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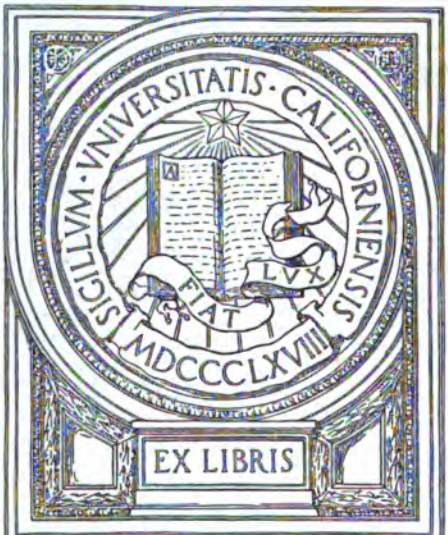
British Poets.

GIFT OF
A. F. Morrison



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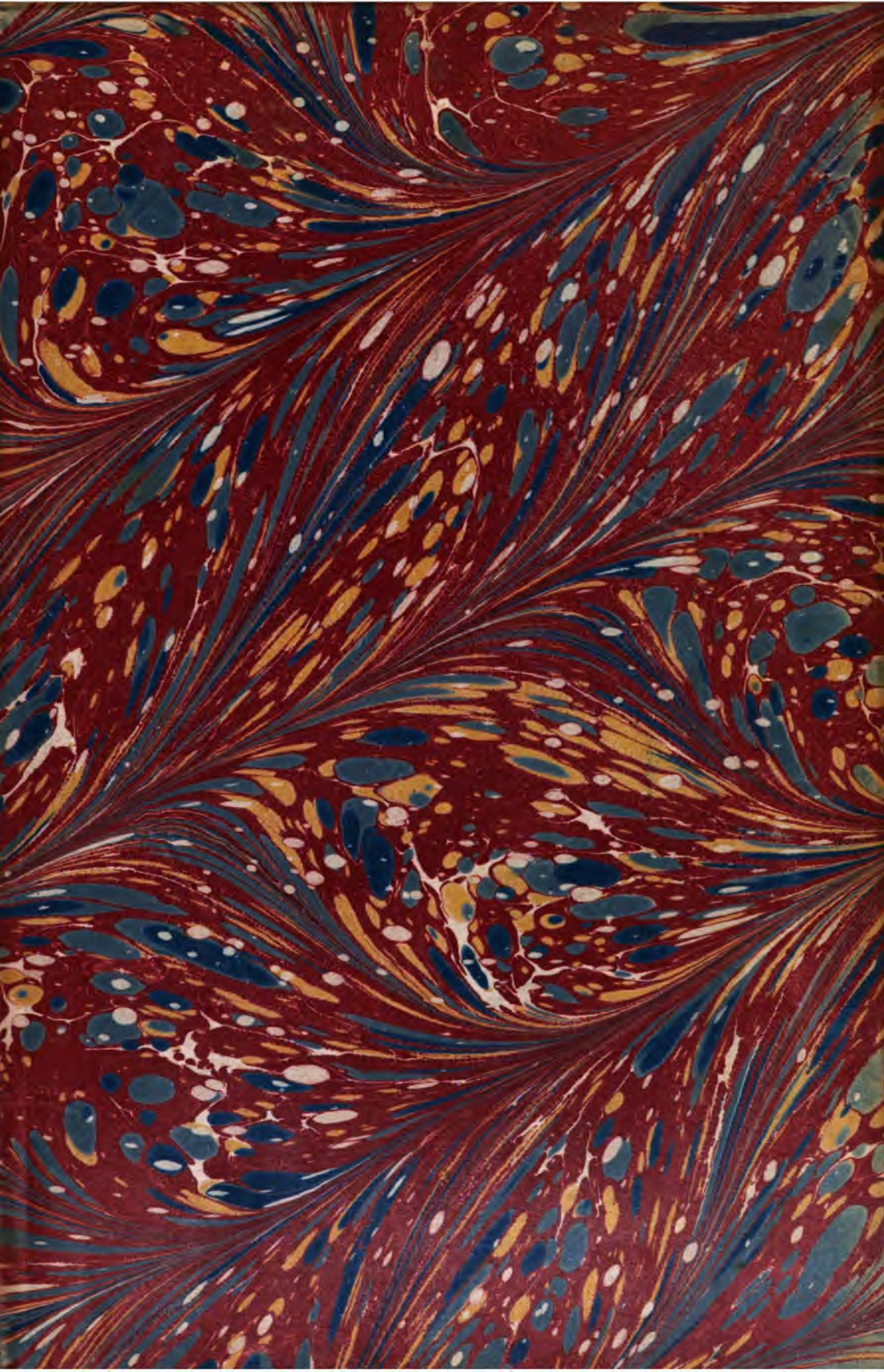

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THE

WORKS

OF THE

BRITISH POETS,

FROM

FALCONER TO SIR WALTER SCOTT,

WITH

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES

NEW YORK.

D. APPLETON & CO.

THE WORKS

OF THE

BRITISH POETS

SELECTED AND CHRONOLOGICALLY ARRANGED

FROM

FALCONER TO SIR WALTER SCOTT.

WITH

BIOGRAPHICAL AND CRITICAL NOTICES.

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List of the Engravings

VOLUME III.

	PAGE
FRONTISPIECE—NETLY ABBEY,	
GAME OF CHESS,	54
THE MOTHER,	104
THE VISION,	199
GINEVRA,	255
THE SICK CHAMBER,	284
BASIL,	305
SUMMER,	405
A MOTHER'S LOVE,	533
THE CASTLE,	625

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CONTENTS.

Page

FALCONER.

The Shipwreck
Canto I. 10
II. 17
III. 26

BARBAULD.

Corsica. Written in the year 1769. 36
The Mouse's Petition 37
Characters 38
An Inventory of the Furniture in Dr. Priestley's Study 39
On a Lady's Writing 39
On the Deserted Village 39
Hymn to Content 39
The Origin of Song-writing 40
Ode to Spring 41
An Address to the Deity 41
A Summer Evening's Meditation 42
To-morrow 43
A School Eclogue 43
What do the Futures speak of? In Answer to a Question in the Greek Grammar 44
The Rights of Woman 44
Washing-day 45
To Mr. S. T. Coleridge. 1797. 45
The Unknown God 46
Ode to Remorse 46
On the Death of the Princess Charlotte 48
The Wake of the King of Spain 48
Hymns:—
I. 48
II. 49
III. For Easter Sunday 49
IV. 50
V. 50
VI. Pious Friendship 50
VII. 50
VIII. 50
IX. 51
X. A Pastoral Hymn 51

SIR WILLIAM JONES.

Caissa; or, the Game of Chess 54
Solima. An Arabian Eclogue 57
An Ode in imitation of Alcæus 58
An Ode in imitation of Callistratus 58
The First Nemean Ode of Pindar 58
A Chinese Ode, paraphrased 59
A Turkish Ode of Mesihi 60
Hymn to Camdeo 61
Two Hymns to Precriti.
To Durga 63
To Bhavani 65
Hymn to Indra 66

CRABBE.

Sir Eustace Grey 70
The Hall of Justice.
Part I. 73
II. 74
Woman 76

Page

Tales:—
I. The Dumb Orators; or, the Benefit of Society 76
II. The Parting Hour 80
III. The Gentleman Farmer 84
IV. Procrastination 88
V. The Patron 91
VI. The Frank Courtship 97
VII. The Widow's Tale 101
VIII. The Mother 104
IX. Arabella 107
X. The Lover's Journey 110
XI. Edward Shore 113
XII. 'Squire Thomas; or, the Precipitate Choice 117
XIII. Jessy and Colin 120
XIV. The Struggles of Conscience 124
XV. Advice; or, the 'Squire and the Priest 128
XVI. The Confidant 131
XVII. Resentment 136
XVIII. The Wager 140
XIX. The Convert 43
XX. The Brothers 46
XXI. The Learned Boy 150

CHATTERTON.

Bristow Tragedie; or, the Dethe of Syr Charles Bawdin 158
Mynstrelles Songe 161

GIFFORD.

The Baviad: a paraphrastic Imitation of the first Satire of Persius 163
The Maviad 173

BURNS.

The twa Dogs, a Tale 190
Death and Dr. Hornbook. A true Story 192
The Brigs of Ayr, a Poem. Inscribed to J. B******, Esq., Ayr 193
The Death and Dying Words of Poor Mailie, the Author's only Pet Yowe. An unco mournful Tale 195
Poor Mailie's Elegy 196
To J. S****. 196
A Dream 196
The Vision.
Duan First 199
Duan Second 201
Address to the unco Guid, or the Rigidly Righteous 202
Tam Samson's Elegy 203
Halloween 204
The auld Farmer's New-year Morning Salutation to his auld Mare Maggie, on giving her accustomed Ripp of Corn to hansel in the New-year . 207
To a Mouse. On turning her up in her Nest with the Plough, November, 1785. 208
A Winter's Night 208
Despondency. An Ode 209
Winter. A Dirge 210
The Cotter's Saturday Night. Inscribed to R. A****, Esq. 210
Man was made to mourn. A Dirge 212
A Prayer in the Prospect of Death 213
Stanzas on the same Occasion 213

	Page
Verses left at a Friend's House	213
The First Psalm	213
A Prayer under the Pressure of violent Anguish	214
The first six Verses of the ninetieth Psalm	214
To a Mountain Daisy, on turning one down with the Plough in April, 1786.	214
To Ruin	214
To Miss L—, with Beattie's Poems as a New-year's Gift, January 1, 1787.	215
Epistle to a Young Friend. May, 1786.	215
On a Scotch Bard gone to the West Indies	216
To a Haggis	216
A Dedication to Gavin Hamilton, Esq.	217
To a Louse. On seeing one on a Lady's Bonnet at Church	218
Address to Edinburgh	218
Epistle to J. Lapraik, an old Scottish Bard. April 1st, 1785.	219
To the same. April 21st, 1785.	220
To W. S*****N, Ochiltree	221
Epistle to J. R******, enclosing some Poems	223
Tam O'Shanter. A Tale	223
Songs :—	
The Lea-rig	225
To Mary	225
My Wife's a winsome wee thing	226
Bonnie Leslie	226
Highland Mary	226
Auld Bob Morris	226
Duncan Gray	226
Song	227
Galla Water	227
Lord Gregory	227
Mary Morison	227
Wandering Willie	228
Jessie	228
When wild War's deadly Blast was blawn	228
Song	228
Bonnie Jean	229
Auld Lang Syne	229
Bannockburn. Robert Bruce's Address to his Army	229
For a' that, and a' that	230
Scottish Ballad	230
Song	230
The Birks of Aberfeldy	231
I love my Jean	231
John Anderson my Jo	231
The Posie	231
The Banks o' Doon	231
Song	232
Sic a Wife as Willie had	232
Wilt thou be my Dearie?	232
For the sake of somebody	232
A red, red Rose	232
Song	233
The bonnie Lad that's far awa	233
Whistle o'er the lave o't	233

ROGERS.

The Pleasures of Memory.	
Part I.	234
II.	238
Italy.—Part I.	
I. The Lake of Geneva	241
II. The Great St. Bernard	242
III. The Descent	243
IV. Jorasse	244
V. Marguerite de Tours	244
VI. The Alps	245
VII. Como	245
VIII. Bergamo	246
IX. Italy	247
X. Col d'alto	247
XI. Venice	248
XII. Luigi	249
XIII. St. Mark's Place	250
XIV. The Gondola	251
XV. The Brides of Venice	252
XVI. Foscari	253
XVII. Arqua	255
XVIII. Ginevra	255
XIX. Bologna	256
XX. Florence	257
XXI. Don Garzia	258
XXII. The Campagna of Florence	258
Italy.—Part II.	
I. The Pilgrim	261
II. An Interview	262
III. Rome	262
IV. A Funeral	264
V. National Prejudices	265
VI. The Campagna of Rome	265
VII. The Roman Pontiffs	266
VIII. Caius Cestius	267
IX. The Nun	267
X. The Firefly	267
XI. Foreign Travel	268
XII. The Fountain	269
XIII. Banditti	269
XIV. An Adventure	270
XV. Naples	271
XVI. The Bag of Gold	273
XVII. A Character	274
XVIII. Sorrento	275
XIX. Paestum	276
XX. Monte Cassino	277
XXI. The Harper	277
XXII. The Feluca	277
XXIII. Genoa	278
Ode to Superstition	279
Verses written to be spoken by Mrs. Siddons	281
On —— asleep	282
To ——	282
From Euripides	282
Captivity	282
The Sailor	282
To an old Oak	282
To two Sisters	283
On a Tear	283
To a Voice that had been lost	283
From a Greek Epigram	283
To the Fragment of a Statue of Hercules, commonly called the Torso	284
To ——	284
Written in a Sick Chamber	284
The Boy of Egremond	284
To a Friend on his Marriage	284
The Alps at Daybreak	285
Imitation of an Italian Sonnet	285
A Character	285
To the Youngest Daughter of Lady ****	285
An Epitaph on a Robin-redbreast	285
To the Gnat	285
A Wish	286
Written at Midnight, 1786.	286
An Italian Song	286
An Inscription	286
Written in the Highlands of Scotland, September 2, 1812.	286
A Farewell	287
Inscription for a Temple. Dedicated to the Graces	287
To the Butterfly	287
Written in Westminster Abbey, October 10, 1806.	287

GRAHAME.

The Sabbath	289
Sabbath Walks :—	
A Spring Sabbath Walk	297
A Summer Sabbath Walk	297
An Autumn Sabbath Walk	298
A Winter Sabbath Walk	298
Biblical Pictures :—	
The First Sabbath	299
The Finding of Moses	299
Jacob and Pharaoh	299
Jephthah's Vow	300
Saul and David	300
Elijah fed by Ravens	300
The Birth of Jesus announced	300
Behold my Mother and my Brethren	300
Bartimeus restored to Sight	301
Little Children brought to Jesus	301
Jesus calms the Tempest	301
Jesus walks on the Sea, and calms the Storm	301
The Dumb cured	301
The Death of Jesus	301
The Resurrection	301
Jesus appears to the Disciples	302
Paul accused before the Tribunal of the Areopagus	302
Paul accused before the Roman Governor of Judea	302
Paraphrase.—Psalm cili. 3, 4.	302
On Visiting Melrose, after an Absence of sixteen Years	302
The Wild Duck and her Brood	303
To a Redbreast that flew in at my Window	303
Epitaph on a Blackbird killed by a Hawk	303
The Poor Man's Funeral	303
The Thanksgiving off Cape Trafalgar	303
To my Son	304

JOANNA BAILLIE.

Basil.	
Act I.	305
II.	309
III.	314
IV.	320
V.	328

Page

De Monfort.
Act I. 332
II. 337
III. 341
IV. 345
V. 349
The Martyr.
Act I. 356
II. 360
III. 365
Christopher Columbus 370
Lady Griseld Baillie 379
Lord John of the East 387
Malcom's Heir 388
The Elden Tree 390
The Ghost of Fadon 392
A November Night's Traveller 394
Sir Maurice. A Ballad 396
Address to a Steam-vessel 398
To Mrs. Siddons 399
A Volunteer Song 400
To a Child 400

BLOOMFIELD.

The Farmer's Boy.
Spring 402
Summer 405
Autumn 408
Winter 411

WORDSWORTH.

The Excursion, being a Portion of the Recluse.
Book I. The Wanderer 417
II. The Solitary 425
III. Despondency 432
IV. Despondency corrected 440
V. The Pastor 451
VI. The Churchyard among the Mountains 459
VII. The Churchyard among the Mountains, continued 468
VIII. The Parsonage 476
IX. Discourse of the Wanderer, and an Evening Visit to the Lake 481
The Armenian Lady's Love 488
The Somnambulist 499

BOWLES.

The Missionary.
Canto I. 492
II. 495
III. 497
IV. 501
V. 503
VI. 505
VII. 506
VIII. 509
Song of the Cid 512
Sonnets. Written chiefly during various Journeys.
Part I.
Sonnet. Written at Tynemouth, Northumberland, after a tempestuous Voyage . 514
Sonnet. At Bamborough Castle . . . 514
Sonnet. To the River Wensbeck . . . 514
Sonnet. To the River Tweed . . . 515
Sonnet 515
Sonnet. On leaving a Village in Scotland . 515
Sonnet. To the River Itchin, near Winton . 515
Sonnet 515
Sonnet. At Dover Cliffs, July 20, 1787 . . 516
Sonnet. At Ostend, landing, July 21, 1787 . 516
Sonnet. At Ostend, July 22, 1787 . . 516
Sonnet. On the River Rhine . . . 516
Sonnet. At a Convent 516
Sonnet 516
Sonnet 517
Sonnet. On a distant View of England . 517
Sonnet. To the River Cherwell, Oxford . 517
Part II.
Sonnet 517
Sonnet. October, 1792 517
Sonnet. November, 1792 517
Sonnet. April, 1793 518
Sonnet. May, 1793 518
Sonnet. Netley Abbey 518
Sonnet 518
Sonnet. May, 1793 518
Sonnet 518
Sonnet. On revisiting Oxford 518
Sonnet. On the Death of the Rev. William Benwell 519
Sonnet. Written at Malvern, July 11, 1793 519
Sonnet. On reviewing the foregoing, September 21, 1797 519

COLERIDGE.

Sibylline Leaves.
I. Poems occasioned by Political Events, or Feelings connected with them:—
Ode to the departing Year 521
France. An Ode 523
Fears in Solitude. Written in April, 1798, during the Alarm of an Invasion . . . 524
Fire, Famine, and Slaughter. A War Eclogue 526
Recantation, illustrated in the Story of the Mad Ox 526
II. Love Poems:—
Introduction to the Tale of the Dark Ladie . 528
Lewti, or the Circassian Love-chant . . 529
The Picture, or the Lover's Resolution . 530
The Night-scene. A Dramatic Fragment . 531
To an unfortunate Woman, whom the Author had known in the Days of her Innocence . 532
To an unfortunate Woman at the Theatre . 532
Lines composed in a Concert-room . . 533
The Keepsake 533
To a Lady. With Falconer's "Shipwreck" . 533
Home-sick. Written in Germany . . . 534
Answer to a Child's Question 534
To a Young Lady. On her Recovery from a Fever 534
The Visionary Hope 534
Something childish, but very natural. Written in Germany 535
Recollections of Love 535
The Happy Husband. A Fragment . . . 536
On revisiting the Sea-shore, after long Absence, under strong medical recommendations not to bathe 536
The Composition of a Kiss 536
III. Meditative Poems. In blank verse:
Hymn before Sunrise, in the Vale of Chamouny 536
Lines written in the Album at Elbingerode, in the Hartz Forest 537
On observing a Blossom on the first of February, 1796 537
The Eolian Harp. Composed at Clevedon, Somersetshire 537
Reflections on having left a Place of Retirement 538
To the Rev. George Coleridge of Ottery St. Mary, Devon, with some Poems 539
A tombless Epitaph 539
Inscription for a Fountain on a Heath . . 540
This Lime-tree Bower my Prison . . . 540
To a Gentleman. Composed on the Night after his Recitation of a Poem on the Growth of an individual Mind 541
To a Friend, who had declared his Intention of writing no more Poetry 542
The Nightingale: a Conversation Poem. Written in April, 1798 542
Frost at Midnight 543
To a Friend, together with an unfinished Poem 544
The Hour when we shall meet again. Composed during Illness and in Absence . . . 544
Lines to Joseph Cottle 544
IV. Odes and Miscellaneous Poems:—
The Three Graves. A Fragment of a Sexton's Tale 545
Dejection. An Ode 548
Ode to Georgiana, Dutchess of Devonshire, on the twenty-fourth Stanza in her "Passage over Mount Gothard" 550
Ode to Tranquillity 551
To a Young Friend, on his proposing to domesticate with the Author. Composed in 1796 . 551
Lines to W. L. Esq., while he sang a Song to Purcell's Music 552
Addressed to a Young Man of Fortune, who abandoned himself to an indolent and causeless Melancholy 552
Sonnet to the River Otter 552
Sonnet. Composed on a Journey homeward; the Author having received Intelligence of the Birth of a Son, September 20, 1796 . . . 552
Sonnet. To a Friend, who asked how I felt when the Nurse first presented my Infant to me 552
The Virgin's Cradle Hymn. Copied from the Print of the Virgin in a Catholic Village in Germany 552
On the Christening of a Friend's Child . . 553
Epitaph on an Infant 553
Melancholy. A Fragment 553
A Christmas Carol 553

Page

Tell's Birthplace. Imitated from Stolberg . 554
Human Life. On the Denial of Immortality . 554
Elegy, imitated from one of Akenside's Blank Verse Inscriptions 554
The Visit of the Gods. Imitated from Schiller 554
Kubla Khan; or, a Vision in a Dream . 555
The Pains of Sleep 556
The Rime of the Ancient Mariner.
Part I. 556
II. 557
III. 558
IV. 559
V. 559
VI. 560
VII. 561
Christabel.
Part I. 563
II. 566
Youth and Age 569
The Devil's Thoughts 569
Epigrams 570
The Garden of Boccaccio 570

MONTGOMERY.

The Wanderer of Switzerland.
Part I. 573
II. 574
III. 575
IV. 577
V. 578
VI. 580
The Grave 582
Ode to the Volunteers of Britain, on the Prospect of Invasion 583
Hannah 584
The Ocean. Written at Scarborough, in the Summer of 1805 584
The Common Lot 586
The Harp of Sorrow 586
Pope's Willow 586
The Swiss Cowherd's Song in a foreign Land. Imitated from the French 587
The Dial 587
A Mother's Love 588
The Glowworm 588
The Oak. Imitated from the Italian of Metastasio 589
The Widow and the Fatherless 589
Human Life.—Job xiv. 589
The Bible 589
The Daisy in India 589
The Stranger and his Friend 590
Via Crucis, Via Lucis 590
The Ages of Man 591
Aspirations of Youth 591

Page

The Falling Leaf 591
The Adventure of a Star. Addressed to a Young Lady 591
Make way for Liberty 592
For the first Leaf of a Lady's Album . . . 593
The first Leaf of an Album 593
Time employed, Time enjoyed. Addressed to a Young Lady from whom the Author had received an elegantly wrought Watch-pocket . 594
A Voyage round the World 594

SIR WALTER SCOTT.

The Lay of the Last Minstrel.
Canto I. 598
II. 602
III. 606
IV. 610
V. 615
VI. 620
Marmion. A Tale of Flodden Field.
Canto I. The Castle 625
II. The Convent 633
III. The Hostel, or Inn 640
IV. The Camp 647
V. The Court 655
VI. The Battle 665
The Lady of the Lake.
Canto I. The Chase 677
II. The Island 683
III. The Gathering 690
IV. The Prophecy 697
V. The Combat 704
VI. The Guard-room 711
The Fire King 719
The Wild Huntsmen 720
The Battle of Sempach 723
The Maid of Toro 725
War Song of the Royal Edinburgh Light Dragoons . 725
Mac-Gregor's Gathering. Written for Albyn's Anthology 726
Mackrimmon's Lament 726
Pibroch of Donald Dhu. Written for Albyn's Anthology 727
The Dance of Death 727
Farewell to the Muse 729
Hellvellyn 729
Wandering Willie 730
Hunting Song 730
The Bard's Incantation. Written under the Threat of Invasion, in the Autumn of 1804 . . . 730
Romance of Dunois. From the French . . . 731
The Troubadour 731
Carle, now the King's come. Being new Words to an auld Spring 732

WILLIAM FALCONER.

WILLIAM FALCONER was a native of Edinburgh, and went to sea at an early age in a merchant vessel of Leith. He was afterwards mate of a ship that was wrecked in the Levant, and was one of only three out of her crew that were saved, a catastrophe which formed the subject of his future poem. He was for some time in the capacity of a servant to Campbell, the author of Lexiphanes, when purser of a ship. Campbell is said to have discovered in Falconer talents worthy of cultivation, and when the latter distinguished himself as a poet, used to boast that he had been his scholar. What he learned from Campbell it is not very easy to ascertain. His education, as he often assured Governor Hunter, had been confined to reading, writing, and a little arithmetic, though in the course of his life he picked up some acquaintance with the French, Spanish, and Italian languages. In these his countryman was not likely to have much assisted him; but he might have lent him books, and possibly instructed him in the use of figures. Falconer published his Shipwreck, in 1762, and by the favour of the Duke of York, to whom it was dedicated, obtained the appointment of a midshipman in the Royal George, and afterwards that of purser in the Glory frigate. He soon afterwards married a Miss Hicks, an accomplished and beautiful woman, the daughter of the surgeon of Sheerness yard. At the peace of 1763, he was on the point of being reduced to distressed circumstances by his ship being laid up in ordinary at Chatham, when, by the friendship of Commissioner Hanway, who ordered the cabin of the Glory to be fitted up for his residence, he enjoyed for some time a retreat for study without expense or embarrassment. Here he employed himself in compiling his Marine Dictionary, which appeared in 1769, and has been always highly spoken of by those who are capable of estimating its merits. He embarked also in the politics of the day, as a poetical antagonist to Churchill, but with little advantage to his memory. Before the publication of his Marine Dictionary he had left his retreat at Chatham for a less comfortable abode in the metropolis, and appears to have struggled with considerable difficulties, in the midst of which he received proposals from the late Mr. Murray, the bookseller, to join him in the business which he had newly established. The cause of his refusing this offer was, in all probability, the appointment which he received to the pursership of the Aurora, East Indiaman. In that ship he embarked for India, in September, 1769, but the Aurora was never heard of after she passed the Cape, and was thought to have foundered in the Channel of Mozambique; so that the poet of the Shipwreck may be supposed to have perished by the same species of calamity which he had rehearsed.

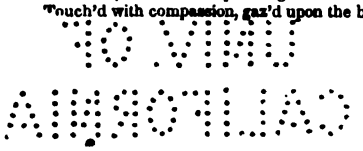
The subject of the Shipwreck, and the fate of its author, bespeak an uncommon partiality in its favour. If we pay respect to the ingenious scholar who can produce agreeable verses amidst the shades of retirement, or the shelves of his library, how much more interest must we take in the "shipboy on the high and giddy mast" cherishing refined visions of fancy at the hour which he may casually snatch from fatigue and danger. Nor did Falconer neglect the proper acquirements of seamanship in cultivating poetry, but evinced considerable knowledge of his profession, both in his Marine Dictionary and in the nautical precepts of the Shipwreck. In that poem he may be said to have added a congenial and peculiarly British subject to the language; at least, we had no previous poem of any length of which the characters and catastrophe were purely naval.

The scene of the catastrophe (though he followed only the fact of his own history) was poetically laid amidst seas and shores where the mind easily gathers romantic associations, and where it supposes the most picturesque vicissitudes of scenery and climate. The spectacle of a majestic British ship on the shores of Greece brings as strong a a reminiscence to the mind, as can well be imagined, of the changes which time has wrought in transplanting the empire of arts and civilization. Falconer's characters are few; but the calm sagacious commander, and the rough obstinate Rodmond, are well contrasted. Some part of the love-story of Palemon is rather swainish and protracted, yet the effect of his being involved in the calamity leaves a deeper sympathy in the mind for the daughter of Albert, when we conceive her at once deprived both of a father and a lover. The incidents of the Shipwreck, like those of a well-wrought tragedy, gradually deepen, while they yet leave a suspense of hope and fear to the imagination. In the final scene there is something that deeply touches our compassion in the picture of the unfortunate man who is struck blind by a flash of lightning at the helm. I remember, by-the-way, to have met with an affecting account of the identical calamity befalling the steersman of a forlorn vessel in a similar moment, given in a prose and veracious history of the loss of a vessel on the

coast of America. Falconer skilfully heightens this trait by showing its effect on the commiseration of Rodmond, the roughest of his characters, who guides the victim of misfortune to lay hold of the shrouds.

"A flash, quick glancing on the nerves of light,
Struck the pale helmsman with eternal night:
Rodmond, who heard a pitious groan behind,
Touch'd with compassion, gaz'd upon the blind;
And, while around his sad companions crowd,
He guides the unhappy victim to the shroud.
Hie thee aloft, my gallant friend! he cries;
Thy only succour on the mast relies!"

The effect of his sea phrases is to give a definite and authentic character to his descriptions, and his poem has the sensible charm of appearing a transcript of reality, and leaves an impression of truth and nature on the mind.



THE SHIPWRECK.

CANTO I.

ARGUMENT.

Proposal of the subject. Invocation. Apology. Allegorical description of memory. Appeal to her assistance. The story begun. Retrospect of the former part of the voyage. The ship arrives at Candia. Ancient state of that island. Present state of the adjacent isles of Greece. The season of the year. Character of the master and his officers. Story of Palemon and Anna. Evening described. Midnight. The ship weighs anchor, and departs from the haven. State of the weather. Morning. Situation of the neighbouring shores. Operation of taking the sun's azimuth. Description of the vessel as seen from the land.

The scene is near the city of Candia; and the time about four days and a half.

WHILE jarring interests wake the world to arms,
And fright the peaceful vale with dire alarms;
While Ocean hears vindictive thunders roll,
Along his trembling wave, from pole to pole;
Sick of the scene, where war, with ruthless hand,
Spreads desolation o'er the bleeding land;
Sick of the tumult, where the trumpet's breath
Bids ruin smile, and drowns the groan of death!
'Tis mine, retired beneath this cavern hoar,
That stands all lonely on the sea-beat shore,
Far other themes of deep distress to sing
Than ever trembled from the vocal string.
No pomp of battle swells th' exalted strain,
Nor gleaming arms ring dreadful on the plain:
But, o'er the scene while pale Remembrance weeps,
Fate with fell triumph rides upon the deeps,
Here hostile elements tumultuous rise,
And lawless floods rebel against the skies;
Till hope expires, and peril and dismay
Wave their black ensigns on the watery way.
Immortal train, who guide the maze of song,
To whom all science, arts, and arms belong;
Who bid the trumpet of eternal fame
Exalt the warrior's and the poet's name!
If e'er with trembling hope I fondly stray'd
In life's fair morn beneath your hallow'd shade,
To hear the sweetly-mournful lute complain,
And melt the heart with ecstasy of pain;
Or listen, while th' enchanting voice of love,
While all Elysium warbled through the grove;
O! by the hollow blast that moans around,
That sweeps the wild harp with a plaintive sound;
By the long surge that foams through yonder cave,
Whose vaults remurmur to the roaring wave;
With living colours give my verse to glow,
The sad memorial of a tale of woe!
A scene from dumb oblivion to restore,
To fame unknown, and new to epic lore!
Alas; neglected by the sacred Nine,
Their suppliant feels no genial ray divine!
Ah! will they leave Pieria's happy shore,
To plough the tide where wintry tempests roar?
Or shall a youth approach their hallow'd fane,
Stranger to Phœbus, and the tuneful train?—
Far from the Muses' academic grove,
'Twas his the vast and trackless deep to rove
Alternate change of climates has he known,
And felt the fierce extremes of either zone;
Where polar skies congeal th' eternal snow,
Or equinoctial suns for ever glow.
Smote by the freezing or the scorching blast,
"A ship-boy on the high and giddy mast,"*
From regions where Peruvian billows roar,
To the bleak coast of savage Labrador.
From where Damascus, pride of Asian plains!
Stoops her proud neck beneath tyrannic chains,
To where the isthmus,† laved by adverse tides,
Atlantic and Pacific seas divides.
But, while he measured o'er the painful race,
In Fortune's wild illimitable chase,
Adversity, companion of his way!
Still o'er the victim hung with iron sway;
Bade new distresses every instant grow,
Marking each change of place with change of woe
In regions where th' Almighty's chastening hand
With livid pestilence afflicts the land;
Or where pale famine blasts the hopeful year,
Parent of want and misery severe;
Or where, all dreadful in th' embattled line,
The hostile ships in flaming combat join:
Where the torn vessel, wind and wave assail,
Till o'er her crew distress and death prevail—
Where'er he wander'd thus vindictive Fate
Pursued his weary steps with lasting hate!
Roused by her mandate, storms of black array
Winter'd the morn of life's advancing day;
Relax'd the sinews of the living lyre,
And quench'd the kindling spark of vital fire.—
Thus while forgotten or unknown he woos,
What hope to win the coy, reluctant Muse?
Then let not Censure, with malignant joy,
The harvest of his humble hope destroy!
His verse no laurel wreath attempts to claim,
Nor sculptur'd brass to tell the poet's name.
If terms uncouth, and jarring phrases, wound
The softer sense with inharmonious sound,

* Shakspeare. † Darien.

Yet here let listening Sympathy prevail.
While conscious Truth unfolds her piteous tale!
And lo! the power that wakes th' eventful song
Hastes hither from Lethean banks along:
She sweeps the gloom, and rushing on the sight,
Spreads o'er the kindling scene propitious light;
In her right hand an ample roll appears,
Fraught with long annals of preceding years;
With every wise and noble art of man,
Since first the circling hours their course began.
Her left a silver wand on high display'd,
Whose magic touch dispels Oblivion's shade.
Pensive her look; on radiant wings, that glow
Like Juno's birds, or Iris' flaming bow,
She sails; and swifter than the course of light,
Directs her rapid intellectual flight.
The fugitive ideas she restores, [shores.
And calls the wandering thought from Lethe's
To things long past a second date she gives,
And hoary Time from her fresh youth receives.
Congenial sister of immortal Fame,
She shares her power, and Memory is her name.
O first-born daughter of primeval Time!
By whom transmitted down in every clime,
The deeds of ages long elapsed are known,
And blazon'd glories spread from zone to zone;
Whose breath dissolves the gloom of mental night,
And o'er th' obscured idea pours the light!
Whose wing unerring glides through time and place,
And trackless scours th' immensity of space!
Say! on what seas, for thou alone canst tell,
What dire mishap a fated ship befell,
Assail'd by tempests! girt with hostile shores!
Arise! approach! unlock thy treasured stores!
A ship from Egypt, o'er the deep impell'd
By guiding winds, her course for Venice held;
Of famed Britannia were the gallant crew,
And from that isle her name the vessel drew.
The wayward steps of Fortune that delude
Full oft to ruin, eager they pursued;
And, dazzled by her visionary glare,
Advanced incautious of each fatal snare;
Though warn'd full oft the slippery track to shun,
Yet Hope, with flattering voice, betray'd them on.
Beguiled to danger thus, they left behind
The scene of peace, and social joy resign'd.
Long absent they, from friends and native home,
The cheerless ocean were inured to roam:
Yet Heaven, in pity to severe distress,
Had crown'd each painful voyage with success:
Still to atone for toils and hazards past,
Restored them to maternal plains at last.
Thrice had the sun, to rule the varying year
Across th' equator roll'd his flaming sphere,
Since last the vessel spread her ample sail
From Albion's coast, obsequious to the gale.
She, o'er the spacious flood, from shore to shore,
Unwearying, wafted her commercial store.
The richest ports of Afric she had view'd,
Thence to fair Italy her course pursued;
Had left behind Trinacria's burning isle,
And visited the margin of the Nile.
And now, that winter deepens round the pole,
The circling voyage hastens to its goal,
They, blind to Fate's inevitable law,
No dark event to blast their hope foresaw;
But from gay Venice soon expect to steer
For Britain's coast, and dread no perils near.
A thousand tender thoughts their souls employ,
That fondly dance to scenes of future joy.
Thus time elapsed, while o'er the pathless tide.
Their ship through Grecian seas the pilots guide.
Occasion call'd to touch at Candia's shore,
Which, bless'd with favouring winds, they soon explore,
The haven enter, borne before the gale,
Despatch their commerce, and prepare to sail
Eternal Powers! what ruins from afar
Mark the fell track of desolating War!
Here Art and Commerce, with auspicious reign,
Once breathed sweet influence on the happy plain
While o'er the lawn, with dance and festive song
Young Pleasure led the jocund hours along.
In gay luxuriance Ceres too was seen
To crown the valleys with eternal green.
For wealth, for valour, courted and revered,
What Albion is, fair Candia then appear'd.
Ah! who the flight of ages can revoke!
The free-born spirit of her sons is broke;
They bow to Ottoman's imperious yoke!
No longer Fame the drooping heart inspires,
For rude Oppression quench'd its genial fires.
But still, her fields with golden harvests crown'd
Supply the barren shores of Greece around,
What pale distress afflicts those wretched isles;
There hope ne'er dawns, and pleasure never smiles
The vassal wretch obsequious drags his chain,
And hears his famish'd babes lament in vain.
These eyes have seen the dull reluctant soil
A seventh year scorn the weary labourer's toil
No blooming Venus, on the desert shore.
Now views with triumph captive gods adore:
No lovely Helens now, with fatal charms,
Call forth th' avenging chiefs of Greece to arms:
No fair Penelopes enchant the eye,
For whom contending kings are proud to die.
Here sullen Beauty sheds a twilight ray,
While Sorrow bids her vernal bloom decay.
Those charms so long renown'd in classic strains
Had dimly shone on Albion's happier plains.
Now, in the southern hemisphere, the sun
Through the bright Virgin and the Scales had run
And on th' ecliptic wheel'd his winding way
Till the fierce Scorpion felt his flaming ray,
The ship was moor'd beside the wave-worn strand
Four days her anchors bite the golden sand:
For sick'ning vapours lull the air to sleep,
And not a breeze awakes the silent deep.
This, when th' autumnal equinox is o'er,
And Phœbus in the north declines no more,
The watchful mariner, whom Heaven informs
Oft deems the prelude of approaching storms.
True to his trust, when sacred duty calls,
No brooding storm the master's soul appals,
Th' advancing season warns him to the main:—
A captive, fetter'd to the oar of gain!
His anxious heart impatient of delay,
Expects the winds to sail from Candia's bay,
Determined, from whatever point they rise,
To trust his fortune to the seas and skies.
Thou living Ray of intellectual fire,
Whose voluntary gleams my verse inspire!
Ere yet the deep'ning incidents prevail,
Till roused attention feel our plaintive tale,
Record whom, chief among the gallant crew
Th' unblest pursuit of fortune hither drew

Can sons of Neptune, generous, brave, and bold,
In pain and hazard toil for sordid gold?
They can! for gold, too oft, with magic art,
Subdues each nobler impulse of the heart:
This crowns the prosperous villain with applause,
To whom, in vain, sad Merit pleads her cause:
This strews with roses life's perplexing road,
And leads the way to pleasure's blest abode;
With slaughter'd victims fills the weeping plain,
And smooths the furrows of the treacherous main.

O'er the gay vessel, and her daring band,
Experienced Albert held the chief command;
Though train'd in boisterous elements, his mind
Was yet by soft humanity refined,
Each joy of wedded love at home he knew;
Abroad confest the father of his crew!
Brave, liberal, just—the calm domestic scene
Had o'er his temper breathed a gay serene:
Him Science taught by mystic lore to trace
The planets wheeling in eternal race;
To mark the ship in floating balance held,
By earth attracted and by seas repell'd; [known,
Or point her devious track through climes un-
That leads to every shore and every zone.
He saw the moon through heaven's blue concave glide,
And into motion charm th' expanding tide;
While earth impetuous round her axle rolls,
Exalts her watery zone, and sinks the poles,
Light and attraction, from their genial source,
He saw still wandering with diminish'd force:
While on the margin of declining day,
Night's shadowy cone reluctant melts away.—
Inured to peril, with unconquer'd soul,
The chief beheld tempestuous oceans roll;
His genius ever for th' event prepared,
Rose with the storm, and all its dangers shared.

The second powers and office Rodmond bore:
A hardy son of England's furthest shore!
Where bleak Northumbria pours her savage train
In sable squadrons o'er the northern main:
That with her pitchy entrails stored, resort,
A scoty tribe! to fair Augusta's port.
Where'er in ambush lurk'd the fatal sands,
They claim the danger; proud of skilful hands;
For while, with darkling course, their vessels sweep
The winding shore, or plough the faithless deep,
O'er bar* and shelf the watery path they sound
With dextrous arm; sagacious of the ground!
Fearless they combat every hostile wind,
Wheeling in mazy tracks with course inclined.
Expert to moor, where terrors line the road,
Or win the anchor from its dark abode:
But drooping and relax'd in climes afar
Tumultuous and undisciplined in war.
Such Rodmond was; by learning unrefined,
That oft enlightens to corrupt the mind.
Boisterous of manners; train'd in early youth
To scenes that shame the conscious cheek of truth,
To scenes that Nature's struggling voice control,
And freeze compassion rising in the soul!
Where the grim hell-hounds prowling round the shore,
With foul intent the stranded bark explore—

Deaf to the voice of wo, her decks they board,
While tardy Justice slumbers o'er her sword—
Th' indignant Muse, severely taught to feel,
Shrinks from a theme she blushes to reveal!
Too oft example, arm'd with poisons fell,
Pollutes the shrine where Mercy loves to dwell
Thus Rodmond, train'd by this unhallow'd crew
The sacred social passions never knew:
Unskill'd to argue, in dispute yet loud;
Bold without caution; without honours proud:
In art unschool'd; each veteran rule he prized,
And all improvement haughtily despised.
Yet, though full oft to future perils blind,
With skill superior glow'd his daring mind,
Through snares of death the reeling bark to guide
When midnight shades involve the raging tide.

To Rodmond next, in order of command,
Succeeds the youngest of our naval band.
But what avails it to record a name
That courts no rank among the sons of Fame?
While yet a stripling, oft with fond alarms
His bosom danced to Nature's boundless charms.
On him fair Science dawn'd in happier hour,
Awakening into bloom young Fancy's flower;
But frowning Fortune, with untimely blast,
The blossom wither'd and the dawn o'ercast.
Forlorn of heart, and by severe decree,
Condemn'd reluctant to the faithless sea,
With long farewell he left the laurel grove,
Where science and the tuneful sisters rove.
Hither he wander'd, anxious to explore,
Antiquities of nations now no more;
To penetrate each distant realm unknown,
And range excursive o'er th' untravell'd zone
In vain—for rude Adversity's command,
Still on the margin of each famous land,
With unrelenting ire his steps opposed,
And every gate of Hope against him closed.
Permit my verse, ye blest Pierian train,
To call Arion this ill-fated swain!
For, like that bard unhappy, on his head,
Malignant stars their hostile influence shed.
Both in lamenting numbers o'er the deep,
With conscious anguish taught the harp to weep
And both the raging surge in safety bore
Amid destruction panting to the shore.
This last, our tragic story from the wave
Of dark Oblivion haply yet may save:
With genuine sympathy may yet complain,
While sad Remembrance bleeds at every vein.

Such were the pilots—tutor'd to divine
Th' untravell'd course by geometric line;
Train'd to command and range the various sail,
Whose various force conforms to every gale.
Charged with the commerce, hither also came
A gallant youth: Palemon was his name;
A father's stern resentment doom'd to prove,
He came the victim of unhappy love!
His heart for Albert's beauteous daughter bled;
For her a secret flame his bosom fed.
Nor let the wretched slaves of Folly scorn
This genuine passion, Nature's eldest born!
'Twas his with lasting anguish to complain,
While blooming Anna mourn'd the cause in va.

Graceful of form, by Nature taught to please
Of power to melt the female breast with ease
To her Palemon told his tender tale,
Soft as the voice of Summer's evening gale

* A bar is known, in hydrography, to be a mass of earth or land collected by the surge of the sea, at the entrance of a river or haven, so as to render the navigation difficult, and often dangerous.

O'erjoy'd, he saw her lovely eyes relent:
The blushing maiden smiled with sweet consent.
Oft in the mazes of a neighbouring grove,
Unheard, they breathed alternate vows of love:
By fond society their passion grew,
Like the young blossom fed with vernal dew.
In evil hour th' officious tongue of Fame
Betray'd the secret of their mutual flame.
With grief and anger struggling in his breast,
Palemon's father heard the tale confest.
Long had he listen'd with Suspicion's ear,
And learnt, sagacious, this event to fear.
Too well, fair youth! thy liberal heart he knew;
A heart to Nature's warm impressions true!
Full oft his wisdom strove, with fruitless toil,
With avarice to pollute that generous soil:
That soil impregnated with nobler seed,
Refused the culture of so rank a weed.
Elate with wealth, in active commerce won,
And basking in the smile of Fortune's sun,
With scorn the parent eyed the lowly shade
That veil'd the beauties of this charming maid:
Indignant he rebuked th' enamoured boy,
The flattering promise of his future joy!
He soothed and menaced, anxious to reclaim
This hopeless passion, or divert its aim:
Oft led the youth where circling joys delight
The ravish'd sense, or beauty charms the sight.
With all her powers, enchanting Music fail'd,
And Pleasure's syren voice no more prevail'd.
The merchant, kindling then with proud disdain,
In look and voice assumed a harsher strain;
In absence now his only hope remain'd;
And such the stern decree his will ordain'd.
Deep anguish, while Palemon heard his doom,
Drew o'er his lovely face a saddening gloom.
In vain with bitter sorrow he repined,
No tender pity touch'd that sordid mind:
To thee, brave Albert, was the charge consign'd.
The stately ship, forsaking England's shore,
To regions far remote Palemon bore.
Incapable of change, th' unhappy youth
Still loved fair Anna with eternal truth:
From clime to clime an exile doom'd to roam,
His heart still panted for its secret home.

The moon had circled twice her wayward zone
To him since young Arion first was known;
Who, wandering here through many a scene re-
In Alexandria's port the vessel found; [nown'd,
Where, anxious to review his native shore,
He on the roaring wave embark'd once more.
Oft, by pale Cynthia's melancholy light,
With him Palemon kept the watch of night!
In whose sad bosom many a sigh suppress'd,
Some painful secret of the soul confess'd.
Perhaps Arion soon the cause divined,
Though shunning still to probe a wounded mind:
He felt the chastity of silent wo,
Though glad the balm of comfort to bestow;
He, with Palemon, oft recounted o'er
The tales of hapless love, in ancient lore,
Recall'd to memory by th' adjacent shore.
The scene thus present, and its story known,
The lover sigh'd for sorrows not his own.
Thus, though a recent date their friendship bore,
Soon the ripe metal own'd the quickening ore;
For in one tide their passions seem'd to roll,
By kindred age and sympathy of soul.

These o'er th' inferior naval train preside,
The course determine, or the commerce guide:
O'er all the rest, an undistinguish'd crew,
Her wing of deepest shade Oblivion drew.

A sullen languor still the skies oppress,
And held th' unwilling ship in strong arrest.
High in his chariot glow'd the lamp of day,
O'er Ida, flaming with meridian ray:
Relax'd from toil, the sailors range the shore,
Where famine, war, and storm are felt no more:
The hour to social pleasure they resign,
And black remembrance drown in generous wine.
On deck, beneath the shading canvass spread,
Rodmond a rueful tale of wonders read,
Of dragons roaring on th' enchanted coast,
The hideous goblin, and the yelling ghost—
But with Arion from the sultry heat
Of noon, Palemon sought a cool retreat.
And lo! the shore with mournful prospects crown'd;*
The rampart torn with many a fatal wound;
The ruin'd bulwark tottering o'er the strand;
Bewail the stroke of War's tremendous hand.
What scenes of wo this hapless isle o'erspread!
Where late thrice fifty thousand warriors bled.
Full twice twelve summers were yon tow'rs assail'd
Till barbarous Ottoman at last prevail'd;
While thundering mines the lovely plains o'erturn'd,
While heroes fell, and domes and temples burn'd

But now before them happier scenes arise.
Elysian vales salute their ravish'd eyes:
Olive and cedar form'd a grateful shade,
Where light with gay romantic error stray'd.
The myrtles here with fond caresses twine;
There, rich with nectar, melts the pregnant vine.
And lo! the stream renown'd in classic song,
Sad Lethe, glides the silent vale along.
On mossy banks, beneath the citron grove,
The youthful wand'rers found a wild alcove:
Soft o'er the fairy region Languor stole,
And with sweet Melancholy charm'd the soul.
Here first Palemon, while his pensive mind
For consolation on his friend reclined,
In Pity's bleeding bosom pour'd the stream
Of love's soft anguish, and of grief supreme—
Too true thy words! by sweet remembrance taught,
My heart in secret bleeds with tender thought:
In vain it courts the solitary shade,
By every action, every look betray'd!—
The pride of generous wo disdains appeal
To hearts that unrelenting frosts congeal.
Yet sure, if right Palemon can divine,
The sense of gentle pity dwells in thine.
Yes! all his cares thy sympathy shall know,
And prove the kind companion of his wo.

Albert thou know'st with skill and science graced
In humble station though by Fortune placed,
Yet never seaman more serenely brave
Led Britain's conquering squadrons o'er the wave.
Where full in view Augusta's spires are seen,
With flowery lawns and waving woods between,
A peaceful dwelling stands in modest pride,
Where Thames, slow-winding, rolls his ample tide.

* The intelligent reader will readily discover, that these remarks allude to the ever memorable siege of Candia, which was taken from the Venetians by the Turks, in 1669; being then considered as impregnable, and esteemed the most formidable fortress in the universe.

There live the hope and pleasure of his life,
A pious daughter, with a faithful wife.
For his return, with fond officious care,
Still every grateful object these prepare;
Whatever can allure the smell or sight,
Or wake the drooping spirits to delight.
This blooming maid in virtue's path to guide,
Her anxious parents all their cares applied:
Her spotless soul, where soft Compassion reign'd,
No vice untuned, no sick'ning folly stained.
Not fairer grows the lily of the vale,
Whose bosom opens to the vernal gale:
Her eyes, unconscious of their fatal charms,
Thrill'd every heart with exquisite alarms;
Her face, in Beauty's sweet attraction dress'd,
The smile of maiden-innocence express'd;
While Health, that rises with the new-born day,
Breathed o'er her cheek the softest blush of May.
Still in her look complacence smiled serene;
She moved the charmer of the rural scene.
'Twas at that season when the fields resume
Their loveliest hues, array'd in vernal bloom;
Yon ship, rich freighted from th' Italian shore,
To Thames' fair banks her costly tribute bore:
While thus my father saw his ample hoard,
From this return, with recent treasures stored,
Me, with affairs of commerce charged, he sent
To Albert's humble mansion; soon I went—
Too soon, alas! unconscious of th' event—
There, struck with sweet surprise and silent awe,
The gentle mistress of my hopes I saw:
There wounded first by Love's resistless arms,
My glowing bosom throbb'd with strange alarms.
My ever charming Anna! who alone
Can all the frowns of cruel fate atone;
O! while all-conscious Memory holds her power,
Can I forget that sweetly-painful hour,
When from those eyes, with lovely lightning fraught,
My fluttering spirits first th' infection caught:
When as I gazed, my fault'ring tongue betray'd
The heart's quick tumults, or refused its aid;
While the dim light my ravish'd eyes forsook,
And every limb, unstrung with terror, shook!
With all her powers dissenting Reason strove
To tame at first the kindling flame of Love;
She strove in vain! subdued by charms divine,
My soul a victim fell at Beauty's shrine.—
Oft from the din of bustling life I stray'd,
In happier scenes to see my lovely maid.
Full oft, where Thames his wand'ring current leads,
We roved at evening hour through flowery meads.
There, while my heart's soft anguish I reveal'd,
To her with tender sighs my hope appeal'd,
While the sweet nymph my faithful tale believed,
Her snowy breast with secret tumult heaved;
For, train'd in rural scenes from earliest youth
Nature was hers, and innocence, and truth.
She never knew the city damsel's art,
Whose frothy pertness charms the vacant heart!
My suit prevail'd; for Love inform'd my tongue,
And on his votary's lips persuasion hung.
Her eyes with conscious sympathy withdrew,
And o'er her cheek the rosy current flew.—
Thrice happy hours! where, with no dark allay,
Life's fairest sunshine gilds the vernal day!
For here, the sigh that soft Affection heaves,
From stings of sharper wo the soul relieves,
Elysian scenes, too happy long to last!
Too soon a storm the smiling dawn o'ercast!
Too soon some demon to my father bore
The tidings that his heart with anguish tore.—
My pride to kindle, with dissuasive voice,
Awhile he labour'd to degrade my choice;
Then, in the whirling wave of Pleasure, sought
From its loved object to divert my thought.
With equal hope he might attempt to bind,
In chains of adamant, the lawless wind:
For Love had aim'd the fatal shaft too sure;
Hope fed the wound, and absence knew no cure.
With alienated look, each art he saw
Still baffled by superior Nature's law.
His anxious mind on various schemes revolved;
At last on cruel exile he resolved.
The rigorous doom was fixed! alas! how vain
To him of tender anguish to complain!
His soul, that never Love's sweet influence felt
By social sympathy could never melt;
With stern command to Albert's charge he gave,
To waft Palemon o'er the distant wave.
The ship was laden and prepared to sail,
And only waited now the leading gale.
'Twas ours, in that sad period first to prove
The heartfelt torments of despairing love:
Th' impatient wish that never feels repose,
Desire that with perpetual current flows;
The fluctuating pangs of hope and fear;
Joy distant still, and sorrow ever near!
Thus, while the pangs of thought severer grew,
The western breezes inauspicious blew,
Hastening the moment of our last adieu.
The vessel parted on the falling tide;
Yet Time one sacred hour to Love supplied.
The night was silent, and, advancing fast,
The moon o'er Thames her silver mantle cast;
Impatient hope the midnight path explored,
And led me to the nymph my soul adored.
Soon her quick footsteps struck my listening ear;
She came confest! the lovely maid drew near!
But ah! what force of language can impart
Th' impetuous joy that glow'd in either heart!—
O! ye, whose melting hearts are form'd to prove
The trembling ecstasies of genuine love!
When, with delicious agony, the thought
Is to the verge of high delirium wrought;
Your secret sympathy alone can tell
What raptures then the throbbing bosom swell,
O'er all the nerves what tender tumults roll,
While love with sweet enchantment melts the soul!
In transport lost, by trembling hope impress,
The blushing virgin sunk upon my breast;
While hers congenial beat with fond alarms;
Dissolving softness! paradise of charms!
Flash'd from our eyes, in warm transfusion flew
Our blending spirits, that each other drew!
O bliss supreme! where Virtue's self can melt
With joys that guilty Pleasure never felt.
Form'd to refine the thought with chaste desire,
And kindle sweet Affection's purest fire!
Ah! wherefore should my hopeless love, she cries
While sorrow burst with interrupting sighs,
For ever destined to lament in vain,
Such flattering fond ideas entertain?
My heart through scenes of fair illusion stray'd
To joys decreed for some superior maid.

'Tis mine to feel the sharpest stings of Grief,
Where never gentle hopes afford relief.
Go then, dear youth! thy father's rage atone!
And let this tortured bosom beat alone!
The hovering anger yet thou may'st appease;
Go then, dear youth! nor tempt the faithless seas!
Find out some happier daughter of the town,
With Fortune's fairer joys thy love to crown;
Where smiling o'er thee with indulgent ray,
Prosperity shall hail each new-born day.
Too well thou know'st good Albert's niggard fate,
Ill fitted to sustain thy father's hate!
Go then, I charge thee, by thy gen'rous love,
That fatal to my father thus may prove:
On me alone let dark Affliction fall,
Whose heart for thee will gladly suffer all.
Then, haste thee hence, Palemon, ere too late,
Nor rashly hope to brave opposing Fate!
She ceased; while anguish in her angel face
O'er all her beauties shower'd celestial grace:
Not Helen, in her bridal charms array'd,
Was half so lovely as this gentle maid.
O soul of all my wishes! I replied,
Can that soft fabric stem Affliction's tide!
Canst thou, fair emblem of exalted Truth!
To Sorrow doom the summer of thy youth;
And I, perfidious! all that sweetness see
Consign'd to lasting misery for me?
Sooner this moment may th' eternal doom
Palemon in the silent earth entomb!
Attest, thou Moon, fair regent of the night!
Whose lustre sickens at this mournful sight;
By all the pangs divided lovers feel,
That sweet possession only knows to heal!
By all the horrors brooding o'er the deep!
Where Fate and Ruin sad dominion keep;
Though tyrant duty o'er me threat'ning stands
And claims obedience to her stern commands;
Should Fortune cruel or auspicious prove,
Her smile or frown shall never change my love!
My heart, that now must every joy resign,
Incapable of change, is only thine!—
O cease to weep! this storm will yet decay,
And these sad clouds of Sorrow melt away.
While through the rugged path of life we go,
All mortals taste the bitter draught of wo:
The famed and great, decreed to equal pain,
Full oft in splendid wretchedness complain.
For this Prosperity, with brighter ray,
In smiling contrast gilds our vital day.
Thou too, sweet maid! ere twice ten months are o'er
Shalt hail Palemon to his native shore,
Where never Interest shall divide us more.
Her struggling soul, o'erwhelm'd with tender grief
Now found an interval of short relief;
So melts the surface of the frozen stream,
Beneath the wintry sun's departing beam.
With warning haste the shades of night withdrew,
And gave the signal of a sad adieu!
As on my neck th' afflicted maiden hung,
A thousand racking doubts her spirit wrung:
She wept the terrors of the fearful wave,
Too oft, alas! the wandering lover's grave!
With soft persuasion I dispell'd her fear,
And from her cheek beguiled the falling tear,
While dying fondness languish'd in her eyes,
She pour'd her soul to heaven in suppliant sighs—
Look down with pity, O ye Powers above!
Who hear the sad complaints of bleeding Love!
Ye, who the secret laws of Fate explore,
Alone can tell if he returns no more:
Or if the hour of future joy remain,
Long-wish'd atonement of long-suffer'd pain!
Bid every guardian minister attend,
And from all ill the much-loved youth defend.
—With grief o'erwhelm'd, we parted twice in vain,
And, urged by strong attraction, met again.
At last, by cruel Fortune torn apart,
While tender passion stream'd in either heart,
Our eyes transfix'd with agonizing look,
One sad farewell, one last embrace we took.
Forlorn of hope the lovely maid I left,
Pensive and pale, of every joy bereft:
She to her silent couch retired to weep,
While her sad swain embark'd upon the deep.
His tale thus closed, from sympathy of grief,
Palemon's bosom felt a sweet relief.
The hapless bird, thus ravished from the skies,
Where all forlorn his loved companion flies,
In secret long bewails his cruel fate,
With fond remembrance of his winged mate:
Till grown familiar with a foreign train,
Composed at length, his sadly warbling strain,
In sweet oblivion charms the sense of pain.
Ye tender maids, in whose pathetic souls
Compassion's sacred stream impetuous rolls;
Whose warm affections exquisitely feel
The secret wound you tremble to reveal!
Ah! may no wand'rer of the faithless main
Pour through your breast the soft delicious bane
May never fatal tenderness approve
The fond effusions of their ardent love.
O! warn'd by friendship's counsel, learn to shun
The fatal path where thousands are undone!
Now as the youths, returning o'er the plain,
Approach'd the lonely margin of the main,
First, with attention roused, Arion eyed
The graceful lover, form'd in Nature's pride.
His frame the happiest symmetry display'd;
And locks of waving gold his neck array'd;
In every look the Paphian graces shine,
Soft-breathing o'er his cheek their bloom divine.
With lighten'd heart he smiled serenely gay,
Like young Adonis or the son of May;
Not Cytherea from a fairer swain
Received her apple on the Trojan plain!
The sun's bright orb, declining all serene,
Now glanced obliquely o'er the woodland scene
Creation smiles around; on every spray
The warbling birds exalt their evening lay.
Blithe skipping o'er yon hill, the fleecy train
Join the deep chorus of the lowing plain:
The golden lime and orange there were seen,
On fragrant branches of perpetual green.
The crystal streams, that velvet meadows lave
To the green ocean roll with chiding wave.
The glassy ocean, hush'd, forgets to roar,
But trembling murmurs on the sandy shore:
And lo! his surface, lovely to behold,
Glows in the west, a sea of living gold!
While all above, a thousand liveries gay,
The skies with pomp ineffable array,
Arabian sweets perfume the happy plains:
Above, beneath, around, enchantment reigns

While yet the shades, on Time's eternal scale,
With long vibration deepen o'er the vale;
While yet the songsters of the vocal grove,
With dying numbers tune the soul to love;
With joyful eyes th' attentive master sees
Th' auspicious omens of an eastern breeze—
Now radiant Vesper leads the starry train,
And Night slow draws her veil o'er land and main.
Round the charged bowl the sailors form a ring,
By turns recount the wondrous tale, or sing;
As love or battle, hardships of the main,
Or genial wine, awake the homely strain:
Then some the watch of night alternate keep,
The rest lie buried in oblivious sleep.

Deep midnight now involves the livid skies,
While infant breezes from the shore arise.
The waning moon, behind a watery shroud,
Pale glimmer'd o'er the long-protracted cloud;
A mighty ring around her silver throne,
With parting meteors cross'd portentous shone.
This in the troubled sky full oft prevails;
Oft deem'd a signal of tempestuous gales.—
While young Arion sleeps, before his sight
Tumultuous swim the visions of the night.
Now blooming Anna, with her happy swain,
Approach'd the sacred Hymeneal fane,
Anon, tremendous lightnings flash between,
And funeral pomp and weeping loves are seen.
Now with Palemon up a rocky steep
Whose summit trembles o'er the roaring deep,
With painful step he climb'd; while far above
Sweet Anna charm'd them with the voice of love,
Then sudden from the slippery height they fell,
While dreadful yawn'd beneath the jaws of hell.—
Amid this fearful trance, a thundering sound
He hears—and thrice the hollow decks rebound.
Upstarting from his couch on deck he sprung;
Thrice with shrill note the boatswain's whistle rung.
All hands unmoor! proclaims a boisterous cry;
All hands unmoor! the cavern'd rocks reply!
Roused from repose aloft the sailors swarm,
And with their levers soon the windlass arm.*
The order given, upspringing with a bound,
They lodge the bars, and wheel their engine round;
At every turn the clanging pauls resound.
Uptorn reluctant from its oozy cave,
The ponderous anchor rises o'er the wave:
Along their slippery masts the yards ascend,
And high in air the canvass wings extend:
Redoubling cords the lofty canvass guide,
And through inextricable mazes glide.
The lunar rays with long reflection gleam,
To light the vessel o'er the silver stream:
Along the glassy plain serene she glides,
While azure radiance trembles on her sides
From east to north the transient breezes play,
And in th' Egyptian quarter soon decay.
A calm ensues; they dread th' adjacent shore;
The boats with rowers arm'd are sent before:
With cordage fasten'd to the lofty prow,
Aloof to sea the stately ship they tow.†

The nervous crew their sweeping oars extend,
And pealing shouts the shore of Candia rend.
Success attends their skill; the danger's o'er;
The port is doubled and beheld no more.

Now Morn, her lamp pale glimmering on the sight
Scatter'd before her van reluctant Night.
She comes not in refulgent pomp array'd,
But sternly frowning, wrapt in sullen shade.
Above incumbent vapours, Ida's height,
Tremendous rock! emerges on the sight.
North-east the guardian isle of Standia lies,
And westward Freschin's woody capes arise.

With winning postures, now the wanton sails
Spread all their snares to charm th' inconstant gales
The swelling stud-sails‡ now their wings extend,
Then stay-sails sidelong to the breeze ascend:
While all to court the wandering breeze are placed
With yards now thwarting, now obliquely braced.

The dim horizon lowering vapours shroud,
And blot the sun, yet struggling in the cloud:
Through the wide atmosphere, condensed with haze,
His glaring orb emits a sanguine blaze.
The pilots now their rules of art apply,
The mystic needle's devious aim to try.
The compass, placed to catch the rising ray,†
The quadrant's shadows studious they survey!
Along the arch the gradual index slides,
While Phœbus down the vertic circle glides.
Now, seen on Ocean's utmost verge to swim,
He sweeps it vibrant with his nether limb.
Their sage experience thus explores the height
And polar distance of the source of light;
Then through the chiliads triple maze they trace
Th' analogy that proves the magnet's place
The wayward steel, to truth thus reconciled,
No more th' attentive pilot's eye beguiled.

The natives, while the ship departs the land,
Ashore with admiration gazing stand.
Majestically slow, before the breeze,
In silent pomp she marches on the seas;
Her milk-white bottom cast a softer gleam,
While trembling through the green translucent stream.
The wales,‡ that close above in contrast shone,
Clasp the long fabric with a jetty zone.
Britannia, riding awful on the prow,
Gazed o'er the vassal wave that roll'd below:
Where'er she moved the vassal waves were seen
To yield obsequious and confess their queen.
Th' imperial trident graced her dexter hand,
Of power to rule the surge, like Moses' wand,

* The windlass is a sort of large roller, used to wind in the cable, or heave up the anchor. It is turned about vertically by a number of long bars or levers; in which operation, it is prevented from recoiling, by the pauls.

† Towing is the operation of drawing a ship forward, by means of ropes, extending from her fore part to one or more of the boats rowing before her.

‡ Studding-sails are long, narrow sails, which are only used in fine weather and fair winds, on the outside of the larger square sails. Stay-sails are three-cornered sails, which are hoisted up on the stays, when the wind crosses the ship's course either directly or obliquely.

† The operation of taking the sun's azimuth, in order to discover the eastern or western variation of the magnetic needle.

‡ The wales, here alluded to, are an assemblage of strong planks which envelope the lower part of the ship's side, wherein they are broader and thicker than the rest, and appear somewhat like a range of hoops, which separates the bottom from the upper works.

Th' eternal empire of the main to keep,
And guide her squadrons o'er the trembling deep.
Her left, propitious, bore a mystic shield,
Around whose margin rolls the watery field:
There her bold Genius, in his floating car,
O'er the wild billow hurls the storm of war—
And lo! the beast that oft with jealous rage
In bloody combat met from age to age,
Tamed into Union, yoked in Friendship's chain,
Draw his proud chariot round the vanquish'd main.
From the broad margin to the centre grew
Shelves, rocks, and whirlpools, hideous to the view!—
Th' immortal shield from Neptune she received,
When first her head above the waters heaved.
Loose floated o'er her limbs an azure vest;
A figured scutcheon glitter'd on her breast;
There, from one parent soil, for ever young,
The blooming rose and hardy thistle sprung:
Around her head an oaken wreath was seen,
Inwove with laurels of unfading green.
Such was the sculptured prow—from van to rear
Th' artillery frown'd, a black tremendous tier!
Embalm'd with orient gum, above the wave,
The swelling sides a yellow radiance gave.
On the broad stern a pencil warm and bold,
That never servile rules of art controll'd,
An allegoric tale on high portray'd,
There a young hero, here a royal maid.
Fair England's genius in the youth exprest,
Her ancient foe, but now her friend confest,
The warlike nymph with fond regard survey'd:
No more his hostile frown her heart dismay'd.
His look, that once shot terror from afar,
Like young Alcides, or the god of war,
Serene as summer's evening skies she saw;
Serene, yet firm; though mild, impressing awe.
Her nervous arm, inured to toils severe,
Brandish'd th' unconquer'd Caledonian spear.
The dreadful falchion of the hills she wore,
Sung to the harp in many a tale of yore,
That oft her rivers dyed with hostile gore.
Blue was her rocky shield; her piercing eye
Flash'd like the meteors of her native sky;
Her crest, high-plumed, was rough with many a scar,
And o'er her helmet gleam'd the northern star.
The warrior youth appear'd of noble frame,
The hardy offspring of some Runic dame:
Loose o'er his shoulders hung the slacken'd bow,
Renown'd in song—the terror of the foe!
The sword, that oft the barbarous north defied,
The scourge of tyrants! glitter'd by his side.
Clad in refulgent arms, in battle won,
The George emblazon'd on his corslet shone.
Fast by his side was seen a golden lyre,
Pregnant with numbers of eternal fire:
Whose strings unlock the witches' midnight spell,
Or waft rapt Fancy through the gulfs of hell—
Struck with contagion, kindling Fancy hears
The songs of heaven, the music of the spheres!
Borne on Newtonian wing, through air she flies,
Where other suns to other systems rise!—
These front the scene conspicuous—over head
Albion's proud oak his filial branches spread;
While on the sea-beat shore obsequious stood,
Beneath their feet, the father of the flood;
Here, the bold native of her cliffs above,
Perch'd by the martial maid the bird of Jove;
There, on the watch, sagacious of his prey,
With eyes of fire, an English mastiff lay.
Yonder fair Commerce stretch'd her winged sail;
Here frown'd the god that wakes the living gale—
High o'er the poop, the fluttering wings unfurl'd
Th' imperial flag that rules the watery world.
Deep blushing armours all the tops invest,
And warlike trophies either quarter dress; high;
Then tower'd the masts; the canvass swell'd on
And waving streamers floated in the sky,
Thus the rich vessel moves in trim array,
Like some fair virgin on her bridal day.
Thus, like a swan she cleaves the watery plain;
The pride and wonder of the Ægean main.

Canto II.

ARGUMENT.

Reflection on leaving the land. The gale continues. A water-spout. Beauty of a dying dolphin. The ship's progress along the shore. Wind strengthens. The sails reduced. A shoal of porpoises. Last appearance of Cape Spado. Sea rises. A squall. The sails further diminished. Mainsail split. Ship bears away before the wind. Again hauls upon the wind. Another mainsail fitted to the yard. The gale still increases. Topsails furled. Top-gallant yards sent down. Sea enlarges. Sunset. Courses reefed. Four seaman lost off the lee main yard-arm. Anxiety of the pilots from their dangerous situation. Resolute behaviour of the sailors. The ship labours in great distress. The artillery thrown overboard. Dismal appearance of the weather. Very high and dangerous sea. Severe fatigue of the crew. Consultation and resolution of the officers. Speech and advice of Albert to the crew. Necessary disposition to veer before the wind. Disappointment in the proposed effect. New dispositions equally unsuccessful. The mizen mast cut away.

The scene lies in the sea, between Cape Fraschin, in Candia, and the Island of Falconera, which is nearly twelve leagues northward of Cape Spado.—The time is from nine in the morning till one o'clock of the following morning.

Adieu, ye pleasures of the rural scene,
Where peace and calm contentment dwell serene!
To me, in vain, on earth's prolific soil,
With summer crown'd th' Elysian valleys smile!
To me those happier scenes no joy impart,
But tantalize with hope my aching heart.
For these, alas! reluctant I forego,
To visit storms and elements of wo!
Ye tempests! o'er my head congenial roll,
To suit the mournful music of my soul!
In black progression, lo! they hover near—
Hail, social Horrors! like my fate severe!
Old Ocean, hail! beneath whose azure zone
The secret deep lies unexplored, unknown.
Approach, ye brave companions of the sea,
And fearless view this awful scene with me!
Ye native guardians of your country's laws
Ye bold assertors of her sacred cause!
The muse invites you, judge if she depart,
Unequal, from the precepts of your art
In practice train'd, and conscious of her power,
Her steps intrepid meet the trying hour.
O'er the smooth bosom of the faithless tides,
Propell'd by gentle gales, the vessel glides.
Rodmond, exulting, felt th' auspicious wind,
And by a mystic charm its aim confined.—
The thoughts of home, that o'er his fancy roll,
With trembling joy dilate Palemon's soul:

Hope lifts his heart, before whose vivid ray
Distress recedes, and danger melts away.
Already Britain's parent cliffs arise,
And in idea greet his longing eyes!
Each amorous sailor too, with heart elate,
Dwells on the beauties of his gentle mate.
E'en they th' impressive dart of Love can feel,
Whose stubborn souls are sheathed in triple steel.
Nor less o'erjoy'd, perhaps with equal truth,
Each faithful maid expects th' approaching youth.
In distant bosoms equal ardours glow;
And mutual passions mutual joy bestow.—
Tall Ida's summit now more distant grew,
And Jove's high hill was rising on the view;
When, from the left approaching, they descry
A liquid column, towering, shoot on high:
The foaming base an angry whirlwind sweeps,
Where curling billows rouse the fearful deeps:
Still round and round the fluid vortex flies,
Scattering dun night and horror through the skies.
The swift volution and th' enormous train
Let sages versed in Nature's lore explain!
The horrid apparition still draws nigh,
And white with foam the whirling surges fly,
The guns were primed—the vessel northward veers,
Till her black battery on the column bears.
The nitre fired; and while the dreadful sound,
Convulsive, shook the slumbering air around.
The watery volume, trembling to the sky,
Burst down the dreadful deluge from on high;
Th' affrighted surge, recoiling as it fell,
Rolling in hills disclosed th' abyss of hell.
But soon this transient undulation o'er,
The sea subsides, the whirlwinds rage no more.
While southward now th' increasing breezes veer,
Dark clouds incumbent on their wings appear.
In front they view the consecrated grove
Of Cypress, sacred once to Cretan Jove.
The thirsty canvass, all around supplied,
Still drinks unquench'd the full aërial tide;
And now, approaching near the lofty stern,
A shoal of sportive dolphins they discern.
From burnish'd scales they beam'd refulgent rays,
Till all the glowing ocean seems to blaze.
Soon to the sport of death the crew repair,
Dart the long lance, or spread the baited snare.
One in redoubling mazes wheels along,
And glides, unhappy! near the triple prong.
Rodmond, unerring, o'er his head suspends
The barbed steel, and every turn attends.
Unerring aim'd the missile weapon flew,
And, plunging, struck the fated victim through.
Th' upturning points his ponderous bulk sustain;
On deck he struggles with convulsive pain.
But while his heart the fatal javelin thrills
And flitting life escapes in sanguine rills,
What radiant changes strike th' astonished sight!
What glowing hues of mingled shade and light!
Now equal beauties gild the lucid west,
With parting beams all o'er profusely drest;
Not lovelier colours paint the vernal dawn,
When orient dews impearl th' enamell'd lawn,
Than from his sides in bright suffusion flow,
That now with gold empyreal seem'd to glow;
Now in pellucid sapphires meet the view,
And emulate the soft celestial hue;
Now beam a flaming crimson on the eye;
And now assume the purple's deeper dye.
But here description clouds each shining ray—
What terms of Art can Nature's powers display?
Now, while on high the freshening gale she feels
The ship beneath her lofty pressure reels.
Th' auxiliar sails that court a gentle breeze,
From their high stations sink by slow degrees.
The watchful ruler of the helm no more
With fix'd attention eyes th' adjacent shore;
But by the oracle of truth below,
The wondrous magnet, guides the wayward prow—
The wind, that still th' impressive canvass sweli'd
Swift and more swift the yielding bark impell'd.
Impatient thus she glides along the coast,
Till, far behind, the hill of Jove is lost:
And while aloof from Retimo she steers,
Malacha's foreland full in front appears.
Wide o'er yon isthmus stands the cypress grove
That once enclosed the hallow'd fane of Jove.
Here too, memorial of his name! is found
A tomb, in marble ruins on the ground.
This gloomy tyrant, whose triumphant yoke
The trembling states around to slavery broke;
Through Greece, for murder, rape, and incest known,
The muses raised to high Olympus throne.—
For oft, alas! their venal strains adorn
The prince whom blushing Virtue holds in scorn.
Still Rome and Greece record his endless fame,
And hence yon mountain yet retains his name.
But see! in confluence borne before the blast,
Clouds roll'd on clouds the dusky noon o'ercast;
The blackening ocean curls; the winds arise;
And the dark scud* in swift succession flies.
While the swoln canvass bends the masts on high
Low in the wave the leeward cannon lie,†
The sailors now, to give the ship relief,
Reduce the topsails by a single reef,‡
Each lofty yard with slacken'd cordage reels,
Rattle the creaking blocks and ringing wheels.
Down the tall masts the topsails sink amain;
And, soon reduced, assume their post again.
More distant grew receding Candia's shore;
And southward of the west Cape Spado bore.
Four hours the sun his high meridian throne
Had left, and o'er Atlantic regions shone:
Still blacker clouds, that all the skies invade,
Draw o'er his sullied orb a dismal shade.
A squall deep lowering blots the southern sky,
Before whose boisterous breath the waters fly.
Its weight the topsails can no more sustain:
'Reef topsails, reef!' the boatswain calls again!

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* Scud is a name given by seamen to the lowest clouds, which are driven with great rapidity along the atmosphere, in squally or tempestuous weather.

† When the wind crosses a ship's course, either directly or obliquely, that side of the ship upon which it acts, is called the weather side: and the opposite one, which is then pressed downwards, is called the lee side. Hence all the rigging and furniture of the ship are, at this time, distinguished by the side, on which they are situated; as the lee cannon, the lee braces, the weather braces, &c.

‡ The topsails are large square sails, of the second degree in height and magnitude. Reefs are certain divisions or spaces by which the principal sails are reduced when the wind increases; and again enlarged proportionably, when its force abates.

The haliards* and top-bow-lines† soon are gone,
To clue-lines‡ and reef-tackles next they run:
The shivering sails descend; and now they square
The yards, while ready sailors mount in air.
The weather-earings§ and the lee they past;
The reefs enroll'd, and every point made fast.
Their task above thus finish'd, they descend,
And vigilant th' approaching squall attend.
It comes resistless; and with foaming sweep,
Upturns the whitening surface of the deep.
In such a tempest, borne to deeds of death,
The wayward sisters scour the blasted heath.
With ruin pregnant now the clouds impend,
And storm and cataract tumultuous blend.
Deep on her side the reeling vessel lies—
"Brail up the mizen,‖ quick!" the master cries,
"Man the clue-garnets!¶ let the main sheet fly!"**
The boisterous squall still presses from on high,
And swift, and fatal, as the lightning's course,
Through the torn mainsail bursts with thundering force,
While the rent canvass flutter'd in the wind,
Still on her flank the stooping bark inclined.—
'Bear up the helm†† a-weather!" Rodmond cries;
Swift, at the word, the helm a-weather flies.
The prow, with secret instinct veers apace:
And now the foresail right athwart they brace;
With equal sheets restrain'd, the bellying sail
Spreads a broad concave to the sweeping gale.
While o'er the foam the ship impetuous flies,
Th' attentive timoneer‡‡ the helm applies.
As in pursuit along the aërial way,
With ardent eye the falcon marks his prey,
Each motion watches of the doubtful chase,
Obliquely wheeling through the liquid space;
So, govern'd by the steersman's glowing hands,
The regent helm her motion still commands.

But now the transient squall to leeward past,
Again she rallies to the sullen blast.
The helm to starboard* turns—with wings inclined
The sidelong canvass clasps the faithless wind,
The mizen draws; she springs aloof once more,
While the fore-staysail† balances before.
The fore-sail braced obliquely to the wind,
They near the prow th' extended tack confined;
Then on the leeward sheet the seamen bend,
And haul the bow-line to the bowsprit end.
To topsails next they haste—the bunt-lines gone,
The clue-lines through their wheel'd machinery run.
On either side below the sheets are mann'd:
Again the fluttering sails their skirts expand,
Once more the topsails, though with humbler plume
Mounting aloft their ancient post resume.
Again the bow-lines and the yards are braced,‡
And all th' entangled cords in order placed.

The sail, by whirlwinds thus so lately rent,
In tatter'd ruins fluttering, is unbent.
With brails§ refix another soon prepared,
Ascending, spreads along beneath the yard.
To each yard-arm the head rope‖ they extend,
And soon their earings and the roebins¶ bend.
That task perform'd, they first the braces** slack,
Then to its station drag th' unwilling tack;
And, while the lee clue-garnet's lower'd away,
Taught aft the sheet they tally and belay.††

Now to the north, from Afric's burning shore,
A troop of porpoises their course explore;
In curling wreaths they gambol on the tide,
Now bound aloft, now down the billow glide.
Their tracks awhile the hoary waves retain,
That burn in sparkling trails along the main.
These fleetest coursers of the finny race,
When threat'ning clouds th' etherial vault deface,
Their rout to leeward still sagacious form,
To shun the fury of th' approaching storm.

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* Haliards are either single ropes or tackles, by which the sails are hoisted up and lowered, when the sail is to be extended or reduced.

† Bow-lines are ropes extended to keep the windward edge of the sail steady, and to prevent it from shaking in an unfavourable wind.

‡ Clue-lines are ropes used to truss up the clues, or lower corners of the principal sails to their respective yards, particularly when the sail is to be close reefed or furled.—Reef-tackles are ropes employed to facilitate the operation of reefing, by confining the extremities of the reef close up to the yard, so that the interval becomes slack, and is therefore easily rolled up and fastened to the yard by the points employed for this purpose.

§ Earings are small cords, by which the upper corners of the principal sails, and also the extremities of the reefs, are fastened to the yard-arms.

‖ The mizen is a large sail of an oblong figure, extended upon the mizen mast.

¶ Clue garnets are employed for the same purposes on the mainsail and foresail, as the clue-lines are upon all other square sails. See note ‡, above.

** It is necessary in this place to remark that the sheets, which are universally mistaken by the English poets and their readers for the sails themselves, are no other than the ropes used to extend the clues or lower corners of the sails to which they are attached. To the mainsail and foresail there is a sheet and a tack on each side; the latter of which is a thick rope, serving to confine the weather clue of the sail down to the ship's side, whilst the former draws out of the lee-clue or lower corner on the opposite side. Tacks are only used in a side wind.

†† The helm is said to be *a-weather*, when the bar by which it is managed is turned to the side of the ship next the wind.

‡‡ Timoneer, (from *timonier*, Fr.) the helmsman or steersman.

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* The helm being turned to starboard, or to the right side of the ship, directs the prow to the left, or to port, and *vice versa*. Hence the helm being put a starboard, when the ship is running northward, directs her prow towards the west.

† This sail, which is with more propriety called the fore-topmast-staysail, is a triangular sail, that runs upon the fore-topmast-stay, over the bowsprit. It is used to command the fore part of the ship, and counterbalance the sails extended towards the stern. See also the last note of this Canto.

‡ A yard is said to be braced when it is turned about the mast horizontally, either to the right or left; the ropes employed in this service are accordingly called *braces*.

§ The ropes used to truss up a sail to the yard or mast whereto it is attached are, in a general sense, called *brails*.

‖ The head-rope is a cord to which the upper part of the sail is sewed.

¶ Rope-bands, pronounced roebins, are small cords used to fasten the upper edge of any sail to its respective yard.

** Because the lee-brace confines the yard so that the tack will not come down to its place till the braces are cast loose.

†† *Taught* implies stiff, tense, or extended straight; and *tally* is a phrase particularly applied to the operation of hauling *aft* the sheets, or drawing them towards the ship's stern. To *belay* is to fasten.

Fair Candia now no more beneath her lee
Protects the vessel from th' insulting sea:
Round her broad arms, impatient of control,
Roused from their secret deeps, the billows roll.
Sunk were the bulwarks of the friendly shore,
And all the scene an hostile aspect wore.
The flattering wind, that late, with promised aid,
From Candia's bay th' unwilling ship betray'd,
No longer fawns beneath the fair disguise,
But like a ruffian on his quarry flies.—
Fost on the tide she feels the tempest blow,
And dreads the vengeance of so fell a foe.
As the proud horse, with costly trappings gay,
Exulting, prances to the bloody fray,
Spurning the ground, he glories in his might,
But reels tumultuous in the shock of fight:
Even so caparison'd in gaudy pride,
The bounding vessel dances on the tide—
Fierce, and more fierce the southern demon blew,
And more incensed the roaring waters grew:
The ship no longer can her topsails spread,
And every hope of fairer skies is fled.
Bow-lines and haliards are relax'd again,
Clue-lines haul'd down, and sheets let fly amain;
Clued up each top-sail, and by braces squared,
The seamen climb aloft on either yard;
They furl'd the sail, and pointed to the wind
The yard, by rolling tackles* then confined.
While o'er the ship the gallant boatswain flies:
Like a hoarse mastiff through the storm he cries:
Prompt to direct th' unskilful still appears;
Th' expert he praises, and the fearful cheers.
Now some to strike top-gallant yards attend;†
Some travellers‡ up the weather-backstays§ send.
At each mast-head the top-ropes‖ others bend.
The youngest sailors from the yards above
Their parrels,¶ lifts,** and braces soon remove:
Then topt an-end, and to travellers tied, [slide,
Charged with their sails, they down the backstays
The yards secure along the booms†† reclined,
While some the flying cords aloft confined.—
Their sails reduced, and all the rigging clear,
A while the crew relax from toils severe.
A while their spirits, with fatigue oppress,
In vain expect th' alternate hour of rest:
But with redoubling force the tempests blow
And watery hills in fell succession flow;
A dismal shade o'ercasts the frowning skies,
New troubles grow; new difficulties rise.
No season this from duty to descend!—
All hands on deck th' eventful hour attend.
His race perform'd, the sacred lamp of day
Now dipt in western clouds his parting ray
His sick'ning fires, half-lost in ambient haze,
Refract along the dusk a crimson blaze;
Till deep immerged the languid orb declines,
And now to cheerless night the sky resigns!
Sad evening's hour, how different from the past
No flaming pomp, no blushing glories cast;
No ray of friendly light is seen around:
The moon and stars in hopeless shade are drown'd.
The ship no longer can her courses* bear:
To reef the courses is the master's care:
The sailors, summon'd aft, a daring band!
Attend th' enfolding brails at his command.
But here the doubtful officers dispute,
'Till skill and judgment prejudice confute.
Rodmond, whose genius never soar'd beyond
The narrow rules of art his youth had conn'd,
Still to the hostile fury of the wind
Released the sheet, and kept the tack confined;
To long-tried practice obstinately warm,
He doubts conviction, and relies on form.
But the sage master this advice declines;
With whom Arion in opinion joins.—
The watchful seaman, whose sagacious eye
On sure experience may with truth rely,
Who from the reigning cause foretells th' effect
This barbarous practice ever will reject.
For, fluttering loose in air, the rigid sail
Soon flits to ruins in the furious gale!
And he who strives the tempest to disarm,
Will never first embrail the lee-yard arm.
The master said;—obedient to command,
To raise the tack, the ready sailors stand†—
Gradual it loosens, while th' involving clue
Swell'd by the wind, aloft unruffling flew
The sheet and weather-brace they now stand by;‡
The lee clue-garnet and the bunt-lines ply.
Thus all prepared, *Let go the sheet!* he cries;
Impetuous round the ringing wheels it flies:
Shivering at first, till by the blast impell'd,
High o'er the lee-yard arm the canvass swell'd:

* The rolling tackle is an assemblage of pulleys, used to confine the yard to the weather-side of the mast, and prevent the former from rubbing against the latter by the fluctuating motion of the ship in a turbulent sea.

† It is usual to send down the top-gallant yards on the approach of a storm. They are the highest yards that are rigged in a ship.

‡ Travellers are slender iron rings, encircling the backstays, and used to facilitate the hoisting or lowering of the top-gallant yards, by confining them to the backstays, in their ascent or descent, so as to prevent them from swinging about by the agitation of the vessel.

§ Backstays are long ropes extending from the right and left side of the ship to the top-mast heads, which they are intended to secure, by counteracting the effort of the wind upon the sails.

‖ Top-ropes are the cords by which the top-gallant yards are hoisted up from the deck, or lowered again in stormy weather.

¶ The parrel, which is usually a movable band of rope, is employed to confine the yard to its respective mast.

** Lifts are ropes extending from the head of any mast to the extremities of its particular yard, to support the weight of the latter; to retain it in balance; or to raise one yard-arm higher than the other, which is accordingly called *topping*.

†† The booms, in this place, imply any masts or yards lying on deck in reserve, to supply the place of others which may be carried away by distress of weather, &c.

* The courses are generally understood to be the main sail, foresail, and mizen, which are the largest and lowest sails of their several masts; the term is, however, sometimes taken in a larger sense.

† It has been remarked before in note **, p. 19, col. 1, that the tack is always fastened to windward; accordingly, as soon as it is cast loose, and the clue-garnet hauled up, the weather clue of the sail immediately mounts to the yard; and this operation must be carefully performed in a storm, to prevent the sail from splitting or being torn to pieces by shivering.

‡ It is necessary to pull in the weather-brace whenever the sheet is cast off, to preserve the sail from shaking violently.

By spilling-lines* embraced, with brails confined
It lies at length unshaken by the wind.
The foresail then secured with equal care,
Again to reef the mainsail they repair.—
While some, high-mounted, overhaul the tye,
Below the down-haul tackle† others ply.
Jears,‡ lifts, and brails, a seaman each attends,
Along the mast the willing yard descends.
When lower'd sufficient, they securely brace,
And fix'd the rolling-tackle in its place;
The reef-lines§ and their earings now prepared,
Mounting on pliant shrouds,‖ they man the yard.
Far on th' extremes two able hands appear,
Arion there, the hardy boatswain here;
That in the van to front the tempest hung;
This round the lee yard-arm, ill-omen'd! clung.
Each earing to its station first they bend;
The reef-band¶ then along the yard extend:
The circling earings, round th' extremes entwined,
By outer and by inner turns** they bind.
From hand to hand the reef-lines next received,
Through eye-let holes and roebin legs were reeved.
The reef in double folds involved they lay;
Strain the firm cord, and either end belay.

Hadst thou, Arion! held the leeward post,
While on the yard by mountain billows tost,
Perhaps oblivion o'er our tragic tale
Had then for ever drawn her dusky veil.—
But ruling heaven prolong'd thy vital date,
Severer ills to suffer and relate!

For, while their orders those aloft attend,
To furl the mainsail, or on deck descend,
A seat†† up surging with tremendous roll,
To instant ruin seems to doom the whole.
"O friends! secure your hold!" Arion cries;
It comes all dreadful, stooping from the skies;
Uplifted on its horrid edge she feels
The shock, and on her side half-buried reels:
The sail half bury'd in the whelming wave,
A fearful warning to the seamen gave:
While from its margin, terrible to tell!
Three sailors, with their gallant boatswain, fell.
Torn with resistless fury from their hold,
In vain their struggling arms the yard infold.
In vain to grapple flying cords they try,
The cords, alas! a solid gripe deny!
Prone on the midnight surge, with panting breath
They cry for aid, and long contend with Death.
High o'er their heads the rolling billows sweep,
And down they sink in everlasting sleep.
Bereft of power to help, their comrades see
The wretched victims die beneath the lee!
With fruitless sorrow their lost state bemoan;
Perhaps a fatal prelude to their own!

In dark suspense on deck the pilots stand,
Nor can determine on the next command
Though still they knew the vessel's armed side
Impenetrable to the clasping tide;
Though still the waters by no secret wound
A passage to her deep recesses found;
Surrounding evils yet they ponder o'er—
A storm, a dangerous sea, and leeward shore!
Should they, though reef'd, again their sails extend
Again in fluttering fragments they may rend;
Or should they stand, beneath the dreadful strain,
The down-press'd ship may never rise again;
Too late to weather* now Morea's land,
Yet verging fast to Athen's rocky strand.—
Thus they lament the consequence severe,
Where perils unallay'd by hope appear.
Long in their minds revolving each event,
At last to furl the courses they consent;
That done, to reef the mizen next agree,
And try,† beneath it, sidelong in the sea.

Now down the mast the sloping yard declined,
Till by the jears and topping lift‡ confined;
The head, with doubling canvass fenced around,
In balance near the lofty peak, they bound.
The reef enwrapt, th' inserted knittles tied,
To hoist the shorten'd sail again they hied.
The order given, the yard aloft they sway'd;
The brails relax'd, th' extended sheet belay'd:
The helm its post forsook, and lash'd a-lee,§
Inclined the wayward prow to front the sea.

When sacred Orpheus, on the Stygian coast,
With notes divine implored his consort lost;

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* The spilling-lines, which are only used on particular occasions in tempestuous weather, are employed to draw together and confine the belly of the sail, when it is inflated by the wind over the yard.

† The violence of the wind forces the yard so much outward from the mast on these occasions, that it cannot easily be lowered so as to reef the sail, without the application of a tackle to haul it down on the mast. This is afterwards converted into rolling tackle. See note *, 1st col. p. 20.

‡ Jears are the same to the mainsail, foresail, and mizen, as the hallards (note *, 1st col. p. 19) are to all inferior sails. The tye is the upper part of the jears.

§ Reef-lines are only used to reef the mainsail and foresail. They are past in spiral turns through the eye-let holes of the reef, and over the head of the sails between the rope-band legs, till they reach the extremities of the reef, to which they are firmly extended, so as to lace the reef close up to the yard.

‖ Shrouds are thick ropes, stretching from the mast-heads downwards to the outside of the ship, serving to support the masts. They are also used as a range of rope-ladders, by which the seamen ascend or descend, to perform whatever is necessary about the sails and rigging.

¶ The reef-band is a long piece of canvass sewed across the sail, to strengthen the canvass in the place where the eye let holes of the reef are formed.

** The outer turns of the earing serve to extend the sail along the yard; and the inner turns are employed to confine its head-rope close to its surface. See note ‖, 2d col. p. 19.

†† A sea is the general name given by sailors to a single wave or billow: hence, when a wave bursts over the deck, the vessel is said to have *shipped a sea*.

* To weather a shore is to pass to the windward of it, which at this time is prevented by the violence of the storm.

† To try, is to lay the ship, with her near side in the direction of the wind and sea, with the head somewhat inclined to the windward; the helm being laid a-lee to retain her in this position. See a farther illustration of this in the last note of this Canto.

‡ The topping lift, which tops the upper part of the mizen-yard, (see note **, p. 20.) This line and the six following describe the operation of reefing and balancing the mizen. The reef of this sail is towards the lower end, the knittles being small short lines used in the room of points for this purpose, (see note ‡, 1st col. p. 19, and note**, p. 20;) they are accordingly knotted under the foot-rope or lower edge of the sail.

§ Lash'd a-lee is fastened to the lee-side. See note † p. 18.

Though round him perils grew in fell array,
And fates and furies stood to bar his way;
Not more adventurous was the attempt, to move
The powers of hell with strains of heavenly love,
Than mine, to bid the unwilling Muse explore
The wilderness of rude mechanic lore.
Such toil th' unwearied Dædalus endured,
When in the Cretan labyrinth immured;
Till Art her salutary help bestow'd,
To guide him through that intricate abode.
Thus long entangled in a thorny way,
That never heard the sweet Pierian lay.
The Muse that tuned to barbarous sounds her string,
Now spreads, like Dædalus, a bolder wing;
The verse begins in softer strains to flow,
Replete with sad variety of wo.
As yet, amid this elemental war,
That scatters desolation from afar,
Nor toil, nor hazard, nor distress appear
To sink the seamen with unmanly fear.
Though their firm hearts no pageant honour boast,
They scorn the wretch that trembles in his post;
Who from the face of danger strives to turn,
Indignant from the social hour they spurn.
Though now full oft they felt the raging tide
In proud rebellion climb the vessel's side,
No future ills unknown their souls appal;
They know no danger, or they scorn it all!
But e'en the generous spirits of the brave,
Subdued by toil, a friendly respite crave:
A short repose alone their thoughts implore,
Their harass'd powers by slumber to restore.
Far other cares the master's mind employ;
Approaching perils all his hopes destroy.
In vain he spreads the graduated chart,
And bounds the distance by the rules of art;
In vain athwart the mimic seas expands
The compasses to circumjacent lands.
Ungrateful task! for no asylum traced
A passage open'd from the watery waste:
Fate seem'd to guard, with adamantine mound,
The path to every friendly port around.
While Albert thus, with secret doubts dismay'd,
The geometric distances survey'd,
On deck the watchful Rodmond cries aloud,
"Secure your lives! grasp every man a shroud!"—
Roused from his trance, he mounts with eyes aghast;
When o'er the ship, in undulation vast,
A giant surge down rushes from on high,
And fore and aft dissever'd ruins lie.—
As when, Britannia's empire to maintain,
Great Hawke descends in thunder on the main,
Around the brazen voice of battle roars,
And fatal lightnings blast the hostile shores;
Beneath the storm their shatter'd navies groan,
The trembling deep recoils from zone to zone:
Thus the torn vessel felt th' enormous stroke:
The boats beneath the thundering deluge broke,
Forth started from their planks the bursting rings,
Th' extended cordage all asunder springs;
The pilot's fair machinery strews the deck,
And cards and needles swim in floating wreck.
The balanced mizen, rending to the head,
In streaming ruins from the margin fled,
The sides convulsive shook on groaning beams,
And, rent with labour, yawn'd the pitchy seams;
They sound the well,* and, terrible to hear!
Five feet immersed along the line appear.
At either pump they ply the clanking brake,†
And turn by turn th' ungrateful office take.
Rodmond, Arion, and Palemon here,
At this sad task, all diligent appear.
As some fair castle, shook by rude alarms,
Opposes long th' approach of hostile arms;
Grim war around her plants his black array,
And death and sorrow mark his horrid way;
Till, in some destined hour, against her wall
In tenfold rage the fatal thunders fall:
The ramparts crack, the solid bulwarks rend,
And hostile troops the shatter'd breach ascend.
Her valiant inmates still the foe retard,
Resolved till death their sacred charge to guard
So the brave mariners their pumps attend,
And help, incessant, by rotation lend;
But all in vain,—for now the sounding cord,
Updrawn, an undiminish'd depth explored.
Nor this severe distress is found alone;
The ribs, oppress'd by ponderous cannon, groan
Deep rolling from the watery volume's height,
The tortured sides seem bursting with their weight
So reels Pelorus with convulsive throes,
When in his veins the burning earthquake glows
Hoarse through his entrails roars th' infernal flame,
And central thunders rend his groaning frame.—
Accumulated mischiefs thus arise,
And Fate, vindictive, all their skill defies.
One only remedy the season gave;
To plunge the nerves of battle in the wave:
From their high platforms, thus, th' artillery thrown,
Eased of their load, the timbers less shall groan:
But arduous is the task their lot requires;
A task that hovering fate alone inspires:
For while intent the yawning decks to ease,
That ever and anon are drench'd with seas,
Some fatal billow with recoiling sweep,
May hurl the helpless wretches in the deep.
No season this for counsel or delay!
Too soon th' eventful moments haste away!
Here perseverance, with each help of art,
Must join the boldest efforts of the heart;
These only now their misery can relieve;
These only now a dawn of safety give!
While o'er the quivering deck, from van to rear
Broad surges roll in terrible career,
Rodmond, Arion, and a chosen crew,
This office in the face of death pursue;
The wheel'd artillery o'er the deck to guide,
Rodmond descending claim'd the weather side:
Fearless of heart the chief his orders gave,
Fronting the rude assaults of every wave. [deep,
Like some strong watch-tower, nodding o'er the
Whose rocky base the foaming waters sweep,
Untamed he stood; the stern aërial war
Had marked his honest face with many a scar—
Meanwhile Arion, traversing the waist,‡

* The well is an apartment in the ship's hold, serving to enclose the pumps. It is sounded by dropping a measured iron rod down into it by a long line. Hence the increase or diminution of the leaks are easily discovered.

† The brake is the lever or handle of the pump, by which it is wrought.

‡ The waist of a ship of this kind is a hollow space, about five feet in depth, between the elevations of the

The cordage of the leeward-guns unbraced,
And pointed crows beneath the metal placed.
Watching the roll, their forelocks they withdrew,
And from their beds the reeling cannon threw:
Then from the windward battlements unbound,
Rodmond's associates wheel'd th' artillery round;
Pointed with iron fangs, their bars beguile
The ponderous arms across the steep defile;
Then, hurl'd from sounding hinges o'er the side,
Thundering they plunge into the flashing tide.

The ship, thus eased, some little respite finds
In this rude conflict of the seas and winds.
Such ease Alcides felt, when, clogg'd with gore,
Th' envenomed mantle from his side he tore;
When, stung with burning pain, he strove too late
To stop the swift career of cruel fate.
Yet then his heart one ray of hope procured,
Sad harbinger of sevenfold pangs endured!
Such, and so short the pause she found!
Cimmerian darkness shades the deep around,
Save when the lightnings, gleaming on the sight,
Flash through the gloom, a pale disastrous light.
Above, all ether, fraught with scenes of wo,
With grim destruction threatens all below.
Beneath, the storm-lash'd surges furious rise,
And wave uproll'd on wave, assails the skies;
With ever-floating bulwarks they surround
The ship, half-swallow'd in the black profound!
With ceaseless hazard and fatigue opprest,
Dismay and anguish every heart possest!
For, while with boundless inundation o'er
The sea-beat ship th' involving waters roar,
Displaced beneath by her capacious womb,
They rage their ancient station to resume;
By secret ambushes their force to prove,
Through many a winding channel first they rove;
Till, gathering fury, like the fever'd blood,
Through her dark veins they roll a rapid flood.
While unrelenting thus the leaks they found,
The pump with ever-clanking strokes resound.
Around each leaping valve, by toil subdued,
The tough bull hide must ever be renew'd.
Their sinking hearts unusual horrors chill:
And down their weary limbs thick dews distil.
No ray of light their dying hope redeems!
Pregnant with some new wo each moment teems.

Again the chief th' instructive draught extends,
And o'er the figured plain attentive bends:
To him the motion of each orb was known,
That wheels around the sun's refulgent throne:
But here alas! his science naught avails!
Art droops unequal, and experience fails.
The different traverses, since twilight made,
He on the hydrographic circle laid;
Then the broad angle of lee-way* explored,
As swept across the graduated chord.
Her place discovered by the rules of art,
Unusual terrors shook the master's heart;
When Falconera's rugged isle he found,
Within her drift, with shelves and breakers bound
For, if on those destructive shallows tost,
The helpless bark with all her crew are lost:
As fatal still appears, that danger o'er,
The steep St. George, and rocky Gardalor.
With him the pilots, of their hopeless state
In mournful consultation now debate.
Not more perplexing doubts her chiefs appal,
When some proud city verges to her fall;
While Ruin glares around, and pale Affright
Convenes her councils in the dead of night—
No blazon'd trophies o'er their concave spread,
Nor storied pillars raised aloft their head:
But here the Queen of shade around them threw
Her dragon wing, disastrous to the view!
Dire was the scene, with whirlwind, hail, and showers
Black Melancholy ruled the fearful hour!
Beneath tremendous roll'd the flashing tide,
Where Fate on every billow seem'd to ride—
Enclosed with ills, by peril unsubdued,
Great in distress the master-seaman stood:
Skill'd to command; deliberate to advise,
Expert in action; and in council wise;
Thus to his partners, by the crew unheard,
The dictates of his soul the chief referr'd.

"Ye faithful mates, who all my troubles share
Approved companions of your master's care!
To you, alas! 'twere fruitless now to tell
Our sad distress, already known too well!
This morn with favouring gales the port we left,
Though now of every flattering hope bereft:
No skill nor long experience could forecast
Th' unseen approach of this destructive blast,
These seas, where storms at various seasons blow
No reigning winds nor certain omens know.
The hour, the occasion all your skill demands;
A leaky ship, embay'd by dangerous lands.
Our bark no transient jeopardy surrounds;
Groaning she lies beneath unnumber'd wounds:
'Tis ours the doubtful remedy to find,
To shun the fury of the seas and wind;
For in this hollow swell, with labour sore,
Her flank can bear the bursting floods no more.
Yet this or other ills she must endure;
A dire disease, and desperate is the cure!
Thus two expedients offer'd to your choice,
Alone require your counsel and your voice,
These only in our power are left to try;
To perish here or from the storm to fly,
The doubtful balance in my judgment cast,
For various reasons I prefer the last.
'Tis true the vessel and her costly freight,
To me consign'd, my orders only wait;
Yet, since the charge of every life is mine,
To equal votes our counsels I resign.
Forbid it, Heaven, that, in this dreadful hour
I claim the dangerous reins of purblind power!
But should we now resolve to bear away,
Our hopeless state can suffer no delay,
Nor can we, thus bereft of every sail,
Attempt to steer obliquely on the gale:
For then, if broaching sideward on the sea,
Our dropsied ship may founder on the lee:
No more obedient to the pilot's power, [vour."
Th' o'erwhelming wave may soon her frame de

He said; the listening mates with fix'd regard
And silent reverence his opinion heard.
Important was the question in debate,
And o'er their councils hung impending Fate
Rodmond, in many a scene of peril tried,
Had oft the master's happier skill descried.

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quarter-deck and fore-castle, and having the upper deck for its base, or platform.

* The lee-way, or drift, which in this place are synonymous terms, is the movement by which a ship is driven sideways at the mercy of the wind and sea, when she is deprived of the government of the sails and helm.

Yet now, the hour, the scene, th' occasion known,
Perhaps with equal right preferr'd his own
Of long experience in the naval art,
Blunt was his speech, and naked was his heart:
Alike to him each climate and each blast;
The first in danger, in retreat the last:
Sagacious balancing th' opposed events,
From Albert his opinion thus dissents.

"Too true the perils of the present hour,
Where toils succeeding toils our strength o'erpower!
Yet whither can we turn, what road pursue,
With death before still opening on the view?
Our bark, 'tis true, no shelter here can find,
Sore shatter'd by the ruffian seas and wind;
Yet with what hope of refuge can we flee,
Chased by this tempest and outrageous sea?
For while its violence the tempest keeps,
Bereft of every sail we roam the deeps;
At random driven, to present death we haste,
And one short hour perhaps may be our last.
In vain the Gulf of Corinth on our lee
Now opens to her ports a passage free;
Since, if before the blast the vessel flies,
Full in her track unnumber'd dangers rise.
Here Falconera spreads her lurking snares;
There distant Greece her rugged shelves prepares,
Should once her bottom strike that rocky shore,
The splitting bark that instant were no more;
Nor she alone, but with her all the crew,
Beyond relief, were doom'd to perish too.
Thus if to scud too rashly we consent,
Too late in fatal hour we may repent.

"Then of our purpose this appears the scope,
To weigh the danger with a doubtful hope.
Though sorely buffeted by every sea,
Our hull unbroken long may try a-lee,
The crew, though harass'd long with toils severe,
Still at their pumps perceive no hazards near.
Shall we, incautious then, the dangers tell,
At once their courage and their hopes to quell!
Prudence forbids!—This southern tempest soon
May change its quarter with the changing moon:
Its rage though terrible may soon subside,
Nor into mountains lash th' unruly tide.
These leaks shall then decrease: the sails once more
Direct our course to some relieving shore."

Thus while he spoke around from man to man,
At either pump, a hollow murmur ran.
For while the vessel through unnumber'd chinks,
Above, below th' invading water drinks,
Sounding her depth, they eyed the wetted scale,
And, lo! the leak o'er all their powers prevail,
Yet in their post, by terrors unsubdued,
They with redoubled force their task pursued.

And now the senior pilots seem'd to wait
Arion's voice to close the dark debate.
Though many a bitter storm, with peril fraught,
In Neptune's school the wandering stripling taught,
Not twice nine summers yet matured his thought.
So oft he bled by Fortune's cruel dart,
It fell at last innoxious on his heart.
His mind still shunning care with secret hate,
In patient indolence resign'd to Fate.
But now the horrors that around him roll,
Thus rous'd to action his rekindling soul.

"With fix'd attention, pondering in my mind
The dark distresses on each side combined;
While here we linger in the pass of Fate,
I see no moment left for sad debate.
For, some decision if we wish to form,
Ere yet our vessel sink beneath the storm,
Her shattered state, and yon desponding crew,
At once suggest what measures to pursue.
The labouring hull already seems half-fill'd
With waters, through a hundred leaks distill'd,
As in a dropsy, wallowing with her freight,
Half-drown'd she lies, a dead inactive weight
Thus drenched by every wave, her riven deck
Stript and defenceless, floats a naked wreck;
Her wounded flanks no longer can sustain
These fell invasions of the bursting main:
At every pitch th' o'erwhelming billows bend,
Beneath their load, the quivering bowsprit end
A fearful warning! since the masts on high
On that support with trembling hope rely.
At either pump our seamen pant for breath,
In dark dismay anticipating death.
Still all our powers th' increasing leaks defy:
We sink at sea, no shore, no haven nigh.
One dawn of hope yet breaks athwart the gloom
To light and save us from the watery tomb;
That bids us shun the death impending here;
Fly from the following blast, and shoreward steer

"'Tis urged indeed, the fury of the gale
Precludes the help of every guiding sail;
And, driven before it on the watery waste,
To rocky shores and scenes of death we haste
But haply Falconera we may shun:
And far to Grecian coasts is yet the run:
Less harass'd then, our scudding ship may bear
Th' assaulting surge repell'd upon her rear.
E'en then the wearied storm as soon shall die,
Or less torment the groaning pines on high.
Should we at last be driven by dire decree
Too near the fatal margin of the sea,
The hull dismasted there awhile may ride,
With lengthen'd cables on the raging tide.
Perhaps kind Heaven, with interposing power,
May curb the tempest ere that dreadful hour.
But here ingulf'd and foundering while we stay,
Fate hovers o'er, and marks us for her prey."

He said; Palemon saw, with grief of heart:
The storm prevailing o'er the pilot's art;
In silent terror and distress involved,
He heard their last alternative resolved.
High beat his bosom: with such fear subdued,
Beneath the gloom of some enchanted wood,
Oft in old time the wandering swain explored
The midnight wizards breathing rites abhorr'd:
Trembling approach'd their incantations fell,
And, chill'd with horror, heard the songs of hell
Arion saw, with secret anguish moved,
The deep affliction of the friend he loved;
And, all awake to Friendship's genial heat,
His bosom felt consenting tumults beat.
Alas! no season this for tender love;
Far hence the music of the myrtle grove.—
With Comfort's soothing voice, from Hope derived
Palemon's drooping spirit he revived.
For Consolation oft, with healing art,
Retunes the jarring numbers of the heart.—
Now had the pilots all th' events revolved,
And on their final refuge thus resolved;

When, like the faithful shepherd, who beholds
Some prowling wolf approach his fleecy folds;
To the brave crew, whom racking doubts perplex,
The dreadful purpose Albert thus directs.
"Unhappy partners in a wayward fate!
Whose gallant spirits now are known too late;
Ye! who unmoved behold this angry storm
With terrors all the rolling deep deform;
Who, patient in adversity, still bear
The firmest front when greatest ills are near!
The truth, though grievous, I must now reveal,
That long, in vain, I purposed to conceal.
Ingulf'd, all help of arts we vainly try,
To weather leeward shores, alas! too nigh.
Our crazy bark no longer can abide
The seas that thunder o'er her batter'd side;
And, while the leaks a fatal warning give,
That in this raging sea she cannot live,
One only refuge from despair we find;
At once to wear and scud before the wind.*
Perhaps e'en then to ruin we may steer;
For broken shores beneath our lee appear;
But that's remote, and instant death is here;
Yet there, by Heaven's assistance, we may gain
Some creek or inlet of the Grecian main;
Or sheltered by some rock, at anchor ride,
Till with abating rage the blast subside.
"But, if determined by the will of Heaven,
Our helpless bark at last ashore is driven,
These counsels follow'd, from the watery grave
Our floating sailors on the surf may save.
'And first, let all our axes be secured,
To cut the masts and rigging from aboard.
Then to the quarters bind each plank and oar,
To float between the vessel and the shore.
The longest cordage, too, must be convey'd
On deck, and to the weather rails belay'd;
So they, who haply reach alive the land,
Th' extended lines may fasten on the strand,
Whene'er, loud thundering on the leeward shore,
While yet aloof we hear the breakers roar.
Thus for the terrible event prepared,
Brace fore and aft to starboard every yard;
So shall our masts swim lighter on the wave,
And from the broken rocks our seamen save.
Then westward turn the stem, that every mast
May shoreward fall, when from the vessel cast.—
When o'er her side once more the billows bound,
Ascend the rigging till she strikes the ground:
And when you hear aloft th' alarming shock
That strikes her bottom on some pointed rock,
The boldest of our sailors must descend,
The dangerous business of the deck to tend;
Then each, secured by some convenient cord,
Should cut the shrouds and rigging from the board;
Let the broad axes next assail each mast;
And booms, and oars, and rafts, to leeward cast.
Thus, while the cordage stretch'd ashore may guide
Our brave companions through the swelling tide,
This floating lumber shall sustain them, o'er
The rocky shelves, in safety to the shore.
But as your firmest succour, till the last,
O cling securely on each faithful mast!
Though great the danger, and the task severe,
Yet bow not to the tyranny of fear!

* For an explanation of these manœuvres, the reader is referred to the last note of this Canto.

If once that slavish yoke your spirits quell,
Adieu to hope! to life itself farewell!
"I know, among you some full oft have view'd
With murdering weapons arm'd, a lawless brood,
On England's vile inhuman shore who stand,
The foul reproach and scandal of our land!
To rob the wanderers wreck'd upon the strand,
These, while their savage office they pursue,
Oft wound to death the helpless plunder'd crew,
Who 'scaped from every horror of the main,
Implored their mercy, but implored in vain.
But dread not this!—a crime to Greece unknown
Such blood-hounds all her circling shores disown.
Her sons, by barbarous tyranny oppress,
Can share affliction with the wretch distress:
Their hearts, by cruel fate inured to grief,
Oft to the friendless stranger yield relief."
With conscious horror struck, the naval band
Detested for a while their native land;
They cursed the sleeping vengeance of the laws,
That thus forgot her guardian sailors' cause.
Meanwhile the master's voice again they heard,
Whom, as with filial duty, all revered.
"No more remains—but now a trusty band
Must ever at the pump industrious stand:
And while with us the rest attend to wear,
Two skilful seamen to the helm repair!—
O Source of Life! our refuge and our stay!
Whose voice the warring elements obey,
On thy supreme assistance we rely;
Thy mercy supplicate, if doom'd to die!
Perhaps this storm is sent, with healing breath,
From neighbouring shores to scourge disease and death!
'Tis ours on thine unerring laws to trust:
With thee, great Lord! 'Whatever is, is just.'"
He said; and with consenting reverence fraught
The sailors join'd his prayer in silent thought.
His intellectual eyes, serenely bright!
Saw distant objects with prophetic light.
Thus in a land, that lasting wars oppress,
That groans beneath misfortune and distress;
Whose wealth to conquering armies falls a prey,
Her bulwarks sinking, as her troops decay;
Some bold sagacious statesman, from the helm,
Sees desolation gathering o'er his realm:
He darts around his penetrating eyes,
Where dangers grow, and hostile unions rise;
With deep attention marks th' invading foe,
Eludes their wiles, and frustrates every blow:
Tries his last art the tottering state to save,
Or in its ruins finds a glorious grave.
Still in the yawning trough the vessel reels,
Ingulf'd beneath two fluctuating hills:
On either side they rise; tremendous scene!
A long dark melancholy vale between.*

* That the reader, who is unacquainted with the manœuvres of navigation, may conceive a clearer idea of a ship's state when trying, and of the change of her situation to that of scudding, I have quoted a part of the explanation of those articles as they appear in the "Dictionary of the Marine."

Trying is the situation in which a ship lies nearly in the trough or hollow of the sea in a tempest, particularly when it blows contrary to her course.

In trying as well as in scudding, the sails are always reduced in proportion to the increase of the storm; and in either state, if the storm is excessive, she may have

The balanced ship, now forward, now behind,
Still felt th' impression of the waves and wind,
And to the right and left by turns inclined;
But Albert from behind the balance drew,
And on the prow its double efforts threw.—
The order now was given to bear away;
The order given the timoneers obey.
High o'er the bowsprit stretch'd the tortured sail,
As on the rack, distends beneath the gale.
But scarce the yielding prow its impulse knew,
When in a thousand flitting shreds it flew!—
Yet Albert new resources still prepares,
And, bridling grief, redoubles all his cares.
"Away there! lower the mizen yard on deck!"
He calls, "and brace the foremost yards aback!"
His great example every bosom fires,
New life rekindles, and new hope inspires,
While to the helm unfaithful still she lies,
One desperate remedy at last he tries,—
"Haste, with your weapons cut the shrouds and stay;
And hew at once the mizen-mast away!"
He said; th' attentive sailors on each side
At his command the trembling cords divide.
Fast by the fated pine bold Rodmond stands;
Th' impatient axe hung gleaming in his hands;
Brandish'd on high, it fell with dreadful sound,
The tall mast, groaning, felt the deadly wound.
Deep gash'd with sores, the tottering structure rings!
And crashing, thundering o'er the quarter swings.
Thus when some limb, convulsed with pangs of death,
Imbibes the gangrene's pestilential breath!
Th' experienced artist from the blood betrays
The latent venom, or its course delays:
But if th' infection triumphs o'er his art,
Tainting the vital stream that warms the heart,
Resolved at last, he quits th' unequal strife,
Severs the member, and preserves the life.

CANTO III.

ARGUMENT.

The design and influence of poetry. Applied to the subject. Wreck of the mizen-mast cleared away. Ship veers before the wind. Her violent agitation. Different stations of the officers. Appearance of the island of Falconera. Excursion to the adjacent nations of Greece renowned in antiquity. Athens. Socrates. Plato. Aristides. Solon. Corinth. Sparta. Leonidas. Invasion of Xerxes. Lycurgus. Epaminondas. Modern appearance. Arcadia; its former

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all her sails furled: or be, according to the sea-phrase, under bare poles.

The intent of spreading a sail at this time, is to keep the ship more steady, and to prevent her from rolling violently by pressing her side down in the water; and also to turn her head towards the source of the wind, so that the shock of the seas may fall more obliquely on her flank, than when she lies along the trough of the sea, or in the interval between two waves. While she lies in this situation, the helm is fastened close to the lee side, to prevent her, as much as possible, from falling to leeward. But as the ship is not then kept in equilibrio by the operation of her sails, which at other times counterbalance each other at the head and stern, she is moved by a slow but continual vibration, which turns her head alternately to windward and to leeward, forming an angle of 30 or 40 degrees in the interval. That part where she stops in approaching the direction of the wind is called her coming-to: and the contrary excess of the angle to leeward is called her falling-off.

Veering, or wearing, (see line 55, 2d col. p. 23, and line 20, 1st col. p. 25;) as used in the present sense, may be defined, the movement by which a ship changes her state from trying to that of scudding, or of running before the direction of the wind and sea.

It is an axiom in natural philosophy, that "every body will persevere in a state of rest, or of moving uniformly in a right line, unless it be compelled to change its state by forces impressed: and that the change of motion is proportional to the moving force impressed, and made according to the right line in which that force acts."

Hence it is easy to conceive how a ship is compelled to turn into any direction by the force of the wind, acting upon any part of her length in lines parallel to the plane of the horizon. Thus, in the act of veering, which is a necessary consequence of this invariable principle, the object of the seamen is to reduce the action of the wind on the ship's hinder part, and to receive its utmost exertion on her fore part, so that the latter may be pushed to leeward. This effect is either produced by the operation of the sails, or by the impression of the wind on the masts and yards. In the former case, the sails on the hind part of the ship are either furled or arranged nearly parallel to the direction of the wind, which then glides ineffectually along their surfaces; at the same time the foremast sails are spread abroad, so as to receive the greatest exertion of the wind. See line 9 of preceding column. The fore part accordingly yields to this impulse, and is put in motion; and this motion necessarily conspiring with that of the wind, pushes the ship about as much as is requisite to produce the desired effect.

But when the tempest is so violent as to preclude the use of sails, the effort of the wind operates almost equally on the opposite end of the ship, because the masts and yards situated near the head and stern serve to counterbalance each other in receiving its impression. The effect of the helm is also considerably diminished, because the head-way, which gives life and vigour to all its operations, is at this time feeble and ineffectual. Hence it becomes necessary to destroy this equilibrium which subsists between the masts and yards before and behind, and to throw the balance forward to prepare for veering. If this cannot be effected by the arrangement of the yards on the masts, and it becomes absolutely necessary to veer, in order to save the ship from destruction, (see line 20 of preceding column,) the mizen-mast must be cut away, and even the main-mast, if she still remains incapable of answering the helm by turning her prow to leeward.

Scudding is that movement in navigation by which a ship is carried precipitately before a tempest. See line 20, 1st col. p. 25.

As a ship flies with amazing rapidity through the water whenever this expedient is put in practice, it is never attempted in a contrary wind, unless when her condition renders her incapable of sustaining the mutual effort of the wind and waves any longer on her side, without being exposed to the most imminent danger.

A ship either scuds with a sail extended on her foremast, or, if the storm is excessive, without any sail, which in the sea-phrase is called scudding under bare poles.

The principal hazards incident to scudding are generally a sea striking a ship's stern; the difficulty of steering, which perpetually exposes her to the danger of broaching-to; and the want of sufficient sea-room. A sea which strikes the stern violently may shatter it to pieces, by which the ship must inevitably founder. By broaching-to suddenly, she is threatened with losing all her masts and sails, or being immediately overturned; and for want of sea-room she is exposed to the dangers of being wrecked on a lee-shore.

happiness and fertility. Present distress, the effect of slavery. Ithaca. Ulysses and Penelope. Argos and Mycenæ. Agamemnon. Macronisi. Lemnos. Vulcan and Venus. Delos. Apollo and Diana. Troy. Sestos. Leander and Hero. Delphos. Temple of Apollo. Parnassus. The Muses. The subject resumed. Sparkling of the sea. Prodigious tempest, accompanied with rain, hail, and meteors. Darkness, lightning, and thunder. Approach of day. Discovery of land. The ship, in great danger, passes the island of St. George. Turns her broadside to the shore. Her bowsprit, foremast, and main topmast carried away. She strikes a rock. Splits asunder. Fate of the crew.

The scene stretches from that part of the Archipelago which lies ten miles to the northward of Falconera, to Cape Colonna in Attica.—The time is about seven hours, being from one till eight in the morning.

WHEN in a barbarous age with blood defiled,
The human savage roam'd the gloomy wild;
When sullen Ignorance her flag display'd,
And Rapine and Revenge her voice obey'd;
Sent from the shores of light, the Muses came,
The dark and solitary race to tame;
'Twas theirs the lawless passions to control,
And melt in tender sympathy the soul:
The heart from vice and error to reclaim,
And breathe in human breasts celestial flame.
The kindling spirit caught th' empyreal ray,
And glow'd congenial with the swelling lay.
Roused from the chaos of primeval night,
At once fair Truth and Reason sprung to light.
When great Mæonides, in rapid song,
The thundering tide of battle rolls along.
Each ravish'd bosom feels the high alarms,
And all the burning pulses beat to arms.
From earth upborne, on Pegasean wings,
Far through the boundless realms of thought he springs;
While distant poets, trembling as they view
His sunward flight, the dazzling track pursue.
But when his strings, with mournful magic, tell
What dire distress Laertes' son befell,
The strains, meandering through the maze of wo,
Bid sacred sympathy the heart o'erflow.
Thus, in old time, the Muses' heavenly breath
With vital force dissolved the chains of death;
Each bard in Epic lays began to sing,
Taught by the master of the vocal string.—
'Tis mine, alas! through dangerous scenes to stray,
Far from the light of his unerring ray!
While, all unused the wayward path to tread,
Darkling I wander with prophetic dread.
To me in vain the bold Mæonian lyre
Awakes the numbers, fraught with living fire!
Full oft, indeed, that mournful harp of yore
Wept the sad wanderer lost upon the shore;
But o'er that scene th' impatient numbers ran,
Subservient only to a nobler plan.
'Tis mine, th' unravell'd prospect to display,
And chain th' events in regular array.
Though hard the task, to sing in varied strains,
While all unchanged the tragic theme remains!
Thrice happy! might the secret powers of art
Unlock the latent windings of the heart,
Might the sad numbers draw Compassion's tear
For kindred miseries, oft beheld too near;
For kindred wretches, oft in ruin cast
On Albion's strand beneath the wintry blast:
For all the pangs, the complicated wo,
Her bravest sons, her faithful sailors know!
So pity, gushing o'er each British breast,
Might sympathize with Briton's sons distrest:
For this, my theme through mazes I pursue,
Which nor Mæonides nor Maro knew!

A while the mast in ruins dragg'd behind,
Balanced th' impression of the helm and wind:
The wounded serpent, agonized with pain,
Thus trails his mangled volume on the plain.
But now the wreck disever'd from the rear,
The long reluctant prow began to veer;
And while around before the wind it falls,
"Square all the yards!"* th' attentive master calls
"You timoneers, her motion still attend!
For on your steerage all our lives depend.
So, steady!† meet her, watch the blast behind,
And steer her right before the seas and wind!"
"Starboard, again!" the watchful pilot cries;
"Starboard!" the obedient timoneer replies.
Then to the left the ruling helm returns;
The wheel‡ revolves, the ringing axle burns!
The ship, no longer foundering by the lee,
Bears on her side th' invasions of the sea:
All lonely, o'er the desert waste she flies,
Scourged on by surges, storm, and bursting skies
As when the masters of the lance assail,
In Hyperborean seas, the slumbering whale;
Soon as the javelins pierce his scaly hide,
With anguish stung, he cleaves the downward tide
In vain he flies! no friendly respite found;
His life-blood gushes through th' inflaming wound.

The wounded bark, thus smarting with her pain
Scuds from pursuing waves along the main;
While, dash'd apart by her dividing prow,
Like burning adamant the waters glow.
Her joints forget their firm elastic tone;
Her long keel trembles, and her timbers groan;
Upheaved behind her in tremendous height
The billows frown, with fearful radiance bright!
Now shivering o'er the topmost wave she rides,
While deep beneath th' enormous gulf divides.
Now launching headlong down the horrid vale,
She hears no more the roaring of the gale;
Till up the dreadful height again she flies,
Trembling beneath the current of the skies.
As that rebellious angel who, from heaven,
To regions of eternal pain was driven;
When dreadless he forsook the Stygian shore,
The distant realms of Eden to explore;
Here, on sulphureous clouds sublime upheaved,
With daring wing th' infernal air he cleaved;
There, in some hideous gulf descending prone,
Far in the rayless void of night was thrown.

E'en so she scales the briny mountain's height,
Then down the black abyss precipitates her flight
The masts around whose tops the whirlwinds sing,
With long vibrations round her axle swing.
To guide the wayward course amid the gloom,
The watchful pilots different posts assume.

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* To square the yards, in this place, is meant to arrange them directly athwart the ship's length.

† Steady is the order to steer the ship according to the line on which she advances at this instant, without deviating to the right or left thereof.

‡ In all large ships, the helm is managed by a wheel

Albert and Rodmond, station'd on the rear,
With warning voice direct each timoneer;
High on the prow the guard Arion keeps,
To shun the cruisers wandering o'er the deeps;
Where'er he moves Palemon still attends,
As if on him his only hope depends;
While Rodmond, fearful of some neighbouring shore,
Cries, ever and anon, "Look out afore!"
Four hours thus scudding on the tide she flew,
When Falconera's rocky height they view:
High o'er its summit, through the gloom of night,
The glimmering watch-tower cast a mournful light.
In dire amazement riveted they stand,
And hear the breakers lash the rugged strand:
But soon beyond this shore the vessel flies,
Swift as the rapid eagle cleaves the skies.
So from the fangs of her insatiate foe,
O'er the broad champaign scuds the trembling roe.
That danger past, reflects a feeble joy;
But soon returning fears their hopes destroy.
Thus, in th' Atlantic, oft the sailor eyes,
While melting in the reign of softer skies,
Some alp of ice from polar regions blown,
Hail the glad influence of a warmer zone:
Its frozen cliffs attemper'd gales supply;
In cooling streams th' aërial billows fly;
A while deliver'd from the scorching heat,
In gentle tides the feverish pulses beat.
So, when their trembling vessel pass'd this isle,
Such visionary joys the crew beguile;
Th' illusive meteors of a lifeless fire;
Too soon they kindle, and too soon expire!
Say, Memory! thou, from whose unerring tongue
Instructive flows the animated song!
What regions now the flying ship surround?
Regions of old through all the world renown'd;
That once the Poet's theme, the Muses' boast,
Now lie in ruins; in oblivion lost!
Did they, whose sad distress these lays deplore,
Unskill'd in Grecian or in Roman lore,
Unconcious pass each famous circling shore?
They did; for blasted in the barren shade,
Here, all too soon, the buds of science fade:
Sad Ocean's genius, in untimely hour,
Withers the bloom of every springing flower:
Here Fancy droops, while sullen cloud and storm
The generous climate of the soul deform.
Then if among the wandering naval train,
One stripling exiled from th' Aonian plain,
Had e'er, entranced in Fancy's soothing dream,
Approach'd to taste the sweet Castalian stream,
(Since those salubrious streams with power divine,
To purer sense th' attemper'd soul refine,)
His heart with liberal commerce here unblest,
Alien to joy! sincerer grief possest.
Yet on the youthful mind, th' impression cast,
Of ancient glory, shall for ever last.
There, all unquench'd by cruel Fortune's ire,
It glows with inextinguishable fire.
Immortal Athens first, in ruin spread,
Contiguous lies at Port Liono's head.
Great source of science! whose immortal name
Stands foremost in the glorious roll of Fame;
Here godlike Socrates and Plato shone,
And, firm to truth, eternal honour won.
The first in Virtue's cause his life resign'd,
By Heaven pronounced the wisest of mankind;
The last foretold the spark of vital fire
The soul's fine essence, never could expire.
Here Solon dwelt, the philosophic sage,
That fled Pisistratus' vindictive rage.
Just Aristides here maintain'd the cause,
Whose sacred precepts shine through Solon's laws
Of all her towering structures, now alone,
Some scatter'd columns stand, with weeds o'er grown.
The wandering stranger near the port descries
A milk-white lion of stupendous size;
Unknown the sculpture; marble is the frame;
And hence the adjacent haven drew its name.
Next, in the gulf of Engia, Corinth lies,
Whose gorgeous fabrics seem'd to strike the skies,
Whom, though by tyrant victors oft subsued,
Greece, Egypt, Rome, with awful wonder view'd.
Her name, for Pallas' heavenly art renown'd,*
Spread, like the foliage which her pillars crown'd,
But now, in fatal desolation laid,
Oblivion o'er it draws a dismal shade.
Then further westward, on Morea's land,
Fair Misitra! thy modern turrets stand.
Ah! who, unmoved with secret wo, can tell
That here great Lacedæmon's glory fell?
Here once she flourish'd at whose trumpet's sound
War burst his chains, and nations shook around.
Here brave Leonidas, from shore to shore,
Through all Achaia bade her thunders roar.
He, when imperial Xerxes, from afar,
Advanced with Persia's sumless troops to war,
Till Macedonia shrunk beneath his spear,
And Greece dismay'd beheld the chief draw near
He, at Thermopylæ's immortal plain,
His force repell'd with Sparta's glorious train.
Tall Œta saw the tyrant's conquer'd bands,
In gasping millions, bleed on hostile lands.
Thus vanquish'd Asia trembling heard thy name,
And Thebes and Athens sicken'd at thy fame!
Thy state, supported by Lycurgus' laws,
Drew, like thine arms, superlative applause:
E'en great Epaminondas strove in vain
To curb that spirit with a Theban chain.
But ah! how low her free-born spirit now!
Her abject sons to haughty tyrants bow;
A false, degenerate, superstitious race
Infest thy region, and thy name disgrace!
Not distant far, Arcadia's blest domains
Peloponnesus' circling shore contains.
Thrice happy soil! where still serenely gay,
Indulgent Flora breathed perpetual May!
Where buxom Ceres taught th' obsequious field,
Rich without art, spontaneous gifts to yield;
Then with some rural nymph supremely blest,
While transport glow'd in each enamour'd breast
Each faithful shepherd told his tender pain,
And sung of sylvan sports in artless strain.
Now, sad reverse! Oppression's iron hand
Enslaves her natives, and despoils the land.
In lawless rapine bred, a sanguine train
With midnight ravage scour th' uncultured plain.
Westward of these, beyond the isthmus lies
The long-lost isle of Ithacus the wise;
Where fair Penelope her absent lord
Full twice ten years with faithful love deplored.

* Architecture.

Though many a princely heart her beauty won,
She, guarded only by a stripling son,
Each bold attempt of suitor-kings repell'd,
And undefiled the nuptial contract held.
With various arts to win her love they toil'd,
But all their wiles by virtuous fraud she foil'd.
True to her vows, and resolutely chaste,
The beauteous princess triumph'd at the last.
Argos, in Greece forgotten and unknown,
Still seems her cruel fortune to bemoan;
Argos, whose monarch led the Grecian hosts
Far o'er the Ægean main to Dardan coasts.
Unhappy prince! who on a hostile shore,
Toil, peril, anguish, ten long winters bore.
And when to native realms restored at last,
To reap the harvest of thy labours past,
A perjured friend, alas! and faithless wife,
There sacrificed to impious lust thy life;—
Fast by Arcadia, stretch these desert plains;
And o'er the land a gloomy tyrant reigns.
Next the fair isle of Helena* is seen,
Where adverse winds detain'd the Spartan queen;
For whom, in arms combined, the Grecian host,
With vengeance fired, invaded Phrygia's coast;
For whom so long they labour'd to destroy
The sacred turrets of imperial Troy.
Here, driven by Juno's rage, the hapless dame,
Forlorn of heart, from ruin'd Ilion came.
The port an image bears of Parian stone,
Of ancient fabric, but of date unknown.
Due east from this appears th' immortal shore
That sacred Phœbus and Diana bore.
Delos, through all th' Ægean seas renown'd:
(Whose coast the rocky Cyclades surround)
By Phœbus honour'd and by Greece revered!
Her hallow'd groves o'en distant Persia fear'd:
But now, a silent unfrequented land!
No human footstep marks the trackless sand.
Thence to the north, by Asia's western bound
Fair Lemnos stands, with rising marble crown'd;
Where, in her rage, avenging Juno hurl'd
Ill-fated Vulcan from th' ethereal world.
There his eternal anvils first he rear'd;
Then, forged by Cyclopean art, appear'd
Thunders, that shook the skies with dire alarms,
And, form'd by skill divine, Vulcanian arms.
There, with this crippled wretch, the foul disgrace
And living scandal of th' empyreal race,
The beauteous queen of Love in wedlock dwelt.
In fires profane, can heavenly bosoms melt?
Eastward of this appears the Dardan shore,
That once th' imperial towers of Ilium bore.
Illustrious Troy! renown'd in every clime,
Through the long annals of unfolding time!
How oft, thy royal bulwarks to defend,
Thou saw'st thy tutelar gods in vain descend!
Though chiefs unnumber'd in her cause were slain,
Though nations perish'd on her bloody plain;
That refuge of perfidious Helen's shame
Was doom'd at length to sink in Grecian flame.
And now, by Time's deep ploughshare harrow'd o'er,
The seat of sacred Troy is found no more:
No trace of all her glories now remains!
But corn and vines enrich her cultured plains.
Silver Scamander laves the verdant shore;
Scamander oft o'erflow'd with hostile gore!
Not far removed from Ilion's famous land,
In counter view, appears the Thracian strand;
Where beauteous Hero, from the turret's height,
Display'd her cresset each revolving night;
Whose gleam directed loved Leander o'er
The rolling Hellespont to Asia's shore,
Till, in a fated hour, on Thracia's coast,
She saw her lover's lifeless body tost;
Then felt her bosom agony severe;
Her eyes, sad gazing, pour'd th' incessant tear!
O'erwhelm'd with anguish, frantic with despair,
She beat her beauteous breast and tore her hair—
On dear Leander's name in vain she cried;
Then headlong plunged into the parting tide:
The parting tide received the lovely weight,
And proudly flow'd, exulting in its freight!
Far west of Thrace, beyond th' Ægean main,
Remote from ocean, lies the Delphic plain.
The sacred oracle of Phœbus there
High o'er the mount arose, divinely fair!
Achaian marble form'd the gorgeous pile;
August the fabric! elegant its style!
On brazen hinges turn'd the silver doors;
And checker'd marble paved the polish'd floors.
The roofs, where storied tablature appear'd,
On columns of Corinthian mould were rear'd:
Of shining porphyry the shafts were framed,
And round the hollow dome bright jewels flamed
Apollo's suppliant priests, a blameless train!
Framed their oblation on the holy fane:
To front the sun's declining ray 'twas placed;
With golden harps and living laurels graced.
The sciences and arts around the shrine
Conspicuous shone, engraved by hands divine!
Here Æsculapius' snake display'd his crest,
And burning glories sparkled on his breast;
While, from his eye's insufferable light,
Disease and Death recoil'd, in headlong flight.
Of this great temple, through all time renown'd
Sunk in oblivion, no remains are found.
Contiguous here, with hallow'd woods o' spread,
Parnassus lifts to heaven its honour'd head;
Where from the deluge saved, by Heaven's command,
Deucalion leading Pyrrha, hand in hand.
Repeopled all the desolated land.
Around the scene unfading laurels grow,
And aromatic flowers for ever blow.
The winged choirs, on every tree above,
Carol sweet numbers through the vocal grove;
While o'er th' eternal spring that smiles beneath
Young zephyrs borne on rosy pinions breathe.
Fair daughters of the Sun! the sacred Nine,
Here wake to ecstasy their songs divine;
Or crown'd with myrtle in some sweet alcove,
Attune the tender strings to bleeding love;
All sadly sweet the balmy currents roll,
Soothing to softest peace the tortured soul,
While hill and vale with choral voice around
The music of immortal harps resound,
Fair Pleasure leads in dance the happy hours,
Still scattering where she moves Elysian flowers.
Even now, the strains, with sweet contagion fraught,
Shed a delicious languor o'er the thought—

* Now known by the name of Micronisi.

Adieu, ye vales, that smiling peace bestow,
Where Eden's blossoms ever vernal blow!
Adieu, ye streams, that o'er enchanted ground
In lucid maze the Aonian hills surround!
Ye fairy scenes, where Fancy loves to dwell,
And young Delight, for ever, O farewell!
The soul with tender luxury you fill,
And o'er the sense Lethean dews distil!
Awake, O Memory, from th' inglorious dream
With brazen lungs resume the kindling theme!
Collect thy powers! arouse thy vital fire!
Ye spirits of the storm, my verse inspire!
Hoarse as the whirlwinds that enrage the main,
In torrents pour along the swelling strain!

Now, borne impetuous o'er the boiling deeps,
Her course to Attic shores the vessel keeps:
The pilots, as the waves behind her swell,
Still with the wheeling stern their force repel.
For, this assault should either quarter* feel,
Again to flank the tempest she might reel.
The steersmen every bidden turn apply;
To right and left the spokes alternate fly.
Thus when some conquer'd host retreats in fear,
The bravest leaders guard the broken rear:
Indignant they retire, and long oppose
Superior armies that around them close;
Still shield the flanks, the routed squadrons join,
And guide the flight in one imbodied line.

So they direct the flying bark before
Th' impelling floods, that lash her to the shore.
As some benighted traveller, through the shade,
Explores the devious path with heart dismay'd,
While prowling savages behind him roar,
And yawning pits and quagmires lurk before—
High o'er the poop the audacious seas aspire,
Uproll'd in hills of fluctuating fire.
As some fell conqueror, frantic with success,
Sheds o'er the nations ruin and distress;
So, while the watery wilderness he roams,
Incensed to sevenfold rage the tempest foams;
And o'er the trembling pines, above, below,
Shrill through the cordage howls, with notes of wo.
Now thunders wafted from the burning zone,
Growl from afar, a deaf and hollow groan!
The ship's high battlements, to either side
For ever rocking, drink the briny tide;
Her joints unhinged, in palsied languors play,
As ice dissolves beneath the noontide ray.
The skies asunder torn, a deluge pour;
The impetuous hail descends in whirling shower.
High on the masts, with pale and livid rays,
Amid the gloom portentous meteors blaze.
Th' ethereal dome, in mournful pomp array'd,
Now lurks behind impenetrable shade;
Now, flashing round intolerable light,
Redoubles all the terrors of the night.
Such terrors Sinai's quaking hill o'erspread,
When heaven's loud trumpet sounded o'er its head.
It seem'd, the wrathful angel of the wind
Had all the horrors of the skies combined;
And here, to one ill-fated ship opposed,
At once the dreadful magazine disclosed.
And lo! tremendous o'er the deep he springs,
Th' inflaming sulphur flashing from his wings!—
Hark! his strong voice the dismal silence breaks:
Mad chaos from the chains of death awakes!
Loud and more loud the rolling peals enlarge;
And blue on deck their blazing sides discharge;
There, all aghast, the shivering wretches stood;
While chill suspense and fear congeal'd their blood
Now in a deluge burst the living flame,
And dread concussion rends th' ethereal frame.
Sick Earth, convulsive, groans from shore to shore,
And Nature, shuddering, feels the horrid roar.

Still the sad prospect rises on my sight,
Reveal'd in all its mournful shade and light;
Swift through my pulses glides the kindling fire,
As lightning glances on th' electric wire
But, ah! the force of numbers strives in vain,
The glowing scene unequal to sustain.

But, lo! at last, from tenfold darkness born,
Forth issues o'er the wave the weeping morn.
Hail, sacred Vision! who, on orient wings,
The cheering dawn of light propitious brings!
All Nature, smiling, hail'd the vivid ray,
That gave her beauties to returning day:
All but our ship, that, groaning on the tide,
No kind relief, no gleam of hope descried.
For now, in front, her trembling inmates see
The hills of Greece emerging on the lee.
So the lost lover views that fatal morn,
On which, for ever from his bosom torn,
The nymph adored resigns her blooming charms
To bless with love some happier rival's arms
So to Eliza dawn'd that cruel day
That tore Æneas from her arms away;
That saw him parting never to return,
Herself in funeral flames decreed to burn.
O yet in clouds, thou genial source of light,
Conceal thy radiant glories from our sight!
Go, with thy smile adorn the happy plain, [reign
And gild the scenes where health and pleasure
But let not here, in scorn, thy wanton beam
Insult the dreadful grandeur of my theme!

While shoreward now the bounding vessel flies,
Full in her van St. George's cliffs arise;
High o'er the rest a pointed crag is seen,
That hung projecting o'er a mossy green.
Nearer and nearer now the danger grows
And all their skill relentless fates oppose;
For, while more eastward they direct the prow,
Enormous waves the quivering deck o'erflow.
While, as she wheels, unable to subdue
Her sallies, still they dread her broaching-to.*
Alarming thought! for now no more a-lee
Her riven side could bear th' invading sea;
And if the following surge she scuds before,
Headlong she runs upon the dreadful shore:
A shore where shelves and hidden rocks abound
Where Death in secret ambush lurks around.
Far less dismay'd, Anchises' wandering son
Was seen the straits of Sicily to shun:
When Palinurus, from the helm descried
The rocks of Scylla on his eastern side;

* The quarter is the hinder part of a ship side; or that part which is near the stern.

* Broaching-to is a sudden and involuntary movement in navigation, wherein a ship, whilst sailing or scudding before the wind, unexpectedly turns her side to windward. It is generally occasioned by the difficulty of steering her, or by some disaster happening to the machinery of the helm. See the last note of the second Canto.

While in the west, with hideous yawn disclosed,
His onward path Charybdis' gulf opposed.
The double danger as by turns he view'd,
His wheeling bark her arduous track pursued.
Thus while to right and left destruction lies,
Between the extremes the daring vessel flies.
With boundless involution, bursting o'er
The marble cliffs, loud dashing surges roar;
Hoarse through each winding creek the tempest raves,
And hollow rocks repeat the groan of waves;
Destruction round th' insatiate coast prepares,
To crush the trembling ship, unnumber'd snares.
But haply now she 'scapes the fatal strand,
Though scarce ten fathoms distant from the land;
Swift as the weapon issuing from the bow,
She cleaves the burning waters with her prow;
And forward leaping, with tumultuous haste,
As on the tempest's wing the isle she past.
With longing eyes and agony of mind,
The sailors view this refuge left behind;
Happy to bribe, with India's richest ore,
A safe accession to that barren shore!

When in the dark Peruvian mine confined,
Lost to the cheerful commerce of mankind,
The groaning captive wastes his life away,
For ever exiled from the realms of day;
No equal pangs his bosom agonize,
When far above the sacred light he eyes,
While, all forlorn, the victim pines in vain,
For scenes he never shall possess again.

But now Athenian mountains they descry,
And o'er the surge Colonna frowns on high:
Beside the cape's projecting verge are placed
A range of columns, long by time defaced;
First planted by devotion to sustain,
In elder times, Tritonia's sacred fane.
Foams the wild beach below, with maddening rage,
Where waves and rocks a dreadful combat wage.
The sickly heaven, fermenting with its freight,
Still vomits o'er the main the feverish weight:
And now, while wing'd with ruin from on high,
Through the rent cloud the ragged lightnings fly,
A flash, quick glancing on the nerves of light,
Struck the pale helmsman with eternal night:
Rodmond, who heard the piteous groan behind,
Touch'd with compassion gazed upon the blind:
And, while around his sad companions crowd,
He guides the unhappy victim to the shroud.
"Hie thee aloft, my gallant friend!" he cries;
"Thy only succour on the mast relies!"—
The helm bereft of half its vital force,
Now scarce subdued the wild unbridled course:
Quick to th' abandon'd wheel Arion came,
The ship's tempestuous sallies to reclaim.
Amazed he saw her, o'er the sounding foam
Upborne, to right and left distracted roam.
So gazed young Phaeton, with pale dismay,
When, mounted in the flaming car of day,
With rash and impious hand the stripling tried
The immortal coursers of the sun to guide.—
The vessel, while the dread event draws nigh,
Seems more impatient o'er the waves to fly;
Fate spurs her on:—thus issuing from afar,
Advances to the sun some blazing star;
And, as it feels th' attraction's kindling force,
Springs onward with accelerated course.

With mournful look the seamen eyed the strand
Where Death's inexorable jaws expand:
Swift from their minds elapsed all dangers past,
As, dumb with terror they beheld the last.
Now, on the trembling shrouds, before, behind,
In mute suspense they mount into the wind.—
The genius of the deep, on rapid wing,
The black eventful moment seem'd to bring,
The fatal sisters on the surge before,
Yoked their infernal horses to the prore.—
The steersmen now received their last command,
To wheel the vessel sidelong to the strand.
Twelve sailors, on the foremast who depend,
High on the platform of the top ascend;
Fatal retreat! for while the plunging prow
Immerges headlong in the wave below,
Down-prest by watery weight the bowsprit bends
And from above the stem deep-crushing rends.
Beneath her beak the floating ruins lie;
The foremast totters, unsustain'd on high:
And now the ship, fore-lifted by the sea,
Hurls the tall fabric backward o'er the lee;
While, in the general wreck, the faithful stay
Drags the main topmast from its post away.
Flung from the mast, the seamen strive in vain
Through hostile floods their vessels to regain;
The waves they buffet, till bereft of strength,
O'erpower'd they yield to cruel fate at length.
The hostile waters close around their head,
They sink, for ever, number'd with the dead!

Those who remain, their fearful doom await,
Nor longer mourn their lost companions' fate;
The heart, that bleeds with sorrows all its own,
Forgets the pangs of friendship to bemoan.—
Albert and Rodmond, and Palemon here,
With young Arion, on the mast appear;
E'en they, amid th' unspeakable distress,
In every look distracting thoughts confess;
In every vein the refluent blood congeals;
And every bosom fatal terror feels.
Enclosed with all the demons of the main,
They view'd th' adjacent shore, but view'd in vain.
Such torments in the drear abodes of hell,
Where sad despair laments with rueful yell,
Such torments agonize the damned breast,
While Fancy views the mansions of the blest.
For Heaven's sweet help, their suppliant cries implore;
But Heaven relentless deigns to help no more.

And now, lash'd on by destiny severe,
With horror fraught, the dreadful scene drew near
The ship hangs hovering on the verge of death,
Hell yawns, rocks rise, and breakers roar beneath
In vain, alas! the sacred shades of yore
Would arm the mind with philosophic lore;
In vain they'd teach us, at the latest breath,
To smile serene amid the pangs of death.
E'en Zeno's self, and Epictetus old,
This fell abyss had shudder'd to behold.
Had Socrates, for godlike virtue famed,
And wisest of the sons of men proclaim'd,
Beheld this scene of frenzy and distress,
His soul had trembled to its last recess!
O yet confirm my heart, ye Powers above,
This last tremendous shock of Fate to prove;
The tottering frame of Reason yet sustain!
Nor let this total ruin whirl my brain!

In vain the cords and axes were prepared,
For now th' audacious seas insult the yard;
High o'er the ship they throw a horrid shade,
And o'er her burst in terrible cascade.
Uplifted on the surge, to heaven she flies,
Her shatter'd top half-buried in the skies,
Then headlong plunging thunders on the ground,
Earth groans! air trembles! and the deeps resound:
Her giant bulk the dread concussion feels,
And quivering with the wound, in torment reels:
So reels, convulsed with agonizing throes,
The bleeding bull beneath the murderer's blows.
Again she plunges: hark! a second shock
Tears her streng bottom on the marble rock:
Down on the vale of Death, with dismal cries,
The fated victims shuddering roll their eyes,
In wild despair; while yet another stroke,
With deep convulsion, rends the solid oak;
Till like the mine, in whose infernal cell
The lurking demons of destruction dwell,
At length asunder torn, her frame divides:
And crashing spreads in ruin o'er the tides.

O were it mine with tuneful Maro's art
To wake to sympathy the feeling heart,
Like him the smooth and mournful verse to dress
In all the pomp of exquisite distress!
Then too severely taught by cruel Fate,
To share in all the perils I relate,
Then might I, with unrivall'd strains, deplore
Th' impervious horrors of a leeward shore.

As o'er the surge, the stooping mainmast hung,
Still on the rigging thirty seamen clung;
Some, struggling, on a broken crag were cast,
And there by oozy tangles grappled fast:
Awile they bore th' o'erwhelming billow's rage,
Unequal combat with their fate to wage;
Till all benumb'd and feeble they forego
Their slippery hold, and sink to shades below.
Some, from the main-yardarm impetuous thrown,
On marble ridges die without a groan.
Three, with Palemon, on their skill depend,
And from the wreck on oars and rafts descend.
Now on the mountain-wave on high they ride,
Then downward plunge beneath th' involving tide;
Till one, who seems in agony to strive,
The whirling breakers heave on shore alive:
The rest a speedier end of anguish knew,
And prest the stony beach a lifeless crew.

Next, O unhappy chief! th' eternal doom
Of Heaven decreed thee to the briny tomb!
What scenes of misery torment thy view!
What painful struggles of thy dying crew!
Thy perish'd hopes all buried in the flood,
O'erspread with corses! red with human blood!
So, pierced with anguish, hoary Priam gazed,
When Troy's imperial domes in ruin blazed;
While he, severest sorrow doom'd to feel,
Expired beneath the victor's murdering steel.
Thus with his helpless partners to the last,
Sad refuge! Albert hugs the floating mast;
His soul could yet sustain this mortal blow,
But droops, alas! beneath superior wo!
For now soft nature's sympathetic chain
Tugs at his yearning heart with powerful strain;
His faithful wife for ever doom'd to mourn
For him, alas! who never shall return;
To black Adversity's approach exposed,
With want and hardships unforeseen enclosed:
His lovely daughter left without a friend,
Her innocence to succour and defend;
By youth and indigence set forth a prey
To lawless guilt, that flatters to betray.—
While these reflections rack his feeling mind,
Rodmond, who hung beside, his grasp resign'd;
And, as the tumbling waters o'er him roll'd,
His outstretch'd arms the master's legs enfold—
Sad Albert feels the dissolution near,
And strives in vain his fetter'd limbs to clear;
For Death bids every clenching joint adhere.
All faint, to heaven he throws his dying eyes.
And "O protect my wife and child!" he cries·
The gushing stream rolls back th' unfinish'd sound!
He gasps! he dies! and tumbles to the ground!

Five only left of all the perish'd throng,
Yet ride the pine which shoreward drives along;
With these Arion still his hold secures,
And all th' assaults of hostile waves endures.
O'er the dire prospect as for life he strives,
He looks if poor Palemon yet survives.
"Ah, wherefore, trusting to unequal art,
Didst thou incautious! from the wreck depart?
Alas! these rocks all human skill defy,
Who strikes them once beyond relief must die;
And, now, sore wounded, thou perhaps art tost
On these, or in some oozy cavern lost!"
Thus thought Arion, anxious gazing round,
In vain, his eyes no more Palemon found.
The demons of destruction hover nigh;
And thick their mortal shafts commission d fly:
And now a breaking surge, with forceful sway,
Two next Arion furious tears away;
Hurl'd on the crags, behold, they gasp! they bleed!
And groaning, cling upon th' illusive weed;—
Another billow burst in boundless roar!
Arion sinks! and Memory views no more!

Ah, total night and horror here preside!
My stunn'd ear tingles to the whizzing tide!
It is the funeral knell; and gliding near,
Methinks the phantoms of the dead appear!
But lo! emerging from the watery grave,
Again they float incumbent on the wave!
Again the dismal prospect opens round,
The wreck, the shores, the dying, and the drown'd.
And see! enfeebled by repeated shocks,
Those two who scramble on th' adjacent rocks,
Their faithless hold no longer can retain,
They sink o'erwhelm'd, and never rise again!

Two, with Arion, yet the mast upbore,
That now above the ridges reach'd the shore:
Still trembling to descend, they downward gaze
With horror pale, and torpid with amaze:
The floods recoil! the ground appears below!
And life's faint embers now rekindling glow;
A while they wait th' exhausted waves' retreat,
Then climb slow up the beach with hands and feet.

O Heaven! deliver'd by whose sovereign hand,
Still on the brink of hell they shuddering stand,
Receive the languid incense they bestow,
That damp with death appears not yet to glow
To Thee each soul the warm oblation pays,
With trembling ardour of unequal praise.
In every heart dismay with wonder strives,
And hope the sicken'd spark of life revives;

Her magic powers their exiled health restore,
Till horror and despair are felt no more.
A troop of Grecians who inhabit nigh,
And oft these perils of the deep descry,
Roused by the blustering tempest of the night,
Anxious had climb'd Colonna's neighbouring height;
When gazing downward on th' adjacent flood,
Full to their view the scene of ruin stood,
The surf with mangled bodies strew'd around,
And those yet breathing on the sea-wash'd ground!
Though lost to science and the nobler arts,
Yet Nature's lore inform'd their feeling hearts;
Straight down the vale with hastening steps they hied.
Th' unhappy sufferers to assist and guide.
Meanwhile those three escaped beneath explore
The first adventurous youth who reach'd the shore;
Panting, with eyes averted from the day,
Prone, helpless on the tangled beach he lay—
It is Palemon;—O what tumults roll
With hope and terror in Arion's soul!
If yet unhurt he lives again to view
His friend, and this sole remnant of our crew!
With us to travel through this foreign zone,
And share the future good or ill-unknown!
Arion thus: but ah! sad doom of Fate!
That bleeding Memory sorrows to relate:
While yet afloat, on some resisting rock
His ribs were dash'd, and fractured with the shock:
Heart-piercing sight! those cheeks, so late array'd
In beauty's bloom are pale, with mortal shade!
Distilling blood his lovely breast o'erspread,
And clogg'd the golden tresses of his head.
Nor yet the lungs by this pernicious stroke
Were wounded, or the vocal organs broke.
Down from his neck, with blazing gems array'd,
Thy image, lovely Anna, hung portray'd;
Th' unconscious figure smiling all serene,
Suspended in a golden chain was seen.
Hadst thou, soft maiden; in this hour of wo,
Beheld him writhing from the deadly blow,
What force of art, what language could express
Thine agony? thine exquisite distress?
But thou, alas! art doom'd to weep in vain
For him thine eyes shall never see again!
With dumb amazement pale, Arion gazed,
And cautiously the wounded youth upraised.
Palemon then, with cruel pangs oppress'd,
In faltering accents thus his friend address'd:
"O rescued from destruction late so nigh,
Beneath whose fatal influence doom'd I lie;
Are we then exiled to this last retreat
Of life, unhappy! thus decreed to meet?
Ah! how unlike what yester-morn enjoy'd
Enchanting hopes, for ever now destroy'd!
For, wounded far beyond all healing power,
Palemon dies, and this his final hour:
By those fell breakers, where in vain I strove,
At once cut off from fortune, life, and love!
Far other scenes must soon present my sight,
That lie deep buried yet in tenfold night.
Ah! wretched father of a wretched son,
Whom thy paternal prudence has undone!
How will remembrance of this blinded care
Bend down thy head with anguish and despair!
Such dire effects from avarice arise,
That deaf to Nature's voice and vainly wise,
With force severe endeavours to control
The noblest passions that inspire the soul.
But, O thou sacred Power! whose law connects
Th' eternal chain of causes and effects,
Let not thy chastening ministers of rage
Afflict with sharp remorse his feeble age!
And you, Arion! who with these the last
Of all our crew survive the shipwreck past—
Ah! cease to mourn! those friendly tears restrain;
Nor give my dying moments keener pain!
Since Heaven may soon thy wandering steps restore,
When parted, hence, to England's distant shore
Shouldst thou th' unwilling messenger of Fate
To him the tragic story first relate,
O! friendship's generous ardour then suppress,
Nor hint the fatal cause of my distress;
Nor let each horrid incident sustain
The lengthen'd tale to aggravate his pain.
Ah! then remember well my last request,
For her who reigns for ever in my breast;
Yet let him prove a father and a friend,
The helpless maid to succour and defend.
Say, I this suit implored with parting breath,
So Heaven befriend him at his hour of death!
But O, to lovely Anna shouldst thou tell
What dire untimely end thy friend befell,
Draw o'er the dismal scene soft Pity's veil;
And lightly touch the lamentable tale:
Say that my love, inviolably true,
No change, no diminution ever knew;
Lo! her bright image pendant on my neck,
Is all Palemon rescued from the wreck:
Take it, and say, when panting in the wave,
I struggled life and this alone to save!
"My soul, that fluttering hastens to be free,
Would yet a train of thoughts impart to thee;
But strives in vain;—the chilling ice of Death
Congeals my blood, and chokes the stream of breath:
Resign'd, she quits her comfortless abode,
To course that long, unknown, eternal road.—
O sacred source of ever-living light!
Conduct the weary wanderer in her flight!
Direct her onward to that peaceful shore,
Where peril, pain, and death are felt no more!
"When thou some tale of hapless love shalt hear,
That steals from Pity's eye the melting tear,
Of two chaste hearts by mutual passion join'd
To absence, sorrow, and despair consign'd,
O! then to swell the tides of social wo
That heal th' afflicted bosom they o'erflow,
While Memory dictates, this sad shipwreck tell,
And what distress thy wretched friend befell!
Then while in streams of soft compassion drown'd
The swains lament and maidens weep around;
While lisping children, touch'd with infant fear,
With wonder gaze, and drop th' unconscious tear
O! then this moral bid their souls retain,
All thoughts of happiness on earth are vain."*
The last faint accents trembled on his tongue,
That now inactive to the palate clung;

* ——sed scilicet ultima semper
Expectanda dies homini; "*dicique beatus*
Ante obitum nemo supremaque funera debet."
Ovid. Met.

His bosom heaves a mortal groan—he dies!
And shades eternal sink upon his eyes!
As thus defaced in death Palemon lay,
Arion gazed upon the lifeless clay:
Transfix'd he stood with awful terror fill'd,
While down his cheek the silent drops distill'd
"O ill-starr'd votary, of unspotted truth!
Untimely perish'd in the bloom of youth,
Should e'er thy friend arrive on Albion's land,
He will obey, though painful, thy demand:
His tongue the dreadful story shall display,
And all the horrors of this dismal day!
Disastrous day! what ruin has thou bred!
What anguish to the living and the dead!
How hast thou left the widow all forlorn,
And ever doom'd the orphan child to mourn
Through life's sad journey hopeless to complain!
Can sacred Justice these events ordain?
But, O my soul! avoid that wondrous maze
Where Reason, lost in endless error, strays!
As through this thorny vale of life we run,
Great Cause of all effects, *Thy will be done!*"
Now had the Grecians on the beach arrived
To aid the helpless few who yet survived:
While passing they behold the waves o'erspread
With shatter'd rafts and corses of the dead,
Three still alive, benumb'd and faint they find,
In mournful silence on a rock reclined;
The generous natives, moved with social pain,
The feeble strangers in their arms sustain;
With pitying sighs their hapless lot deplore,
And lead them trembling from the fatal shore

ANNE LETITIA BARBAULD.

This gifted authoress, the daughter of Dr. John Aikin, was born at Kilworth Harcourt, in Leicestershire, on the 20th of June, 1743. Her education was entirely domestic, but the quickness of apprehension, and desire for learning which she manifested, induced her father to lend her his assistance towards enabling her to obtain a knowledge of Latin and Greek. On the removal of Dr. Aikin to superintend the dissenting academy at Warrington, in Lancashire, she accompanied him thither, in her fifteenth year, when she is said to have possessed great beauty of person and vivacity of intellect. The associates she met with at Warrington were in every way congenial to her mind, and among others, were Drs. Priestley and Enfield, with whom she formed an intimate acquaintance. In 1773, she was induced to publish a volume of her poems, which, in the course of the same year, went through four editions. They were followed by miscellaneous pieces in prose, by J. (her brother) and A. L. Aikin, which considerably added to her reputation.

In 1774, she married the Rev. Rochemont Barbauld, with whom she removed to Palgrave, near Dis, in Suffolk, where her husband had charge of a dissenting congregation, and was about to open a boarding-school. Mrs. Barbauld assisted him in the task of instruction; and some of her pupils, who have since risen to literary eminence, among whom were the present Mr. Denman and Sir William Gell, have acknowledged the value of her lessons in English composition, and declamation. In 1775, appeared a small volume from her pen, entitled Devotional Pieces, compiled from the Psalms of David, &c.; a collection which met with little success and some animadversion. In 1778, she published her Lessons for Children from Two to Three Years Old; and, in 1781, Hymns in Prose, for Children; both of which may be said to have formed an era in the art of instruction, and the former has been translated into French, by M. Pasquier.

In 1785, Mrs. Barbauld and her husband gave up their school and visited the continent, whence they returned to England in June, 1786, and in the following year took up their residence at Hampstead. Our authoress now began to use her pen on the popular side of politics, and published, successively, An Address to the Opposers of the Repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts; A Poetical Epistle to Mr. Wilberforce on the Rejection of the Bill for Abolishing the Slave Trade; Remarks on Gilbert Wakefield's Inquiry into the Expediency and Propriety of Public or Social Worship; and Sins of Government, Sins of the Nation, or a Discourse for the Fast, which last appeared in 1793 In 1802, she removed, with Mr. Barbauld, to Stoke Newington; and in 1804, published selections from the Spectator, Tatler, Guardian, and Freeholder, with a preliminary essay, which is regarded as her most successful effort in literary criticism. In the same year, appeared her edition of The Correspondence of Richardson, in six volumes, duodecimo; but the most valuable part of this work is the very elegant and interesting life of that novelist, and the able review of his works, from the pen of our authoress. In 1808, she became a widow; and in 1810, appeared her edition of The British Novelists, with an introductory essay, and biographical and critical notices prefixed to the works of each author. In the following year she published a collection of prose and verse, under the title of The Female Spectator; and in the same year, appeared that original offspring of her genius, Eighteen Hundred and Eleven, a poem. This was the last separate publication of Mrs. Barbauld, who died on the 9th of March, 1825, in the eighty-second year of her age. An edition of her works appeared in the same year, in two octavo volumes, with a memoir, by Lucy Aikin.

Mrs. Barbauld is one of the most eminent female writers which England has produced; and both in prose and poetry she is hardly surpassed by any of her sex, in the present age. With respect to the style, we shall, perhaps, best describe it, by calling it that of a female Johnson; and her Essay on Romances is a professed imitation of the manner of that great critic. He is himself said to have allowed it to be the best that was ever attempted; "because it reflected the colour of his thoughts, no less than the turn of his expressions." She is, however, not without a style of her own, which is graceful, easy, and natural; alike calculated to engage the most common, and the most elevated understanding. Her poems are addressed more to the feelings than to the imagination,—more to the reason than the senses; but the language never becomes prosaic, and has sublimity and pathos, totally free from bombast and affectation. The spirit of piety and benevolence that breathes through her works pervaded her life, and she is an amiable example to her sex that it is possible to combine, without danger to its morals or religious principles, a manly understanding with a feminine and susceptible heart.

CORSICA.

WRITTEN IN THE YEAR 1768.

.....A manly race
Of unsubmitting spirit, wise and brave;
Who still through bleeding ages struggled hard
To hold a generous undiminish'd state;
Too much in vain

THOMSON.

HAIL, generous Corsica! unconquer'd isle!
The fort of freedom; that amidst the waves
Stands like a rock of adamant, and dares
The wildest fury of the beating storm.
And are there yet, in this late sickly age,
Unkindly to the towering growths of virtue,
Such bold exalted spirits? Men whose deeds,
To the bright annals of old Greece opposed,
Would throw in shades her yet unrivall'd name,
And dim the lustre of her fairest page!
And glows the flame of Liberty so strong
In this lone speck of earth! this spot obscure,
Shaggy with woods, and crusted o'er with rock,
By slaves surrounded, and by slaves oppress'd!
What then should Britons feel?—should they not catch
The warm contagion of heroic ardour,
And kindle at a fire so like their own?
Such were the working thoughts which swell'd the breast
Of generous Boswell; when with nobler aim
And views beyond the narrow beaten track
By trivial fancy trod, he turn'd his course
From polish'd Gallia's soft delicious vales,
From the gray relics of imperial Rome,
From her long galleries of laurell'd stone,
Her chisell'd heroes and her marble gods,
Whose dumb majestic pomp yet awes the world,
To animated forms of patriot zeal;
Warm in the living majesty of virtue;
Elate with fearless spirit; firm; resolved;
By fortune nor subdued, nor awed by power.
How raptured fancy burns, while warm in thought
I trace the pictured landscape; while I kiss
With pilgrim lips devout the sacred soil
Stain'd with the blood of heroes. Cyrnus, hail!
Hail to thy rocky, deep indented shores,
And pointed cliffs, which hear the chafing deep
Incessant foaming round thy shaggy sides.
Hail to thy winding bays, thy sheltering ports,
And ample harbours, which inviting stretch
Their hospitable arms to every sail:
Thy numerous streams, that bursting from the cliffs
Down the steep channell'd rock impetuous pour
With grateful murmur: on the fearful edge
Of the rude precipice, thy hamlets brown
And straw-roof'd cots, which from the level vale
Scarce seen, amongst the craggy hanging cliffs
Seem like an eagle's nest aërial built.
Thy swelling mountains, brown with solemn shade
Of various trees, that wave their giant arms
O'er the rough sons of freedom; lofty pines,
And hardy fir, and ilex ever green,
And spreading chestnut, with each humbler plant,
And shrub of fragrant leaf, that clothes their sides
With living verdure; whence the clustering bee
Extracts her golden dews: the shining box
And sweet-leaved myrtle, aromatic thyme,
The prickly juniper, and the green leaf
Which feeds the spinning worm; while glowing bright
Beneath the various foliage, wildly spreads
The arbutus, and rears his scarlet fruit
Luxuriant, mantling o'er the craggy steeps;
And thy own native laurel crowns the scene.
Hail to thy savage forests, awful, deep;
Thy tangled thickets, and thy crowded woods,
The haunt of herds untamed; which sullen bound
From rock to rock with fierce unsocial air,
And wilder gaze, as conscious of the power
That loves to reign amid the lonely scenes
Of unquell'd nature: precipices huge,
And tumbling torrents; trackless deserts, plains
Fenced in with guardian rocks, whose quarries teem
With shining steel, that to the cultured fields
And sunny hills which wave with bearded grain,
Defends their homely produce. Liberty,
The mountain goddess, loves to range at large
Amid such scenes, and on the iron soil
Prints her majestic step. For these she scorns
The green enamell'd vales, the velvet lap
Of smooth savannahs, whore the pillow'd head
Of luxury reposes; balmy gales,
And bowers that breathe of bliss. For these, when first
This isle emerging like a beauteous gem
From the dark bosom of the Tyrrhene main,
Rear'd its fair front, she mark'd it for her own,
And with her spirit warm'd. Her genuine sons,
A broken remnant, from the generous stock
Of ancient Greece, from Sparta's sad remains,
True to their high descent, preserved unquench'd
The sacred fire through many a barbarous age:
Whom, nor the iron rod of cruel Carthage,
Nor the dread sceptre of imperial Rome,
Nor bloody Goth, nor grisly Saracen,
Nor the long galling yoke of proud Liguria,
Could crush into subjection. Still unquell'd
They rose superior, bursting from their chains,
And claim'd man's dearest birthright, liberty:
And long, through many a hard unequal strife,
Maintain'd the glorious conflict; long withstood,
With single arm, the whole collected force
Of haughty Genoa, and ambitious Gaul.
And shall withstand it—Trust the faithful muse!
It is not in the force of mortal arm,
Scarcely in fate, to bind the struggling soul
That gall'd by wanton power, indignant swells
Against oppression; breathing great revenge,
Careless of life, determined to be free.
And favouring Heaven approves: for see the man,
Born to exalt his own, and give mankind
A glimpse of higher natures: just, as great;
The soul of council, and the nerve of war;
Of high unshaken spirit, temper'd sweet
With soft urbanity, and polish'd grace,
And attic wit, and gay unstudied smiles:
Whom Heaven in some propitious hour endow'd
With every purer virtue: gave him all
That lifts the hero, or adorns the man.

Gave him the eye sublime; the searching glance,
Keen, scanning deep, that smites the guilty soul
As with a beam from heaven: on his brow
Serene, and spacious front, set the broad seal
Of dignity and rule; then smiled benign
On this fair pattern of a God below, [breast
High wrought, and breathed into his swelling
The large ambitious wish to save his country.
O beauteous title to immortal fame!
The man devoted to the public, stands
In the bright records of superior worth,
A step below the skies: if he succeed,
The first fair lot which earth affords, is his;
And if he falls, he falls above a throne.
When such their leader, can the brave despair?
Freedom the cause, and Paoli the chief!
Success to your fair hopes? A British muse,
Though weak and powerless, lifts her fervent voice,
And breathes a prayer for your success. O could
She scatter blessings as the morn sheds dews,
To drop upon your heads! But patient hope
Must wait th' appointed hour; secure of this,
That never with the indolent and weak
Will Freedom deign to dwell; she must be seized
By that bold arm that wrestles for the blessing:
'Tis Heaven's best prize, and must be bought with blood.
When the storm thickens, when the combat burns,
And pain and death in every horrid shape
That can appal the feeble, prowl around,
Then Virtue triumphs; then her towering form
Dilates with kindling majesty; her mien
Breathes a diviner spirit, and enlarged
Each spreading feature, with an ampler port
And bolder tone, exulting, rides the storm,
And joys amidst the tempest. Then she reaps
Her golden harvest; fruits of nobler growth
And higher relish than meridian suns
Can ever ripen; fair, heroic deeds,
And godlike action. 'Tis not meats and drinks,
And balmy airs, and vernal suns and showers,
That feed and ripen minds; 'tis toil and danger;
And wrestling with the stubborn gripe of fate;
And war, and sharp distress, and paths obscure
And dubious. The bold swimmer joys not so
To feel the proud waves under him, and beat
With strong repelling arm the billowy surge;
The generous courser does not so exult
To toss his floating mane against the wind,
And neigh amidst the thunder of the war,
As Virtue to oppose her swelling breast
Like a firm shield against the darts of fate.
And when her sons in that rough school have learn'd
To smile at danger, then the hand that raised,
Shall hush the storm, and lead the shining train
Of peaceful years in bright procession on.
Then shall the shepherd's pipe, the muse's lyre,
On Cyrnus' shores be heard: her grateful sons
With loud acclaim and hymns of cordial praise
Shall hail their high deliverers; every name
To virtue dear be from oblivion snatched
And placed among the stars: but chiefly thine,
Thine, Paoli, with sweetest sound shall dwell
On their applauding lips; thy sacred name,
Endear'd to long posterity, some muse,
More worthy of the theme, shall consecrate
To after-ages, and applauding worlds
Shall bless the godlike man who saved his country.

* * * * * * * * * * *

So vainly wish'd, so fondly hoped the muse:
Too fondly hoped. The iron fates prevail,
And Cyrnus is no more. Her generous sons,
Less vanquish'd than o'erwhelm'd, by numbers crush'd,
Admired, unaided fell. So strives the moon
In dubious battle with the gathering clouds,
And strikes a splendour through them; till at length
Storms rolled on storms involve the face of heaven
And quench her struggling fires. Forgive the zeal
That, too presumptuous, whisper'd better things,
And read the book of destiny amiss.
Not with the purple colouring of success
Is virtue best adorn'd: th' attempt is praise
There yet remains a freedom, nobler far
Than kings or senates can destroy or give;
Beyond the proud oppressor's cruel grasp
Seated secure, uninjured, undestroy'd;
Worthy of gods:—the freedom of the mind.

THE MOUSE'S PETITION.*

O HEAR a pensive prisoner's prayer,
For liberty that sighs:
And never let thine heart be shut
Against the wretch's cries!

For here forlorn and sad I sit
Within the wiry grate;
And tremble at th' approaching morn,
Which brings impending fate.

If e'er thy breast with freedom glow'd,
And spurn'd a tyrant's chain,
Let not thy strong oppressive force
A free-born mouse detain!

O do not stain with guiltless blood
Thy hospitable hearth;
Nor triumph that thy wiles betray'd
A prize so little worth.

The scatter'd gleanings of a feast
My frugal meals supply;
But if thine unrelenting heart
That slender boon deny,—

The cheerful light, the vital air,
Are blessings widely given;
Let Nature's commoners enjoy
The common gifts of heaven.

The well-taught philosophic mind
To all compassion gives;
Casts round the world an equal eye
And feels for all that lives.

* Found in the trap where he had been confined all night by Dr. Priestley, for the sake of making experiments with different kinds of air.

of mind,—as ancient sages taught,—
A never-dying flame,
Still shifts through matter's varying forms
In every form the same;

Beware, lest in the worm you crush,
A brother's soul you find;
And tremble lest thy luckless hand
Dislodge a kindred mind.

Or, if this transient gleam of day
Be *all* of life we share,
Let pity plead within thy breast
That little *all* to spare.

So may thy hospitable board
With health and peace be crown'd;
And every charm of heartfelt ease
Beneath thy roof be found,

So when destruction lurks unseen,
Which men, like mice, may share,
May some kind angel clear thy path,
And break the hidden snare.

CHARACTERS.

O BORN to soothe distress and lighten care,
Lively as soft, and innocent as fair!
Blest with that sweet simplicity of thought
So rarely found, and never to be taught;
Of winning speech, endearing, artless, kind,
The loveliest pattern of a female mind;
Like some fair spirit from the realms of rest,
With all her native heaven within her breast;
So pure, so good, she scarce can guess at sin,
But thinks the world without like that within;
Such melting tenderness, so fond to bless,
Her charity almost become excess.
Wealth may be courted, Wisdom be revered,
And Beauty praised, and brutal Strength be fear'd;
But Goodness only can affection move,
And love must owe its origin to love

Illam quicquid agit, quoquo vestigia flectit,
Componit, furtim, subsequiturque decor.
TIBUL.

OF gentle manners, and of taste refined,
With all the graces of a polish'd mind;
Clear sense and truth still shone in all she spoke,
And from her lips no idle sentence broke.
Each nicer elegance of art she knew;
Correctly fair, and regularly true.
Her ready fingers plied with equal skill
The pencil's task, the needle, or the quill;
So poised her feelings, so composed her soul,
So subject all to reason's calm control,—
One only passion, strong and unconfined,
Disturb'd the balance of her even mind
In every word, and look, and thought confest—
One passion-ruled despotic in her breast,
But that was love; and love delights to bless
The generous transports of a fond excess.

HAPPY old man, who stretch'd beneath the shade
Of large grown trees, or in the rustic porch
With woodbine canopied, where linger yet
The hospitable virtues, calm enjoy'st
Nature's best blessings all;—a healthy age
Ruddy and vigorous, native cheerfulness,
Plain-hearted friendship, simple piety,
The rural manners and the rural joys
Friendly to life. O rude of speech, yet rich
In genuine worth, not unobserved shall pass
Thy bashful virtues! for the muse shall mark,
Detect thy charities, and call to light
Thy secret deeds of mercy; while the poor,
The desolate, and friendless, at thy gate,
A numerous family, with better praise
Shall hallow in their hearts thy spotless name

SUCH were the dames of old heroic days,
Which faithful story yet delights to praise;
Who, great in useful works, hung o'er the loom,—
The mighty mothers of immortal Rome:
Obscure, in sober dignity retired,
They more deserved than sought to be admired;
The household virtues o'er their honour'd head
Their simple grace and modest lustre shed:
Chaste their attire, their feet unused to roam,
They loved the sacred threshold of their home,
Yet true to glory, fann'd the generous flame,
Bade lovers, brothers, sons aspire to fame;
In the young bosom cherish'd Virtue's seed,
The secret springs of many a godlike deed.
So the fair stream in some sequester'd glade
With lowly state glides silent through the shade,
Yet by the smiling meads her urn is blest,
With freshest flowers her rising banks are drest,
And groves of laurel by her sweetness fed,
High o'er the forest lift their verdant head.

Is there whom genius and whom taste adorn
With rare but happy union; in whose breast
Calm, philosophic, thoughtful, largely fraught
With stores of various knowledge, dwell the powers
That trace out secret causes, and unveil
Great Nature's awful face? Is there whose hours
Of still domestic leisure breathe the soul
Of friendship, peace, and elegant delight
Beneath poetic shades, where leads the muse
Through walks of fragance, and the fairy groves
Where young ideas blossom?—Is there one
Whose tender hand, lenient of human woes,
Wards off the dart of death, and smooths the couch
Of torturing anguish? On so dear a name
May blessings dwell, honour and cordial praise:
Nor heed he be a brother to be loved.

CHAMPION of Truth, alike through Nature's field,
And where in sacred leaves she shines reveal'd,—
Alike in both, eccentric, piercing, bold,
Like his own lightnings, which no chains can hold;
Neglecting caution, and disdaining art,
He seeks no armour for a naked heart:—
Pursue the track thy ardent genius shows,
That like the sun illumines where it goes·

Travel the various map of Science o'er,
Record past wonders, and discover more;
Pour thy free spirit o'er the breathing page,
And wake the virtue of a careless age.
But O forgive, if touched with fond regret
Fancy recalls the scenes she can't forget,
Recalls the vacant smile, the social hours
Which charm'd us once, for once those scenes were ours!
And while thy praises through wide realms extend,
We sit in shades, and mourn the absent friend.
So where th' impetuous river sweeps the plain,
Itself a sea, and rushes to the main;
While its firm banks repel conflicting tides,
And stately on its breast the vessel glides;
Admiring much the shepherd stands to gaze,
Awe-struck, and mingling wonder with his praise;
Yet more he loves its winding path to trace
Through beds of flowers, and Nature's rural face,
While yet a stream the silent vale is cheer'd,
By many a recollected scene endear'd,
Where trembling first beneath the poplar shade
He tuned his pipe to suit the wild cascade.

AN INVENTORY OF THE FURNITURE IN R PRIESTLEY'S STUDY

A MAP of every country known,
With not a foot of land his own.
A list of folks that kick'd a dust
On this poor globe, from Ptol. the First;
He hopes,—indeed it is but fair,—
Some day to get a corner there.
A group of all the British kings,
Fair emblem! on a packthread swings.
The fathers, ranged in goodly row,
A decent, venerable show,
Writ a great while ago, they tell us,
And many an inch o'ertop their fellows.
A Juvenal to hunt for mottoes;
And Ovid's tales of nymphs and grottoes.
The meek-robed lawyers, all in white;
Pure as the lamb,—at least to sight.
A shelf of bottles, jar and phial,
By which the rogues he can defy all,—
All fill'd with lightning keen and genuine,
And many a little imp he'll pen you in;
Which, like Le Sage's sprite, let out
Among the neighbours makes a rout;
Brings down the lightning on their houses,
And kills their geese, and frights their spouses.
A rare thermometer, by which
He settles to the nicest pitch,
The just degrees of heat, to raise
Sermons, or politics, or plays.
Papers and books, a strange mix'd olio,
From shilling touch to pompous folio;
Answer, remark, reply, rejoinder,
Fresh from the mint, all stamp'd and coin'd here.
Like new-made glass, set by to cool,
Before it bears the workman's tool.
A blotted proof-sheet, wet from Bowling.
—"How can a man his anger hold in?"—
Forgotten rhymes, and college themes,
Worm-eaten plans, and embryo schemes;—
A mass of heterogeneous matter,
A chaos dark, nor land nor water;—
New books, like new-born infants, stand,
Waiting the printer's clothing hand;—
Others, a motley ragged brood,
Their limbs unfashion'd all, and rude,
Like Cadmus' half-form'd men appear;
One rears a helm, one lifts a spear,
And feet were lopp'd and fingers torn
Before their fellow limbs were born;
A leg began to kick and sprawl
Before the head was seen at all,
Which quiet as a mushroom lay
Till crumbling hillocks gave it way;
And all, like controversial writing,
Were born with teeth, and sprung up fighting
"But what is this," I hear you cry,
"Which saucily provokes my eye?"—
A thing unknown, without a name,
Born of the air and doom'd to flame.

ON A LADY'S WRITING.

HER even lines her steady temper show,
Neat as her dress, and polish'd as her brow;
Strong as her judgment, easy as her air;
Correct though free, and regular though fair:
And the same graces o'er her pen preside,
That form her manners and her footsteps guide

ON THE DESERTED VILLAGE.

IN vain fair Auburn weeps her desert plains,
She moves our envy who so well complains;
In vain has proud oppression laid her low,
So sweet a garland on her faded brow.
Now, Auburn, now absolve impartial fate,
Which if it made thee wretched, makes thee great
So, unobserved, some humble plant may bloom,
Till crush'd it fills the air with sweet perfume;
So, had thy swains in ease and plenty slept,
Thy poet had not sung, nor Britain wept.
Nor let Britannia mourn her drooping bay,
Unhonour'd genius, and her swift decay;
O patron of the poor! it cannot be,
While one—one poet yet remains like thee!
Nor can the muse desert our favour'd isle,
Till thou desert the muse and scorn her smile

HYMN TO CONTENT.

.....natura beatis
Omnibus esse dedit, si quis cognoverit uti.
CLAUDIAN

O THOU, the nymph with placid eye!
O seldom found, yet ever nigh!
Receive my temperate vow:
Not all the storms that shake the pole
Can e'er disturb thy halcyon soul
And smooth unalter'd brow

O come, in simple vest array'd,
With all thy sober cheer display'd,
To bless my longing sight;
Thy mien composed, thy even pace,
Thy meek regard, thy matron grace,
And chaste subdued delight.

No more by varying passions beat,
O gently guide my pilgrim feet
To find thy hermit cell;
Where in some pure and equal sky,
Beneath thy soft indulgent eye,
The modest virtues dwell.

Simplicity in Attic vest,
And Innocence with candid breast,
And clear undaunted eye;
And Hope, who points to distant years,
Fair opening through this vale of tears
A vista to the sky.

There Health, through whose calm bosom glide
The temperate joys in even tide,
That rarely ebb or flow;
And Patience there, thy sister meek,
Presents her mild unvarying cheek
To meet the offer'd blow.

Her influence taught the Phrygian sage
A tyrant master's wanton rage
With settled smiles to meet:
Inured to toil and bitter bread,
He bow'd his meek submitted head,
And kiss'd thy sainted feet.

But thou, O nymph retired and coy!
In what brown hamlet dost thou joy
To tell thy tender tale?
The lowliest children of the ground,
Moss-rose, and violet blossom round,
And lily of the vale.

O say what soft propitious hour
I best may choose to hail thy power,
And court thy gentle sway?
When Autumn friendly to the muse,
Shall thy own modest tints diffuse,
And shed thy milder day.

When Eve, her dewy star beneath,
Thy balmy spirit loves to breathe,
And every storm is laid;—
If such an hour was e'er thy choice,
Oft let me hear thy soothing voice
Low whispering through the shade.

THE ORIGIN OF SONG-WRITING.*

Illic indocto primum se exercuit arcu;
Hei mihi quam doctas nunc habet ille manus!
TIBUL.

When Cupid, wanton boy! was young,
His wings unfledged, and rude his tongue,
He loiter'd in Arcadian bowers,
And hid his bow in wreaths of flowers;
Or pierced some fond unguarded heart
With now and then a random dart,
But heroes scorned the idle boy,
And love was but a shepherd's toy.
When Venus, vex'd to see her child
Amid the forests thus run wild,
Would point him out some nobler game
Gods and godlike men to tame.
She seized the boy's reluctant hand,
And led him to the virgin band,
Where the sister muses round
Swell the deep majestic sound;
And in solemn strains unite,
Breathing chaste, severe delight;
Songs of chiefs and heroes old,
In unsubmitting virtue bold:
Of even valour's temperate heat,
And toils to stubborn patience sweet;
Of nodding plumes and burnish'd arms
And glory's bright terrific charms.
The potent sounds like lightning dart
Resistless through the glowing heart;
Of power to lift the fixed soul
High o'er Fortune's proud control;
Kindling deep, prophetic musing;
Love of beauteous death infusing;
Scorn, and unconquerable hate
Of tyrant pride's unhallow'd state.
The boy abash'd, and half afraid,
Beheld each chaste immortal maid:
Pallas spread her Egis there;
Mars stood by with threatening air;
And stern Diana's icy look
With sudden chill his bosom struck.
"Daughters of Jove, receive the child,'
The queen of beauty said, and smiled;—
Her rosy breath perfumed the air,
And scatter'd sweet contagion there
Relenting Nature learn'd to languish,
And sicken'd with delightful anguish:—
"Receive him artless yet and young;
Refine his air, and smooth his tongue:
Conduct him through your favourite bower
Enrich'd with fair perennial flowers,
To solemn shades and springs that lie
Remote from each unhallow'd eye;
Teach him to spell those mystic names
That kindle bright immortal flames:
And guide his young unpractised feet
To reach coy Learning's lofty seat."
Ah, luckless hour! mistaken maids,
When Cupid sought the muses' shades.
Of their sweetest notes beguiled,
By the sly insidious child;
Now of power his darts are found
Twice ten thousand times to wound.
Now no more the slacken'd strings
Breathe of high immortal things,
But Cupid tunes the Muse's lyre
To languid notes of soft desire.
In every clime, in every tongue,
'Tis love inspires the poet's song.
Hence Sappho's soft infectious page;
Monimia's wo; Othello's rage;
Abandon'd Dido's fruitless prayer;
And Eloisa's long despair;
The garland, blest with many a vow,
For haughty Sacharissa's brow;

* Addressed to the Author of Essays on Song-writing.

And wash'd with tears, the mournful verse
That Petrarch laid on Laura's hearse.
But more than all the sister choir,
Music confess'd the pleasing fire.
Here sovereign Cupid reign'd alone;
Music and song were all his own.
Sweet as in old Arcadian plains,
The British pipe has caught the strains:
And where the Tweed's pure current glides,
Or Liffy rolls her limpid tides;
Or Thames his oozy waters leads
Through rural bowers or yellow meads,—
With many an old romantic tale
Has cheer'd the lone sequester'd vale;
With many a sweet and tender lay
Deceived the tiresome summer day.
'Tis yours to cull with happy art
Each meaning verse that speaks the heart;
And fair array'd, in order meet,
To lay the wreath at Beauty's feet.

ODE TO SPRING.

Sweet daughter of a rough and stormy sire,
Hoar Winter's blooming child; delightful Spring,
Whose unshorn locks with leaves
And swelling buds are crown'd;

From the green islands of eternal youth,—
Crown'd with fresh blooms and ever springing shade,—
Turn, hither turn thy step,
O thou, whose powerful voice

More sweet than softest touch of Doric reed,
Or Lydian flute, can sooth the madding wind,—
And through the stormy deep
Breathe thine own tender calm.

Thee, best-beloved! the virgin train await
With songs and festal rites, and joy to rove
Thy blooming wilds among,
And vales and dewy lawns,

With untired feet; and cull thy earliest sweets
To weave fresh garlands for the glowing brow
Of him, the favoured youth
That prompts their whisper'd sigh.

Unlock thy copious stores,—those tender showers
That drop their sweetness on the infant buds;
And silent dews that swell
The milky ear's green stem,

And feed the flowering osier's early shoots;
And call those winds which through the whispering boughs
With warm and pleasant breath
Salute the blowing flowers.

Now let me sit beneath the whitening thorn,
And mark thy spreading tints steal o'er the dale;
And watch with patient eye
Thy fair unfolding charms.

O nymph, approach! while yet the temperate sun
With bashful forehead through the cold moist air
Throws his young maiden beams,
And with chaste kisses woos

The earth's fair bosom; while the streaming veil
Of lucid clouds with kind and frequent shade
Protects thy modest blooms
From his severer blaze.

Sweet is thy reign, but short:—The red dog-star
Shall scorch thy tresses, and the mower's scythe
Thy greens, thy flowerets all,
Remorseless shall destroy.

Reluctant shall I bid thee then farewell;
For O, not all that Autumn's lap contains,
Nor Summer's ruddiest fruits,
Can aught for thee atone.

Fair Spring! whose simplest treasure more delights
Than all their largest wealth, and through the heart
Each joy and new-born hope
With softest influence breathes.

AN ADDRESS TO THE DEITY.

God of my life! and Author of my days!
Permit my feeble voice to lisp thy praise;
And trembling, take upon a mortal tongue
That hallowed name, to harps of seraphs sung.
Yet here the brightest seraphs could no more
Than veil their faces, tremble, and adore.
Worms, angels, men, in every different sphere,
Are equal all,—for all are nothing here.
All nature faints beneath the mighty name,
Which nature's works through all their parts proclaim.
I feel that name my inmost thoughts control,
And breathe an awful stillness through my soul;
As by a charm, the waves of grief subside;
Impetuous Passion stops her headlong tide:
At thy felt presence all emotions cease,
And my hush'd spirit finds a sudden peace,
Till every worldly thought within me dies,
And earth's gay pageants vanish from my eyes;
Till all my sense is lost in infinite,
And one vast object fills my aching sight.
But soon, alas! this holy calm is broke;
My soul submits to wear her wonted yoke;
With shackled pinions strives to soar in vain,
And mingles with the dross of earth again.
But he, our gracious Master, kind as just,
Knowing our frame, remembers man is dust.
His spirit, ever brooding o'er our mind,
Sees the first wish to better hopes inclined;
Marks the young dawn of every virtuous aim,
And fans the smoking flax into a flame.
His ears are open to the softest cry,
His grace descends to meet the lifted eye;
He reads the language of a silent tear,
And sighs are incense from a heart sincere.
Such are the vows, the sacrifice I give;
Accept the vow, and bid the suppliant live:
From each terrestrial bondage set me free;
Still every wish that centres not in thee;
Bid my fond hopes, my vain disquiets cease,
And point my path to everlasting peace.
If the soft hand of winning Pleasure leads
By living waters, and through flowery meads,
When all is smiling, tranquil, and serene,
And vernal beauty paints the flattering scene

O teach me to elude each latent snare,
And whisper to my sliding heart,—Beware!
With caution let me hear the syren's voice,
And doubtful, with a trembling heart, rejoice.
If friendless, in a vale of tears I stray,
Where briars wound, and thorns perplex my way,
Still let my steady soul thy goodness see,
And with strong confidence lay hold on thee;
With equal eye my various lot receive,
Resign'd to die, or resolute to live;
Prepared to kiss the sceptre or the rod,
While God is seen in all, and all in God.

I read his awful name, emblazon'd high
With golden letters on th' illumined sky;
Nor less the mystic characters I see
Wrought in each flower, inscribed in every tree;
In every leaf that trembles to the breeze
I hear the voice of God among the trees;
With thee in shady solitudes I walk,
With thee in busy crowded cities talk;
In every creature own thy forming power,
In each event thy providence adore.
Thy hopes shall animate my drooping soul,
Thy precepts guide me, and thy fears control:
Thus shall I rest, unmoved by all alarms,
Secure within the temple of thine arms;
From anxious cares, from gloomy terrors free,
And feel myself omnipotent in thee.

Then when the last, the closing hour, draws nigh,
And earth recedes before my swimming eye;
When trembling on the doubtful edge of fate
I stand, and stretch my view to either state:
Teach me to quit this transitory scene
With decent triumph, and a look serene;
Teach me to fix my ardent hopes on high,
And having lived to Thee, in Thee to die.

A SUMMER EVENING'S MEDITATION.

'Tis past! the sultry tyrant of the south
Has spent his short-lived rage; more grateful hours
Move silent on; the skies no more repel
The dazzled sight, but with mild maiden beams
Of temper'd lustre court the cherish'd eye
To wander o'er their sphere; where hung aloft
Dian's bright crescent, like a silver bow
New strung in heaven, lifts high its beamy horns
Impatient for the night, and seems to push
Her brother down the sky. Fair Venus shines
E'en in the eye of day; with sweetest beam
Propitious shines, and shakes a trembling flood
Of soften'd radiance from her dewy locks.
The shadows spread apace; while meeken'd Eve,
Her cheek yet warm with blushes, slow retires
Through the Hesperian gardens of the west,
And shuts the gates of day. 'Tis now the hour
When Contemplation from her sunless haunts,
The cool damp grotto, or the lonely depth
Of unpierced woods, where wrapt in solid shade
She mused away the gaudy hours of noon,
And fed on thoughts unripen'd by the sun,
Moves forward; and with radiant finger points
To yon blue concave swell'd by breath divine,
Where, one by one, the living eyes of heaven
Awake, quick kindling o'er the face of ether
One boundless blaze; ten thousand trembling fires,
And dancing lustres, where the unsteady eye,
Restless and dazzled, wanders unconfined
O'er all this field of glories; spacious field,
And worthy of the Master: he, whose hand
With hieroglyphics elder than the Nile
Inscribed the mystic tablet, hung on high
To public gaze, and said, "Adore, O man!
The finger of thy God." From what pure wells
Of milky light, what soft o'erflowing urn,
Are all these lamps so fill'd? these friendly lamps
For ever streaming o'er the azure deep
To point our path, and light us to our home.
How soft they slide along their lucid spheres!
And silent as the foot of Time, fulfil
Their destined courses: Nature's self is hush'd
And, but a scatter'd leaf, which rustles through
The thick-wove foliage, not a sound is heard
To break the midnight air; though the raised ear
Intensely listening, drinks in every breath.
How deep the silence, yet how loud the praise!
But are they silent all? or is there not
A tongue in every star, that talks with man,
And woos him to be wise? nor woos in vain:
This dead of midnight is the noon of thought,
And Wisdom mounts her zenith with the stars.
At this still hour the self-collected soul
Turns inward, and beholds a stranger there
Of high descent, and more than mortal rank;
An embryo god; a spark of fire divine,
Which must burn on for ages, when the sun,—
Fair transitory creature of a day!—
Has closed his golden eye, and wrapped in shades
Forgets his wonted journey through the east.
Ye citadels of light, and seats of gods!
Perhaps my future home, from whence the soul,
Revolving periods past, may oft look back
With recollected tenderness on all
The various busy scenes she left below,
Its deep-laid projects, and its strange events,
As on some fond and doating tale that sooth'd
Her infant hours—O be it lawful now
To tread the hallow'd circle of your courts,
And with mute wonder and delighted awe
Approach your burning confines. Seized in thought,
On Fancy's wild and roving wing I sail,
From the green borders of the peopled Earth,
And the pale Moon, her duteous fair attendant;
From solitary Mars; from the vast orb
Of Jupiter, whose huge gigantic bulk
Dances in ether like the lightest leaf;
To the dim verge, the suburbs of the system,
Where cheerless Saturn midst his watery moons
Girt with a lucid zone, in gloomy pomp,
Sits like an exiled monarch: fearless thence
I launch into the trackless deeps of space,
Where, burning round, ten thousand suns appear,
Of elder beam, which ask no leave to shine
Of our terrestrial star, nor borrow light
From the proud regent of our scanty day;
Sons of the morning, first-born of creation,
And only less than Him who marks their track,
And guides their fiery wheels. Here must I stop
Or is there aught beyond? What hand unseen
Impels me onward through the glowing orbs
Of habitable nature, far remote,
To the dread confines of eternal night,
To solitudes of vast unpeopled space,

The deserts of creation, wide and wild;
Where embryo systems and unkindled suns
Sleep in the womb of chaos? fancy droops,
And thought astonish'd stops her bold career.
But O thou mighty Mind! whose powerful word
Said, thus let all things be, and thus they were,
Where shall I seek thy presence? how unblamed
Invoke thy dread perfection?
Have the broad eyelids of the morn beheld thee?
Or does the beamy shoulder of Orion
Support thy throne? O look with pity down
On erring, guilty man! not in thy names
Of terror clad · not with those thunders arm'd
That conscious Sinai felt, when fear appall'd
The scatter'd tribes;—thou hast a gentler voice,
That whispers comfort to the swelling heart
Abash'd, yet longing to behold her Maker.
But now my soul, unused to stretch her powers
In flight so daring, drops her weary wing,
And seeks again the known accustom'd spot,
Drest up with sun, and shade, and lawns and streams,
A mansion fair, and spacious for its guest,
And full replete with wonders. Let me here,
Content and grateful, wait th' appointed time,
And ripen for the skies: the hour will come
When all these splendours bursting on my sight
Shall stand unveiled, and to my ravished sense
Unlock the glories of the world unknown.

TO-MORROW.

See where the falling day
In silence steals away
Behind the western hills withdrawn:
Her fires are quench'd, her beauty fled,
While blushes all her face o'erspread,
As conscious she had ill fulfill'd
The promise of the dawn.

Another morning soon shall rise,
Another day salute our eyes,
As smiling and as fair as she,
And make as many promises:
But do not thou
The tale believe,
They're sisters all,
And all deceive.

A SCHOOL ECLOGUE.

EDWARD.

Hist, William! hist! what means that air so gay?
Thy looks, thy dress, bespeak some holyday:
Thy hat is brush'd; thy hands, with wondrous pains,
Are cleansed from garden mould and inky stains;
Thy glossy shoes confess the lackey's care;
And recent from the comb shines thy sleek hair.
What god, what saint, this prodigy has wrought?*
Declare the cause, and ease my labouring thought?

WILLIAM.

John, faithful John, is with the horses come;
Mamma prevails, and I am sent for home.

HARRY.

Thrice happy whom such welcome tidings greet†
Thrice happy who reviews his native seat!
For him the matron spreads her candied hoard,
And early strawberries crown the smiling board,
For him crush'd gooseberries with rich cream combine,
And bending boughs their fragrant fruit resign:
Custards and sillabubs his taste invite;
Sports fill the day, and feasts prolong the night.
Think not I envy, I admire thy fate:‡
Yet, ah! what different tasks thy comrades wait!
Some in the grammar's thorny maze to toil,
Some with rude strokes the snowy paper soil,
Some o'er barbaric climes in maps to roam,
Far from their mother-tongue, and dear loved home.‡
Harsh names, of uncouth sound, their memories load
And oft their shoulders feel th' unpleasant goad.

EDWARD.

Doubt not our turn will come some future time.
Now, William, hear us twain contend in rhyme,
For yet thy horses have not eat their hay,
And unconsumed as yet th' allotted hour of play

WILLIAM.

Then spout alternate, I consent to hear,§—
Let no false rhyme offend my critic ear;—
But say, what prizes shall the victor hold?
I guess your pockets are not lined with gold!

HARRY.

A ship these hands have built, in every part
Carved, rigg'd, and painted, with the nicest art;
The ridgy sides are black with pitchy store,
From stem to stern 'tis twice ten inches o'er.
The lofty mast, a straight smooth hazel framed,
The tackling silk, the Charming Sally named;
And,—but take heed lest thou divulge the tale,—
The lappet of my shirt supplied the sail,
An azure riband for a pendant flies:—
Now, if thy verse excel, be this the prize.

EDWARD.

For me at home the careful housewives make,
With plums and almonds rich, an ample cake.
Smooth is the top, a plain of shining ice,
The West its sweetness gives, the East its spice:
From soft Ionian isles, well known to fame,
Ulysses once, the luscious currant came
The green transparent citron Spain bestows,
And from her golden groves the orange glows.
So vast the heaving mass, it scarce has room
Within the oven's dark capacious womb;
'Twill be consign'd to the next carrier's care,
I cannot yield it all,—be half thy share.

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* Fortunate senex, his inter flumina nota.
† Non equidem invideo, miror magis.
‡ At nos hinc alii sitientes ibimus Afros,
Pars Scythiam, et rapidum Cretæ veniemus Oaxem.
§ Alternis dicetis.

Sed tamen, ille Deus qui sit, da Tityre nobis.

Well does the gift thy liquorish palate suit;
I know who robb'd the orchard of its fruit.*
When all were wrapt in sleep, one early morn,
While yet the dew-drop trembled on the thorn,
I mark'd when o'er the quickset hedge you leapt,
And, sly, beneath the gooseberry bushes crept;†
Then shook the trees; a shower of apples fell,—
And where the hoard you kept, I know full well;
The mellow gooseberries did themselves produce,
For through thy pocket oozed the viscous juice.

HARRY

I scorn a telltale, or I could declare
How, leave unask'd, you sought the neighbouring fair;
Then home by moonlight spurr'd your jaded steed,
And scarce return'd before the hour of bed.
Think how thy trembling heart had felt affright,
Had not our master supp'd abroad that night.

EDWARD.

On the smooth whitewash'd ceiling near thy bed,
Mix'd with thine own, is Anna's cipher read;
From wreaths of dusky smoke the letters flow;—
Whose hand the waving candle held, I know.
Fines and jobations shall thy soul appal,
Whene'er our mistress spies the sullied wall.

HARRY.

Unconn'd her lesson once, in idle mood,
Trembling before her master, Anna stood
I mark'd what prompter near her took his place,
And, whispering, saved the virgin from disgrace:
Much is the youth belied, and much the maid,
Or more than words the whisper soft convey'd.

EDWARD.

Think not I blush to own so bright a flame,
E'en boys for her assume the lover's name;—
As far as alleys beyond taws we prize,‡
Or venison pasty ranks above school pies;
As much as peaches beyond apples please,
Or Parmesan excels a Suffolk cheese;
Or Palgrave donkeys lag behind a steed,—
So far do Anna's charms all other charms exceed.

HARRY.

Tell, if thou canst, where is that creature bred,
Whose wide-stretch'd mouth is larger than its head:
Guess, and my great Apollo thou shalt be,§
And cake and ship shall both remain with thee.

EDWARD.

Explain thou first, what portent late was seen,
With strides impetuous, posting o'er the green;
Three heads, like Cerberus, the monster bore,
And one was sidelong fix'd, and two before;
Eight legs, depending from his ample sides,
Each well-built flank unequally divides;
For five on this, on that side three, are found,
Four swiftly move, and four not touch the ground.
Long time the moving prodigy I view'd,
By gazing men and barking dogs pursued.

WILLIAM.

Cease! cease your carols, both! for lo the bell,
With jarring notes, has rung out Pleasure's knell.
Your startled comrades, ere the game be done,
Quit their unfinish'd sports, and trembling run.
Haste to your forms before the master call!
With thoughtful step he paces o'er the hall,
Does with stern looks each playful loiterer greet,
Counts with his eye, and marks each vacant seat;
Intense the buzzing murmur grows around,
Loud through the dome the usher's strokes resound
Sneak off, and to your places slyly steal,
Before the prowess of his arm you feel.

WHAT DO THE FUTURES SPEAK OF

IN ANSWER TO A QUESTION IN THE GREEK GRAMMAR

THEY speak of never-withering shades,
And bowers of opening joy;
They promise mines of fairy gold,
And bliss without alloy

They whisper strange enchanting things
Within Hope's greedy ears;
And sure this tuneful voice exceeds
The music of the spheres

They speak of pleasure to the gay,
And wisdom to the wise;
And soothe the poet's beating heart
With fame that never dies

To virgins languishing in love,
They speak the minute nigh,
And warm consenting hearts they join,
And paint the rapture high.

In every language, every tongue,
The same kind things they say;
In gentle slumbers speak by night
In waking dreams by day.

Cassandra's fate reversed is theirs:
She, true, no faith could gain,—
They, every passing hour deceive,
Yet are believed again.

THE RIGHTS OF WOMAN.

YES, injured woman! rise, assert thy right!
Woman! too long degraded, scorn'd, oppress:
O born to rule in partial Law's despite,
Resume thy native empire o'er the breast!

Go forth array'd in panoply divine;
That angel pureness which admits no stain,
Go, bid proud man his boasted rule resign,
And kiss the golden sceptre of thy reign

Go, gird thyself with grace; collect thy store
Of bright artillery glancing from afar;
Soft melting tones thy thundering cannon's roar
Blushes and fears thy magazine of war.

* Non ego, te vidi, Damonis———
† ———Tu post carecta latebas.
‡ Lenta salix quantum pallenti cedit olivæ.
§ Dic quibus in terris, et eris mihi magnus Apollo.

Thy rights are empire: urge no meaner claim,—
Felt, not defined, and if debated, lost;
Like sacred mysteries, which withheld from fame,
Shunning discussion, are revered the most.

Try all that wit and art suggest to bend
Of thy imperial foe the stubborn knee;
Make treacherous man thy subject, not thy friend;
Thou mayst command, but never canst be free.

Awe the licentious, and restrain the rude;
Soften the sullen, clear the cloudy brow:
Be, more than princes' gifts, thy favours sued;
She hazards all, who will the least allow.

But hope not, courted idol of mankind,
On this proud eminence secure to stay;
Subduing and subdued, thou soon shalt find
Thy coldness soften, and thy pride give way.

Then, then, abandon each ambitious thought,
Conquest or rule thy heart shall feebly move,
In Nature's school, by her soft maxims taught,
That separate rights are lost in mutual love.

WASHING-DAY.

.....And their voice,
Turning again towards childish treble, pipes
And whistles in its sound.——

The muses are turn'd gossips; they have lost
The buskin'd step, and clear high-sounding phrase,
Language of gods. Come then, domestic muse,
In slipshod measure loosely prattling on
Of farm or orchard, pleasant curds and cream,
Or drowning flies, or shoe lost in the mire
By little whimpering boy, with rueful face;
Come, muse, and sing the dreaded washing-day.
Ye who beneath the yoke of wedlock bend,
With bow'd soul, full well ye ken the day
Which week, smooth sliding after week, brings on
Too soon;—for to that day nor peace belongs
Nor comfort;—ere the first gray streak of dawn,
The red-arm'd washers come and chase repose.
Nor pleasant smile, nor quaint device of mirth,
E'er visited that day: the very cat,
From the wet kitchen scared and reeking hearth,
Visits the parlour,—an unwonted guest.
The silent breakfast-meal is soon despatch'd;
Uninterrupted, save by anxious looks
Cast at the lowering sky, if sky should lower.
From that last evil, O preserve us, heavens!
For should the skies pour down, adieu to all
Remains of quiet: then expect to hear
Of sad disasters,—dirt and gravel stains
Hard to efface, and loaded lines at once
Snapp'd short,—and linen horse by dog thrown down,
And all the petty miseries of life.
Saints have been calm while stretch'd upon the rack,
And Guatimozin smiled on burning coals;
But never yet did housewife notable
Greet with a smile a rainy washing-day.
—But grant the welkin fair, require not thou
Who call'st thyself perchance the master there,
Or study swept, or nicely dusted coat,
Or usual 'tendance;—ask not, indiscreet,
Thy stockings mended, though the yawning rents
Gape wide as Erebus; nor hope to find
Some snug recess impervious: shouldst thou try
The 'custom'd garden walks, thine eye shall rue
The budding fragrance of thy tender shrubs,
Myrtle or rose, all crush'd beneath the weight
Of coarse check'd apron,—with impatient hand,
Twitch'd off when showers impend: or crossing lines
Shall mar thy musings, as the wet cold sheet
Flaps in thy face abrupt. Wo to the friend
Whose evil stars have urged him forth to claim
On such a day the hospitable rites!
Looks blank at best, and stinted courtesy,
Shall he receive. Vainly he feeds his hopes
With dinner of roast chickens, savoury pie,
Or tart or pudding:—pudding he nor tart
That day shall eat; nor, though the husband try,
Mending what can't be help'd, to kindle mirth
From cheer deficient, shall his consort's brow
Clear up propitious:—the unlucky guest
In silence dines, and early slinks away.
I well remember, when a child, the awe
This day struck into me, for then the maids,
I scarce knew why, look'd cross, and drove me from them:
Nor soft caress could I obtain, nor hope
Usual indulgencies; jelly or creams,
Relic of costly suppers, and set by
For me their petted one; or butter'd toast,
When butter was forbid; or thrilling tale
Of ghost or witch, or murder—so I went
And shelter'd me beside the parlour fire:
There my dear grandmother, eldest of forms,
Tended the little ones, and watch'd from harm,
Anxiously fond, though oft her spectacles
With elfin cunning hid, and oft the pins
Drawn from her ravell'd stockings, might have sour'd
One less indulgent.—
At intervals my mother's voice was heard,
Urging despatch: briskly the work went on,
All hands employ'd to wash, to rinse, to wring,
To fold, and starch, and clap, and iron, and plait.
Then would I sit me down, and ponder much
Why washings were. Sometimes through hollow bowl
Of pipe amused we blew, and sent aloft
The floating bubbles; little dreaming then
To see, Montgolfier, thy silken ball
Ride buoyant through the clouds—so near approach
The sports of children and the toils of men.
Earth, air, and sky, and ocean, hath its bubbles,
And verse is one of them—this most of all.

TO MR. S. T. COLERIDGE.—1797.

Midway the hill of science after steep
And rugged paths that tire the unpractised feet,
A grove extends in tangled mazes wrought,
And fill'd with strange enchantment:—dubious shapes
Flit through dim glades, and lure the eager foot

Of youthful ardour to eternal chase.
Dreams hang on every leaf; unearthly forms
Glide through the gloom; and mystic visions swim
Before the cheated sense. Athwart the mists,
Far into vacant space, huge shadows stretch,
And seem realities; while things of life,
Obvious to sight and touch, all glowing round,
Fade to the hue of shadows.—Scruples here,
With filmy net, most like th' autumnal webs
Of floating gossamer, arrest the foot
Of generous enterprise; and palsy hope
And fair ambition with the chilling touch
Of sickly hesitation and blank fear.
Nor seldom Indolence these lawns among
Fixes her turf-built seat; and wears the garb
Of deep philosophy, and museful sits,
In dreamy twilight of the vacant mind,
Soothed by the whispering shade; for soothing soft
The shades; and vistas lengthening into air,
With moonbeam rainbows tinted.—Here each mind
Of finer mould acute and delicate,
In its high progress to eternal truth
Rests for a space, in fairy bowers entranced;
And loves the soften'd light and tender gloom;
And, pamper'd with most unsubstantial food,
Looks down indignant on the grosser world,
And matters cumbrous shaping. Youth beloved
Of Science—of the Muse beloved,—not here,
Not in the maze of metaphysic lore,
Build thou thy place of resting! lightly tread
The dangerous ground, on noble aims intent;
And be this Circe of the studious cell
Enjoy'd but still subservient. Active scenes
Shall soon with healthful spirit brace thy mind;
And fair exertion for bright fame sustain'd,
For friends, for country chase each spleen-fed fog
That blots the wide creation.—
Now Heaven conduct thee with a parent's love!

THE UNKNOWN GOD.

To learned Athens, led by fame,
As once the man of Tarsus came,
With pity and surprise,
Midst idol altars as he stood,
O'er sculptured marble, brass, and wood,
He roll'd his awful eyes.

But one, apart, his notice caught,
That seem'd with higher meaning fraught,
Graved on the wounded stone;
Nor form nor name was there express'd;
Deep reverence fill'd the musing breast,
Perusing, "To the God unknown."

Ages after age has roll'd away,
Altars and thrones have felt decay,
Sages and saints have risen;
And, like a giant roused from sleep,
Man has explored the pathless deep,
And lightnings snatch'd from heaven.

And many a shrine in dust is laid,
Where kneeling nations homage paid,
By rock, or fount, or grove;
Ephesian Dian sees no more
Her workmen fuse the silver ore,
Nor Capitolian Jove.

E'en Salem's hallow'd courts have ceased
With solemn pomps her tribes to feast,
No more the victim bleeds;
To censers fill'd with rare perfumes,
And vestments from Egyptian looms,
A purer rite succeeds.

Yet still, where'er presumptuous man
His Maker's essence strives to scan,
And lifts his feeble hands,
Though saint and sage their powers unite,
To fathom that abyss of light,
Ah! still *that altar* stands.

ODE TO REMORSE.

Dread offspring of the holy light within,
Offspring of Conscience and of Sin,
Stern as thine awful sire, and fraught with woe,
From bitter springs thy mother taught to flow,—
Remorse! To man alone 'tis given
Of all on earth, or all in heaven,
To wretched man thy bitter cup to drain,
Feel thy awakening stings, and taste thy whole some pain.

Midst Eden's blissful bowers,
And amaranthine flowers,
Thy birth portentous dimm'd the orient day,
What time our hapless sire,
O'ercome by fond desire,
The high command presumed to disobey;
Then didst thou rear thy snaky crest,
And raise thy scorpion lash to tear the guilty breast:
And never, since that fatal hour,
May man, of woman born, expect t' escape thy power.

Thy goading stings the branded Cain
Cross th' untrodden desert drove,
Ere from his cradling home and native plain
Domestic man had learnt to rove.

By gloomy shade or lonely flood
Of vast primeval solitude,
Thy step his hurried steps pursued,
Thy voice awoke his conscious fears,
For ever sounding in his ears
A father's curse, a brother's blood,
Till life was misery too great to bear,
And torturing thought was lost in sullen, dumb despair.

The king who sat on Judah's throne,
By guilty love to murder wrought,
Was taught thy searching power to own,
When, sent of Heaven, the seer his royal presence sought.
As, wrapt in artful phrase, with sorrow feign'd,
He told of helpless, meek distress,
And wrongs that sought from power redress
The pity-moving tale his ear obtain'd

And bade his better feelings wake:
Then, sudden as the trodden snake
On the scared traveller darts his fangs,
The prophet's bold rebuke aroused thy keenest pangs.

And O that look, that soft upbraiding look!
A thousand cutting, tender things it spoke,—
The sword so lately drawn was not so keen,—
Which, as the injured Master turn'd him round,
In the strange solemn scene,
And the shrill clarion gave th' appointed sound,
Pierced sudden through the reins,
Awakening all thy pains,
And drew a silent shower of bitter tears
Down Peter's blushing cheek, late pale with coward fears.

Cruel Remorse! where Youth and Pleasure sport,
And thoughtless Folly keeps her court,—
Crouching midst rosy bowers thou lurk'st unseen;
Slumbering the festal hours away,
While Youth disports in that enchanting scene;
Till on some fated day
Thou with a tiger-spring dost leap upon thy prey,
And tear his helpless breast, o'erwhelm'd, with wild dismay.
Mark that poor wretch with clasped hands!
Pale o'er his parent's grave he stands,—
The grave by his ingratitude prepared;
Ah then, where'er he rests his head,
On roses pillow'd or the softest down,
Though festal wreaths his temples crown,
He well might envy Guatimozin's bed,
With burning coals and sulphur spread,
And with less agony his torturing hour have shared.

For Thou art by to point the keen reproach;
Thou draw'st the curtains of his nightly couch,
Bring'st back the reverend face with tears bedew'd,
That o'er his follies yearn'd;
The warnings oft in vain renew'd,
The looks of anguish and of love,
His stubborn breast that failed to move,
When in the scorner's chair he sat, and wholesome counsel spurn'd.

Lives there a man whose labouring breast
Is with some dark and guilty secret prest,
Who hides within its inmost fold
Strange crimes to mortal ear untold?
In vain to sad Chartreuse he flies,
Midst savage rocks and cloisters dim and drear,
And there to shun thee tries:
In vain untold his crime to mortal ear,
Silence and whisper'd sounds but make thy voice more clear.

Lo, where the cowled monk with frantic rage
Lifts high the sounding scourge, his bleeding shoulders smites!
Penance and fasts his anxious thoughts engage,
Weary his days and joyless are his nights,
His naked feet the flinty pavement tears,
His knee at every shrine the marble wears;—
Why does he lift the cruel scourge?
The restless pilgrimage why urge?
'Tis all to quell thy fiercer rage,
'Tis all to sooth thy deep despair, [bear.
He courts the body's pangs, for thine he cannot

See o'er the bleeding corse of her he loved
The jealous murderer bends unmoved,
Trembling with rage, his livid lips express
His frantic passion's wild and rash excess.
O God, she's innocent!—transfixt he stands,
Pierced through with shafts from thine avenging hands;
Down his pale cheek no tear will flow,
Nor can he shun, nor can he bear, his wo.

'Twas phantoms summon'd by thy power
Round Richard's couch at midnight hour,
That scared the tyrant from unblest repose;
With frantic haste, "To horse! to horse!" he cries,
While on his crowned brow cold sweat-drops rise—
And fancied spears his spear oppose;
But not the swiftest steed can bear away
From thy firm grasp thine agonizing prey,
Thou wast the fiend, and thou alone,
That stood'st by Beaufort's mitred head,
With upright hair and visage ghastly pale:
Thy terrors shook his dying bed,
Past crimes and blood his sinking heart assail,
His hands are clasp'd,—hark to that hollow groan!
See how his glazed, dim eye-balls wildly roll,
'Tis not dissolving Nature's pains; that pang is of the soul.

Where guilty souls are doom'd to dwell,
'Tis thou that makest their fiercest hell,
The vulture thou that on their liver feeds,
As rise to view their past unhallow'd deeds;
With thee condemn'd to stay,
Till time has roll'd away
Long eras of uncounted years,
And every stain is wash'd in soft repentant tears.

Servant of God—but unbeloved—proceed,
For thou must live and ply thy scorpion scourge.
Thy sharp upbraidings urge
Against th' unrighteous deed,
Till thine accursed mother shall expire,
And a new world spring forth from renovating fire

O! when the glare of day is fled,
And calm, beneath the evening star,
Reflection leans her pensive head,
And calls the passions to her solemn bar;
Reviews the censure rash, the hasty word,
The purposed act too long deferr'd,
Of time the wasted treasures lent,
And fair occasions lost, and golden hours mispent:

When anxious Memory numbers o'er
Each offer'd prize we failed to seize;
Or friends laid low, whom now no more
Our fondest love can serve or please,
And thou, dread power! bring'st back, in terrors dress'd,
Th' irrevocable past, to sting the careless breast;—

O! in that hour be mine to know,
While fast the silent sorrows flow,

And wisdom cherishes the wholesome pain,
No heavier guilt, no deeper stain,
Than tears of meek contrition may atone,
Shed at the mercy-seat of Heaven's eternal throne.

ON THE

DEATH OF THE PRINCESS CHARLOTTE.

YES, Britain mourns, as with electric touch,
For youth, for love, for happiness destroy'd,
Her universal population melts
In grief spontaneous, and hard hearts are moved,
And rough, unpolish'd natures learn to feel
For those they envied, levell'd in the dust
By Fate's impartial stroke; and pulpits sound
With vanity and wo to earthly goods,
And urge and dry the tear.—Yet one there is
Who midst this general burst of grief remains
In strange tranquillity; whom not the stir
And long-drawn murmurs of the gathering crowd,
That by his very windows trail the pomp
Of hearse, and blazon'd arms, and long array
Of sad funereal rites, nor the loud groans
And deep-felt anguish of a husband's heart,
Can move to mingle with this flood one tear:
In careless apathy, perhaps in mirth,
He wears the day. Yet is he near in blood,
The very stem on which this blossom grew,
And at his knees she fondled in the charm
And grace spontaneous which alone belongs
To untaught infancy:—Yet, O forbear!
Nor deem him hard of heart; for awful, struck
By Heaven's severest visitation, sad,
Like a scathed oak amidst the forest trees,
Lonely he stands;—leaves bud, and shoot, and fall,
He holds no sympathy with living nature
Or time's incessant change. Then in this hour,
While pensive thought is busy with the woes
And restless change of poor humanity,
Think then, O think of him, and breathe one prayer,
From the full tide of sorrow spare one tear,
For him who does not weep!

THE WAKE OF THE KING OF SPAIN.*

ARRAY'D in robes of regal state,
But stiff and cold the monarch sate;
In gorgeous vests, his chair beside,
Stood prince and peer, the nation's pride;
And paladin and high-born dame
Their place amid the circle claim:
And wands of office lifted high,
And arms and blazon'd heraldry,—
All mute like marble statues stand,
Nor raise the eye, nor move the hand:
No voice, no sound to stir the air,
The silence of the grave is there.

The portal opens—hark, a voice!
"Come forth, O king! O king, rejoice!
The bowl is fill'd, the feast is spread,
Come forth, O king!"—The king is dead.
The bowl, the feast, he tastes no more,
The feast of life for him is o'er.
Again the sounding portals shake,
And speaks again the voice that spake:
—"The sun is high, the sun is warm,
Forth to the field the gallants swarm,
The foaming bit the courser champs,
His hoof the turf impatient stamps;
Light on their steeds the hunters spring,
The sun is high—Come forth, O king!"
Along these melancholy walls
In vain the voice of pleasure calls:
The horse may neigh, and bay the hound,—
He hears no more; his sleep is sound.
Retire;—once more the portals close;
Leave, leave him to his dread repose

* The kings of Spain for nine days after death are placed sitting in robes of state with their attendants around them, and solemnly summoned by the proper officers to their meals and their amusements, as if living.

HYMNS.

HYMN I.

JEHOVAH reigns: let every nation hear,
And at his footstool bow with holy fear;
Let heaven's high arches echo with his name,
And the wide peopled earth his praise proclaim,
Then send it down to hell's deep glooms resounding,
Through all her caves in dreadful murmurs sounding.

He rules with wide and absolute command
O'er the broad ocean and the steadfast land:
Jehovah reigns, unbounded, and alone,
And all creation hangs beneath his throne.
He reigns alone; let no inferior nature
Usurp, or share the throne of the Creator.

He saw the struggling beams of infant light
Shoot through the massy gloom of ancient night;
His spirit hush'd the elemental strife,
And brooded o'er the kindling seeds of life:
Seasons and months began their long procession,
And measured o'er the year in bright succession.

The joyful sun sprung up th' ethereal way,
Strong as a giant, as a bridegroom gay;
And the pale moon diffused her shadowy light
Superior o'er the dusky brow of night;
Ten thousand glittering lamps the skies adorning,
Numerous as dew-drops from the womb of morning

Earth's blooming face with rising flowers he drest,
And spread a verdant mantle o'er her breast;
Then from the hollow of his hand he pours
The circling water round her winding shores,
The new-born world in their cool arms embracing
And with soft murmurs still her banks caressing.

At length she rose complete in finish'd pride,
All fair and spotless, like a virgin bride;
Fresh with untarnish'd lustre as she stood,
Her Maker bless'd his work, and call'd it good
The morning stars with joyful acclamation
Exulting sang, and hail'd the new creation

Yet this fair world, the creature of a day,
Though built by God's right hand, must pass away;
And long oblivion creep o'er mortal things,
The fate of empires, and the pride of kings:
Eternal night shall veil their proudest story,
And drop the curtain o'er all human glory.

The sun himself, with weary clouds oppress,
Shall in his silent, dark pavilion rest;
His golden urn shall broke and useless lie,
Amidst the common ruins of the sky;
The stars rush headlong in the wild commotion,
And bathe their glittering foreheads in the ocean

But fix'd, O God! for ever stands thy throne;
Jehovah reigns, a universe alone;
Th' eternal fire that feeds each vital flame,
Collected, or diffused, is still the same.
He dwells within his own unfathom'd essence,
And fills all space with his unbounded presence.

But O! our highest notes the theme debase,
And silence is our least injurious praise;
Cease, cease your songs, the daring flight control,
Revere him in the stillness of the soul;
With silent duty meekly bend before him,
And deep within your inmost hearts adore him.

HYMN II.

Praise to God immortal praise,*
For the love that crowns our days;
Bounteous scource of every joy,
Let thy praise our tongues employ;

For the blessings of the field,
For the stores the gardens yield,
For the vine's exalted juice,
For the generous olive's use;

Flocks that whiten all the plain,
Yellow sheaves of ripen'd grain;
Clouds that drop their fattening dews,
Suns that temperate warmth diffuse;

All that Spring with bounteous hand
Scatters o'er the smiling land;
All that liberal Autumn pours
From her rich o'erflowing stores:

These to thee, my God, we owe;
Source whence all our blessings flow;
And for these my soul shall raise
Grateful vows and solemn praise.

Yet should rising whirlwinds tear
From its stem the ripening ear;
Should the fig tree's blasted shoot
Drop her green untimely fruit;

Should the vine put forth no more,
Nor the olive yield her store;

* Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines, the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat, the flocks shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation.—Hab. iii. 17, 18.

Though the sickening flocks should fall,
And the herds desert the stall;

Should thine alter'd hand restrain
The early and the latter rain;
Blast each opening bud of joy,
And the rising year destroy:

Yet to thee my soul should raise
Grateful vows, and solemn praise;
And, when every blessing's flown,
Love thee—for thyself alone.

HYMN III.

FOR EASTER SUNDAY.

Again the Lord of life and light
Awakes the kindling ray;
Unseals the eyelids of the morn,
And pours increasing day.

O what a night was that, which wrapt
The heathen world in gloom!
O what a sun which broke this day,
Triumphant from the tomb!

This day be grateful homage paid,
And loud hosannas sung;
Let gladness dwell in every heart,
And praise on every tongue.

Ten thousand differing lips shall join
To hail this welcome morn,
Which scatters blessings from its wings,
To nations yet unborn.

Jesus the friend of human kind,
With strong compassion moved,
Descended like a pitying God,
To save the souls he loved.

The powers of darkness leagued in vain
To bind his soul in death;
He shook their kingdom when he fell,
With his expiring breath.

Not long the toils of hell could keep
The hope of Judah's line;
Corruption never could take hold
On aught so much divine.

And now his conquering chariot wheels
Ascend the lofty skies;
While broke beneath his powerful cross,
Death's iron sceptre lies.

Exalted high at God's right hand,
The Lord of all below,
Through him is pardoning love dispensed,
And boundless blessings flow.

And still for erring, guilty man,
A brother's pity flows;
And still his bleeding heart is touch'd
With memory of our woes.

To thee, my Saviour and my King,
Glad homage let me give,
And stand prepared like thee to die
With thee that I may live.

HYMN IV.

Behold, where breathing love divine,
Our dying Master stands!
His weeping followers gathering round,
Receive his last commands.

From that mild teacher's parting lips
What tender accents fell!
The gentle precept which he gave,
Became its author well

"Blest is the man whose softening heart
Feels all another's pain;
To whom the supplicating eye
Was never raised in vain.

Whose breast expands with generous warmth
A stranger's woes to feel;
And bleeds in pity o'er the wound
He wants the power to heal.

"He spreads his kind supporting arms
To every child of grief;
His secret bounty largely flows,
And brings unask'd relief.

"To gentle offices of love
His feet are never slow:
He views through mercy's melting eye
A brother in a foe.

"Peace from the bosom of his God,
My peace to him I give;
And when he kneels before the throne,
His trembling soul shall live.

"To him protection shall be shown,
And mercy from above
Descend on those who thus fulfil
The perfect law of love."

HYMN V.

Awake, my soul! lift up thine eyes,
See where thy foes against thee rise,
In long array, a numerous host;
Awake, my soul! or thou art lost.

Here giant Danger threatening stands,
Mustering his pale terrific bands;
There Pleasure's silken banners spread,
And willing souls are captive led.

See where rebellious passions rage,
And fierce desires and lusts engage;
The meanest foe of all the train
Has thousands and ten thousands slain.

Thou tread'st upon enchanted ground,
Perils and snares beset thee round;
Beware of all, guard every part,
But most, the traitor in thy heart.

"Come then, my soul, now learn to wield
The weight of thine immortal shield;"
Put on the armour from above
Of heavenly truth and heavenly love.

The terror and the charm repel,
And powers of earth, and powers of hell;
The Man of Calvary triumph'd here;
Why should his faithful followers fear?

HYMN VI.

PIOUS FRIENDSHIP.

How blest the sacred tie that binds
In union sweet according minds!
How swift the heavenly course they run,
Whose hearts, whose faith, whose hopes are one

To each, the soul of each how dear,
What jealous love, what holy fear!
How doth the generous flame within
Refine from earth and cleanse from sin!

Their streaming tears together flow
For human guilt and mortal wo;
Their ardent prayers together rise,
Like mingling flames in sacrifice.

Together both they seek the place
Where God reveals his awful face;
How high, how strong, their raptures swell,
There's none but kindred souls can tell.

Nor shall the glowing flame expire
When nature droops her sickening fire;
Then shall they meet in realms above,
A heaven of joy—because of love.

HYMN VII.

"Come unto me all that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

Come, said Jesus' sacred voice,
Come and make my paths your choice;
I will guide you to your home;
Weary pilgrim, hither come!

Thou, who houseless, sole, forlorn,
Long hast borne the proud world's scorn,
Long hast roam'd the barren waste,—
Weary pilgrim, hither haste!

Ye, who toss'd on beds of pain,
Seek for ease, but seek in vain,
Ye whose swoll'n and sleepless eyes
Watch to see the morning rise;

Ye, by fiercer anguish torn,
In remorse for guilt who mourn;
Here repose your heavy care,
A wounded spirit who can bear!

Sinner, come! for here is found
Balm that flows for every wound:
Peace, that ever shall endure,
Rest eternal, sacred, sure.

HYMN VIII.

"The world is not their friend, nor the world's law."

Lo where a crowd of pilgrims toil
Yon craggy steeps among!
Strange their attire, and strange their mien,
As wild they press along.

Their eyes with bitter streaming tears
Now bent towards the ground,
Now rapt, to heaven their looks they raise,
And bursts of song resound.

And hark! a voice from 'midst the throng
Cries, "Stranger, wouldst thou know
Our name, our race, our destined home,
Our cause of joy or wo?—

"Our country is Immanuel's land,
We seek that promised soil;
The songs of Zion cheer our hearts,
While strangers here we toil.

"Oft do our eyes with joy o'erflow,
And oft are bathed in tears:
Yet naught but heaven our hopes can raise,
And naught but sin our fears.

"The flowers that spring along the road,
We scarcely stoop to pluck;
We walk o'er beds of shining ore
Nor waste one wishful look:

'We tread the path our Master trod,
We bear the cross he bore;
And every thorn that wounds our feet,
His temples pierced before:

"Our powers are oft dissolved away
In ecstasies of love;
And while our bodies wander here,
Our souls are fix'd above:

"We purge our mortal dross away,
Refining as we run;
But while we die to earth and sense,
Our heaven is begun."

HYMN IX.

Joy to the followers of the Lord!
Thus saith the sure, the eternal word;
Not of earth the joy it brings,
Temper'd in celestial springs:

'Tis the joy of pardon'd sin,
When conscience cries, 'Tis well within;
'Tis the joy that fills the breast
When the passions sink to rest:

'Tis the joy that seated deep,
Leaves not when we sigh and weep;
It spreads itself in virtuous deeds,
With sorrow sighs, in pity bleeds.

Stern and awful are its tones
When the patriot martyr groans,
And the throbbing pulse beats high
To rapture mix'd with agony.

A tenderer, softer form it wears,
Dissolved in love, dissolved in tears,
When humble souls a Saviour greet,
And sinners clasp the mercy seat.

'Tis joy e'en here! a budding flower,
Struggling with snows and storm and shower
And waits the moment to expand,
Transplanted to its native land.

HYMN X.

A PASTORAL HYMN.

"Gentle pilgrim, tell me why
Dost thou fold thine arms and sigh,
And wistful cast thine eyes around?—
Whither, pilgrim, art thou bound?"
"The road to Zion's gates I seek;
If thou canst inform me, speak."
"Keep yon right-hand path with care,
Though crags obstruct, and brambles tear
You just discern a narrow track,—
Enter there and turn not back."
"Say where that pleasant pathway leads,
Winding down yon flowery meads?
Songs and dance the way beguiles,
Every face is drest in smiles."
"Shun with care that flowery way;
'Twill lead thee, pilgrim, far astray."
"Guide or counsel do I need?"
"Pilgrim, he who runs may read."
"Is the way that I must keep,
Cross'd by waters wide and deep?"
"Did it lead through flood and fire,
Thou must not stop—thou must not tire.
"Till I have my journey past,
Tell me will the daylight last?
Will the sky be bright and clear
Till the evening shades appear?"
"Though the sun now rides so high,
Clouds may veil the evening sky;
Fast sinks the sun, fast wears the day,
Thou must not stop, thou must not stay
God speed thee, pilgrim, on thy way.'

SIR WILLIAM JONES.

WILLIAM JONES, the son of an eminent mathematician, was born in London, in the year 1746. Losing his father, when only three years of age, he was left to the entire care of his mother, a woman of strong mind and good sense, and from whom he imbibed an early taste for literature. In 1753, he was sent to Harrow School, where he soon attracted the attention of the masters, and the admiration of his associates, by his extraordinary diligence and superior talents. Among his school fellows were Dr. Parr, and Bennett, afterwards Bishop of Cloyne, who, in speaking of young Jones, at the age eight or nine, says, he was even then "an uncommon boy." Describing his subsequent progress at Harrow, he says, "great abilities, great particularity of thinking, fondness for writing verses and plays of various kinds, and a degree of integrity and manly courage, distinguished him even at that period. I loved him and revered him, and, though one or two years older than he was, was always instructed by him from my earliest age." Such was his devotion to study, that he used to pass whole nights over his books, until his eyesight became affected; and Dr. Thackeray, the master of Harrow, said, "so active was the mind of Jones, that if he were left, naked and friendless, on Salisbury Plain, he would, nevertheless, find the road to fame and riches."

In 1764, he was entered at University College, Oxford, in opposition to the wishes of his friends, who advised his mother to place him under the superintendence of some special pleader, as at that early age he had made such a voluntary progress in legal acquirements, as to be able to put cases from an abridgement of Coke's Institutes. At the university, instead of confining himself to the usual discipline, he continued the course of classical reading which he had commenced at Harrow, and devoted a considerable portion of his time to the study of the oriental languages. During his vacations, which he generally spent in London, he learnt riding and fencing; and at home he occupied himself in the perusal of the best Italian, Spanish, French, and Portuguese authors. In 1765, he became private tutor to Lord Althorp, the son of Earl Spencer; and shortly afterwards he was elected fellow on the foundation of Sir Simon Bennett.

In 1767, he accompanied the Spencer family to Germany; and whilst at Spa, he learnt dancing, the broad-sword exercise, music, besides the art of playing on the Welsh harp; "thus," to transcribe an observation of his own, "with the fortune of a peasant, giving himself the education of a prince." On his return, he resided with his pupil at Harrow, and, during his abode there, he translated into French the life of Nadir Shah from the Persian, at the request of the King of Denmark. After making another tour, he gave up his tutorship, and, in September, 1770, entered himself a student of the Temple, for the purpose of studying for the bar. He took this step in compliance with the earnest solicitations of his friends. "Their advice," he says, in a letter to his friend Reviczki "was conformable to my own inclinations; for the only road to the highest stations in this country, is that of the law; and I need not add how ambitious and laborious I am." The mode in which he occupied himself in chambers is best described by his own pen, in a letter to his friend, Dr. Bennett, —"I have learned so much," he says, "seen so much, written so much, said so much, and thought so much, since I conversed with you, that were I to attempt to tell half what I have learned, seen, writ, said, and thought, my letter would have no end. I spend the whole winter in attending the public speeches of our greatest lawyers and senators, and in studying our own admirable laws. I give up my leisure hours to a Political Treatise on the Turks, from which I expect some reputation; and I have several objects of ambition which I cannot trust to letter, but will impart to you when we meet." In the midst of all these engagements he found time to attend Dr. William Hunter's lectures on anatomy, and to read Newton's Principia: and in 1772, he published a collection of poems, consisting, principally, of translations from the Asiatic languages. In the same year he was elected a fellow of the Royal Society; and, in 1774, appeared his celebrated commentaries De Poesi Asiatica, which procured him great reputation both at home and abroad.

Being now called to the bar, he suspended all literary pursuits, and devoted himself, with intense earnestness, to the study of his profession. In 1775, he became a regular attendant at Westminster Hall, and went the circuit and sessions at Oxford; and in the following year he was, without solicitation, made a commissioner of bankrupt, by Lord-chancellor Bathurst. It would seem, from the correspondence of our author, that soon after his call to the bar, he acquired considerable practice, as he says, in a letter to Mr. Schultens, dated July, 1777, "My law employments, attendance in the courts, incessant studies, the arrangement of pleadings, trials of causes, and opinions to clients, scarcely allow me a few moments for eating and sleeping." In 1778, he published his translation of the Orations of Isæus, with a Prefatory Discourse, Notes, and Commentary, which displayed profound critical and historical research, and excited much admiration. In March 1780, he published a Latin Ode in favour of American freedom:

and, shortly afterwards, on the resignation of Sir Roger Newdigate, he was induced to become a candidate for the representation of the University of Oxford; but the liberality of his political principles rendering his success hopeless, he declined a poll. The tumults of this year induced him to write a pamphlet, entitled, An Inquiry into the Legal Mode of suppressing Riots, with a Constitutional Plan of Future Defence; and about the same period he published his celebrated essay on the Law of Bailments, in which he treated his subject, says Mr. Roscoe, with an accuracy of method hitherto seldom exhibited by our legal writers. In 1782, he spoke at a public meeting in favour of parliamentary reform, and also became a member of the Society for Contitutional Reformation. In a letter to the Dean of St. Asaph, this year, he says it is "his wish to become as great a lawyer as Sulpicius;" and hints at giving up politics, to the resignation of which he was the more inclined in consequence of a bill of indictment being preferred against the divine abovementioned, for publishing a tract, composed by Jones, entitled, A Dialogue between a Farmer and a Country Gentleman, on the Principles of Government. Of this our author immediately avowed himself the writer, by a letter addressed to Lord Kenyon, in which he defended his positions, and contended that they were conformable to the laws of England.

His political principles had for some time prevented him obtaining the grand object of his ambition,—an Indian judge-ship; but he was at length, in March, 1783, appointed judge of the Supreme Court of Judicature in Bengal, through the influence of Lord Ashburton. Previous to his departure he received the honour of knighthood, and married Miss Shipley, daughter to the Bishop of St. Asaph, with whom he arrived in Calcutta, in September, and entered upon his judicial functions in the following December. Law, literature, and philosophy, now engrossed his attention to such a degree, that his health, on which the climate also had a prejudicial influence, was quickly impaired. In a letter to Dr. Patrick Russell, dated March, 1784, he says, "I do not expect, as long as I stay in India, to be free from a bad digestion, the *morbus literatorum*, for which there is hardly any remedy but abstinence from too much food, literary and culinary. I rise before the sun, and bathe after a gentle ride; my diet is light and sparing, and I go early to rest; yet the activity of my mind is too strong for my constitution, though naturally not infirm, and I must be satisfied with a valetudinarian state of health." Soon after his arrival he projected the scheme of the Asiatic Society, of which he became the first president, and contributed many papers to its memoirs. With a view to rendering himself a proficient in the science of Sanscrit and Hindoo laws, he studied the Sanscrit and Arabic languages with great ardour; and whilst on a tour through the district of Benares, for the recovery of his health, he composed a tale, in verse, called The Enchanted Fruit, and A Treatise on the Gods of Greece, Italy, and India. In 1790, he appears to have received an offer of some augmentation of his salary, as, in a letter of that year to Sir James Macpherson, he says, "Really I want no addition to my fortune, which is enough for me; and if the whole legislature of Britain were to offer me a station different from that I now fill, I should most gratefully and respectfully decline it." He continued, with indefatigable zeal, his compilation of the Hindoo and Mahometan Digest; on the completion of which he was to have followed his wife to England, who had proceeded thither, for the recovery of her health, in the December of 1793. This intention, however, he did not live to carry into effect, being shortly afterwards attacked with an inflammation of the liver, which terminated his existence on the 27th of April, 1794. His epitaph, written by himself is equally admirable for its truth and its elegance.

Here was deposited
the mortal part of a man
who feared God, but not death;
and maintained independence,
but sought not riches;
who thought none below him
but the base and unjust;
none above him but the wise and virtuous;
who loved his parents, kindred, friends, and country;
and having devoted his life to their service,
and the improvement of his mind,
resigned it calmly, giving glory to his Creator,
wishing peace on earth,
and good will to all his creatures.

His character was, indeed, truly estimable in every respect. "To exquisite taste and learning quite unparalleled," says Dr. Parr, "Sir William Jones is known to have united the most benevolent temper, and the purest morals." His whole life was one unceasing struggle for the interests of his fellow creatures, and, unconnected with this object, he knew no ambition. He was a sincere and pious Christian; and in one of his latest discourses to the Asiatic Society, he has done more to give validity to the Mosaic account of the creation, than the researches of any contemporary writers. His acquirements as a linguist were absolutely wonderful: he understood, critically, English, Latin, French, Italian, Greek, Arabic, Persian, and Sanscrit; he could translate, with the aid of a dictionary, the Spanish, Portuguese, German, Runic, Hebrew, Bengalee, Hindoo, and Turkish; and he had bestowed considerable attention on the Russian, Swedish, Coptic, Welsh, Chinese, Dutch, Syriac, and several other languages. In addition to his vast stock of literary information, he possessed extensive legal knowledge; and, as far as we may judge from his translations, had sufficient capacity and taste for a first-rate original poet. His indefatigable application and industry have, perhaps, never been equalled; even when in ill-health he rose at three in the morning, and what were called his hours of relaxation, were devoted to studies, which would have appalled the most vigorous minds. In 1799, his widow published a splendid edition of his works, in six volumes, folio, and placed, at her own expense, a marble statue of him, executed by Flaxman, in the anti-chamber of University College, Oxford; and, among other public testimonies of respect to his memory, the directors of the East India Company voted him a monument in St. Paul's Cathedral, and a statue in Bengal.

CAISSA:

OR, THE GAME OF CHESS.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE first idea of the following piece was taken from a Latin poem of Vida, entitled Scacchia Ludus, which was translated into Italian by Marino, and inserted in the fifteenth canto of his Adonis: the author thought it fair to make an acknowledgment, in the notes, for the passages which he borrowed from those two poets; but he must also do them the justice to declare, that most of the descriptions, and the whole story of Caissa, which is written in imitation of Ovid, are his own; and their faults must be imputed to him only. The characters in the poem are no less imaginary than those in the episode; in which the invention of chess is poetically ascribed to Mars, though it is certain that the game was originally brought from India.

Of armies on the chequer'd field array'd,*
And guiltless war in pleasing form display'd;
When two bold kings contend with vain alarms,
In ivory this, and that in ebon arms;
Sing, sportive maids, that haunt the sacred hill
Of Pindus, and the famed Pierian rill.
† Thou, joy of all below, and all above,
Mild Venus, queen of laughter, queen of love:
Leave thy bright island, where on many a rose
And many a pink thy blooming train repose;
Assist me, goddess! since a lovely pair
Command my song, like thee divinely fair.

Near yon cool stream, whose living waters play,
And rise translucent, in the solar ray;
Beneath the covert of a fragrant bower,
Where Spring's soft influence purpled every flower;
Two smiling nymphs reclined in calm retreat,
And envying blossoms crowded round their seat;
Here, Delia was enthroned, and by her side
The sweet Sirena; both in beauty's pride:
Thus shine two roses, fresh with early bloom,
That from their native stalk dispense perfume;
Their leaves unfolding to the dawning day,
Gems of the glowing mead, and eyes of May.
A band of youths and damsels sat around,
Their flowing locks with braided myrtle bound;
Agatis, in the graceful dance admired,
And gentle Thyrsis, by the muse inspired;
With Sylvia, fairest of the mirthful train;
And Daphnis, doom'd to love, yet love in vain.
Now, whilst a purer blush o'erspreads her cheeks,
With soothing accents thus Sirena speaks:

"The meads and lawns are tinged with beamy light,
And wakeful larks begin their vocal flight;
Whilst on each bank the dew-drops sweetly smile;
What sport, my Delia, shall the hours beguile?
Shall heavenly notes, prolong'd with various art,
Charm the fond ear, and warm the rapturous heart?
At distance shall we view the sylvan chase;
Or catch with silken lines the finny race?"

Then Delia thus: "Or rather, since we meet
By chance, assembled in this cool retreat,
In artful contest let our warlike train
Move, well-directed, o'er the colour'd plain;
Daphnis, who taught us first, the play shall guide,
Explain its laws, and o'er the field preside:
No prize we need, our ardour to inflame;
We fight with pleasure, if we fight for fame."
The nymph consents: the maids and youths prepare
To view the combat, and the sport to share;
But Daphnis most approved the bold design,
Whom love instructed, and the tuneful Nine.
He rose, and on the cedar table placed
A polish'd board, with different colours graced;
Squares eight times eight in equal order lie;*
These bright as snow, those dark with sable dye;
Like the broad target by the tortoise borne,
Or like the hide by spotted panthers worn.
Then from a chest, with harmless heroes stored,
O'er the smooth plain two well-wrought hosts he pour'd;
The champions burn'd their rivals to assail,
Twice eight in black, twice eight in milk-white mail;†
In shape and station different, as in name,
Their motions various, nor their power the same.
Say, muse! (for Jove has naught from thee conceal'd,)
Who form'd the legions on the level field?
High in the midst the reverend kings appear,
And o'er the rest their pearly sceptres rear:
One solemn step, majestically slow,
They gravely move, and shun the dangerous foe,
If e'er they call, the watchful subjects spring,
And die with rapture, if they save their king;
On him the glory of the day depends,
He, once imprison'd, all the conflict ends.
The queens exulting near their consorts stand;
Each bears a deadly falchion in her hand;
Now here, now there, they bound with furious pride,
And thin the trembling ranks from side to side;
Swift as Camilla flying o'er the main,
Or lightly skimming o'er the dewy plain:
Fierce as they seem, some bold plebeian spear
May pierce their shield, or stop their full career.
The valiant guards, their minds on havoc bent,
Fill the next squares, and watch the royal tent;
Though weak their spears, though dwarfish be their height,
Compact they move, the bulwark of the fight.‡

IMITATIONS.

* Ludimus effigiem belli, simulataque veris
Prœlia, buxo acies fictas, et ludicra regna:
Ut gemini inter se reges, albusque nigerque,
Pro laude oppositi certent bicoloribus armis.
Dicite, Seriades Nymphæ, certamina tanta. *Vida.*

† Æneadum genitrix, hominum divumque voluptas,
Alma Venus! &c. *Lucretius.*

IMITATIONS.

* Sexaginta insunt et quatuor ordine sedes
Octono; parte ex omni, via limite quadrat
Ordinibus paribus; necnon forma omnibus una
Sedibus, æquale et spatium, sed non color unus.
Alternant semper variæ, subeuntque vicissim
Albentes nigris; testudo picta superne
Qualia devexo gestat discrimina tergo. *Vida.*

† Agmina bina pari numeroque, et viribus æquis,
Bis nivea cum veste octo, totidemque nigranti.
Ut variæ facies, pariter sunt et sua cuique
Nomina, diversum munus, non æqua potestas. *Ibid.*

‡ The chief art in the tactics of chess consists in the nice conduct of the royal pawns; in supporting them against every attack; and, if they are taken, in supplying their places with others equally supported; a principle

THE GAME OF CHESS.

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

To right and left the martial wings display
Their shining arms, and stand in close array.
Behold! four archers, eager to advance,
Send the light reed, and rush with sidelong glance;
Through angles, over, they assault the foes,
True to the colour, which at first they chose.
Then four bold knights, for courage famed and speed,
Each knight exalted on a prancing steed:
Their arching course no vulgar limit knows,*
Transverse they leap, and aim insidious blows,
Nor friends, nor foes, their rapid force restrain,
By one quick bound two changing squares they gain;
From varying hues renew the fierce attack,
And rush from black to white, from white to black.
Four solemn elephants the sides defend;
Beneath the load of ponderous towers they bend:
In one unalter'd line they tempt the fight;
Now crush the left, and now o'erwhelm the right.
Bright in the front the dauntless soldiers raise
Their polish'd spears; their steely helmets blaze:
Prepared they stand the daring foe to strike,
Direct their progress, but their wounds oblique.
Now swell th' embattled troops with hostile rage,
And clang their shields, impatient to engage;
When Daphnis thus: "A varied plain behold,
Where fairy kings their mimic tents unfold,
As Oberon, and Mab, his wayward queen,
Lead forth their armies on the daisied green.
No mortal had the wondrous sport contrived,
By gods invented, and from gods derived;
From them the British nymphs received the game,(†)
And play each morn beneath the crystal Thame;
Hear then the tale, which they to Colin sung,
As idling o'er the lucid wave he hung:—
"'A lovely Dryad ranged the Thracian wild,
Her air enchanting and her aspect mild;
To chase the bounding hart was all her joy
Averse from Hymen, and the Cyprian boy;
O'er hills and valleys was her beauty famed,
And fair Caissa was the damsel named.
Mars saw the maid; with deep surprise he gazed,
Admired her shape, and every gesture praised:
His golden bow the child of Venus bent,
And through his breast a piercing arrow sent:
The reed was Hope; the feathers, keen Desire;
The point, her eyes; the barbs, ethereal fire.
Soon to the nymph he pour'd his tender strain;
The haughty Dryad scorn'd his amorous pain:
He told his woes, where'er the maid he found,
And still he press'd, yet still Caissa frown'd;
But e'en her frowns (ah, what might smiles have done!)
Fired all his soul, and all his senses won.
He left his car, by raging tigers drawn,
And lonely wander'd o'er the dusky lawn;
Then lay desponding near a murmuring stream,
And fair Caissa was his plaintive theme.
A Naiad heard him from her mossy bed,
And through the crystal raised her placid head
Then mildly spake: "O thou whom love inspires,
Thy tears will nourish, not allay thy fires.
The smiling blossoms drink the pearly dew;
And ripening fruit the feather'd race pursue;
The scaly shoals devour the silken weeds!
Love on our sighs, and on our sorrow feeds.
Then weep no more; but, ere thou canst obtain
Balm for thy wounds and solace to thy pain,
With gentle art thy martial look beguile;
Be mild, and teach thy rugged brow to smile.
Canst thou no play, no soothing game devise,
To make thee lovely in the damsel's eyes?
So may thy prayers assuage the scornful dame,
And ev'n Caissa own a mutual flame."
"Kind nymph, (said Mars,) thy counsel I approve;
Art, only art, her ruthless breast can move.
But when? or how? Thy dark discourse explain:
So may thy stream ne'er swell with gushing rain,
So may thy waves in one pure current flow,
And flowers eternal on thy border blow!"
"'To whom the maid replied with smiling mien:
"Above the palace of the Paphian queen
Love's brother dwells, a boy of graceful port,
By gods named Euphron, and by mortals Sport;
Seek him; to faithful ears unfold thy grief,
And hope, ere morn return, a sweet relief.
His temple hangs below the azure skies;
Seest thou yon argent cloud? 'Tis there it lies."
This said, she sunk beneath the liquid plain,
And sought the mansion of her blue-hair'd train.
"'Meantime the god elate with heart-felt joy,
Had reach'd the temple of the sportful boy;
He told Caissa's cruelty, his kindred fire,
The Naiad's counsel, and his warm desire.
"Be swift, (he added) give my passion aid;
A god requests."—He spake, and Sport obey'd.
He framed a tablet of celestial mould,
Inlaid with squares of silver and of gold;
Then of two metals form'd the warlike band,
That here, compact, in show of battle stand;
He taught the rules that guide the pensive game,
And call'd it *Caissa* from the Dryad's name:
(Whence Albion's sons, who most its praise confess,
Approved the play, and named it thoughtful Chess.)
The god, delighted, thank'd indulgent Sport;
Then grasp'd the board, and left his airy court.
With radiant feet he pierced the clouds; nor stay'd
Till in the woods he saw the beauteous maid.
Tired with the chase the damsel sat reclined,
Her girdle loose, her bosom unconfined.
He took the figure of a wanton faun,
And stood before her on the flowery lawn;

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on which the success of the game in great measure depends, though it seems to be omitted by the very accurate Vida.

IMITATIONS.

* Il cavallo leggier per dritta lista,
Come gli altri, parringo unqua non fende,
Ma la lizza attraversa, e fiero in vista
Curvo in giro, e lunato il salto stende,
E sempre nel saltar due case acquista,
Quel colore abbandona, e questo prende.
Marino, Adone. 15.

† Quas quondam sub aquis gaudent spectacla tueri
Nereides, vastique omnis gens accola ponti;
Siquando placidum mare, et humida regna quierunt.
Vida

* Ecco d'astuto ingegno, e pronta mano
Garzon, che sempre scherza, e vola ratto,
Gioco s'apella, ed è *d'amor germano.*
Marino, Adone. 15.

Then show'd his tablet; pleased, the nymph survey'd
The lifeless troops, in glittering ranks display'd;
She ask'd the wily sylvan to explain
The various motions of the splendid train;
With eager heart she caught the winning lore,
And thought e'en Mars less hateful than before:
"What spell (said she) deceived my careless mind?
The god was fair, and I was most unkind."
She spoke, and saw the changing faun assume
A milder aspect, and a fairer bloom;
His wreathing horns, that from his temples grew,
Flow'd down in curls of bright celestial hue;
The dappled hairs, that veil'd his loveless face,
Blazed into beams, and show'd a heavenly grace;
The shaggy hide, that mantled o'er his breast,
Was soften'd to a smooth transparent vest,
That through its folds his vigorous bosom show'd,
And nervous limbs, where youthful ardour glow'd:
(Had Venus view'd him in those blooming charms
Not Vulcan's net had forced her from his arms.)
With goatlike feet no more he mark'd the ground,
But braided flowers his silken sandals bound.
The Dryad blush'd; and, as he press'd her, smiled,
Whilst all his cares one tender glance beguiled."

He ends: *To arms*, the maids and striplings cry;
To arms, the groves and sounding vales reply.
Sirena led to war the swarthy crew,
And Delia those that bore the lily's hue.
Who first, O muse, began the bold attack;
The white refulgent, or the mournful black?
Fair Delia first, as favouring lots ordain,
Moves her pale legions toward the sable train:
From thought to thought her lively fancy flies,
Whilst o'er the board she darts her sparkling eyes.

At length the warrior moves with haughty strides;
Who from the plain the snowy king divides;
With equal haste his swarthy rival bounds;
His quiver rattles, and his buckler sounds:
Ah! hapless youths, with fatal warmth you burn;
Laws, ever fix'd, forbid you to return.
Then from the wing a short-lived spearman flies,
Unsafely bold, and see! he dies, he dies:
The dark-brow'd hero, with one vengeful blow,
Of life and place deprives his ivory foe.
Now rush both armies o'er the burnish'd field,
Hurl the swift dart, and rend the bursting shield.
Here furious knights on fiery coursers prance,
Here archers spring, and lofty towers advance.
But see! the white-robed Amazon beholds
Where the dark host its opening van unfolds:
Soon as her eye discerns the hostile maid,
By ebon shield, and ebon helm betray'd:
Seven squares she passes with majestic mien,
And stands triumphant o'er the falling queen,
Perplex'd, and sorrowing at his consort's fate,
The monarch burn'd with rage, despair, and hate;
Swift from his zone th' avenging blade he drew,
And, mad with ire, the proud virago slew.
Meanwhile, sweet smiling Delia's wary king
Retired from fight behind his circling wing.

Long time the war in equal balance hung;
Till, unforeseen, an ivory courser sprung,
And, wildly prancing, in an evil hour,
Attack'd at once the monarch and the tower:
Sirena blush'd, for, as the rules required,
Her injured sovereign to his tent retired;
Whilst her lost castle leaves his threatening height,
And adds new glory to th' exulting knight.

At this, pale fear oppress'd the drooping maid,
And on her cheek the rose began to fade:
A crystal tear, that stood prepared to fall,
She wiped in silence, and conceal'd from all;
From all but Daphnis: he remark'd her pain,
And saw the weakness of her ebon train;
Then gently spoke: "Let me your loss supply,
And either nobly win, or nobly die;
Me oft has fortune crown'd with fair success,
And led to triumph in the fields of chess."
He said: the willing nymph her place resign'd
And sat at distance on the bank reclined.
Thus, when Minerva call'd her chief to arms,
And Troy's high turret shook with dire alarms,
The Cyprian goddess, wounded, left the plain,
And Mars engaged a mightier force in vain.

Straight Daphnis leads his squadron to the field,
(To Delia's arms 'tis e'en a joy to yield)
Each guileful snare and subtle art he tries,
But finds his art less powerful than her eyes;
Wisdom and strength superior charms obey:
And beauty, beauty, wins the long-fought day.
By this—a hoary chief, on slaughter bent,
Approach'd the gloomy king's unguarded tent:
Where, late, his consort spread dismay around,
Now her dark corse lies bleeding on the ground.
Hail, happy youth! thy glories not unsung
Shall live eternal on the poet's tongue;
For thou shalt soon receive a splendid change,
And o'er the plain with nobler fury range.
The swarthy leaders saw the storm impend,
And strove in vain their sovereign to defend:
Th' invader waved his silver lance in air,
And flew like lightning to the fatal square;
His limbs, dilated, in a moment grew
To stately height, and widen'd to the view;
More fierce his look, more lion-like his mien,
Sublime he moved, and seem'd a warrior queen.
As when the sage on some unfolding plant
Has caught a wondering fly, or frugal ant,
His hand the microscopic frame applies,
And lo! a bright-hair'd monster meets his eyes;
He sees new plumes in slender cases roll'd
Here stain'd with azure, there bedropp'd with gold,
Thus, on the alter'd chief both armies gaze,
And both the kings are fix'd with deep amaze.
The sword, which arm'd the snow-white maid before,
He now assumes, and hurls the spear no more;
Then springs indignant on the dark-robed band,
And knights and archers feel his deadly hand.
Now flies the monarch of the sable shield,
His legions vanquish'd, o'er the lonely field.
So when the morn, by rosy coursers drawn,*
With pearls and rubies sows the verdant lawn,
Whilst each pale star from heaven's blue vault retires,
Still Venus gleams, and last of all expires.

IMITATIONS.

* ——Modio rex æquore inermis
Constitit amissis sociis: velut æthere in alto
Expulit ardentes flammas ubi lutea bigis
Luciferis Aurora, tuus pulcherrimus ignis
Lucet adhuc, Venus, et cœlo mox ultimus exit.
Vida, ver. 604.

He hears, where'er he moves, the dreadful sound;
Check the deep vales, and *Check* the woods rebound:—
No place remains: he sees the certain fate,
And yields his throne to ruin, and *check-mate.*
A brighter blush o'erspreads the damsel's cheeks,
And mildly thus the conquer'd stripling speaks:
"A double triumph, Delia, hast thou won,
By Mars protected, and by Venus' son;
The first with conquest crowns thy matchless art,
The second points those eyes at Daphnis' heart."
She smiled; the nymphs and amorous youths arise,
And own, that Beauty gain'd the nobler prize.
Low in their chest the mimic troops were laid,
And peaceful slept the sable hero's shade.*

SOLIMA.

AN ARABIAN ECLOGUE.

"Ye maids of Aden! hear a loftier tale
Than e'er was sung in meadow, bower, or dale.
—The smiles of Abelah, and Maia's eyes,
Where beauty plays, and love in slumber lies;
The fragrant hyacinths of Azza's hair,
That wanton with the laughing summer-air;
Love-tinctured cheeks, whence roses seek their bloom,
And lips, from which the zephyr steals perfume;
Invite no more the wild unpolish'd lay,
But fly like dreams before the morning ray.
Then farewell, love! and farewell, youthful fires!
A nobler warmth my kindled breast inspires.
Far bolder notes the listening woods shall fill;
Flow smooth, ye rivulets; and, ye gales, be still.
"See yon fair groves that o'er Amana rise,
And with their spicy breath embalm the skies;
Where every breeze sheds incense o'er the vales,
And every shrub the scent of musk exhales!
See through yon opening glade a glittering scene,
Lawns ever gay, and meadows ever green;
Then ask the groves, and ask the vocal bowers,
Who deck'd their spiry tops with blooming flowers,
Taught the blue stream o'er sandy vales to flow,
And the brown wild with liveliest hues to glow?
Fair Solima! the hills and dales will sing;
Fair Solima! the distant echoes ring.†
But not with idle shows of vain delight,
To charm the soul or to beguile the sight·
At noon on banks of pleasure to repose,
Where bloom entwined the lily, pink, and rose;
Not in proud piles to heap the nightly feast,
Till morn with pearls has deck'd the glowing east;
Ah! not for this she taught those bowers to rise,
And bade all Eden spring before our eyes:
For other thoughts her heavenly mind employ
(Hence, empty pride! and hence, delusive joy!)
To cheer with sweet repast the fainting guest;
To lull the weary on the couch of rest;
To warm the traveller numb'd with winter's cold
The young to cherish, to support the old;
The sad to comfort, and the weak protect;
The poor to shelter, and the lost direct:—
These are her cares, and this her glorious task;
Can Heaven a nobler give, or mortals ask?
Come to these groves, and these life-breathing glades,
Ye friendless orphans, and ye dowerless maids;
With eager haste your mournful mansions leave,
Ye weak, that tremble; and, ye sick, that grieve:
Here shall soft tents, o'er flowery lawns display'd,
At night defend you, and at noon o'ershade;
Here rosy health the sweets of life will shower,
And new delights beguile each varied hour.
Mourns there a widow, bathed in streaming tears
Stoops there a sire beneath the weight of years?
Weeps there a maid, in pining sadness left,
Of tender parents and of hope bereft?
To Solima their sorrows they bewail;
To Solima they pour their plaintive tale.
She hears; and, radiant as the star of day,
Through the thick forest gains her easy way;
She asks what cares the joyless train oppress,
What sickness wastes them, or what wants distress,
And, as they mourn, she steals a tender sigh,
Whilst all her soul sits melting in her eye:
Then with a smile the healing balm bestows,
And sheds a tear of pity o'er their woes,
Which, as it drops, some soft-eyed angel bears
Transform'd to pearl, and in his bosom wears.
"When chill'd with fear, the trembling pilgrim roves [groves
Through pathless deserts and through tangled
Where mantling darkness spreads her dragon wing,
And birds of death their fatal dirges sing,
While vapours pale a dreadful glimmering cast,
And thrilling horror howls in every blast;
She cheers his gloom with streams of bursting light,
By day a sun, a beaming moon by night; [ray
Darts through the quivering shades her heavenly
And spreads with rising flowers his solitary way.
"Ye heavens, for this in showers of sweetness shed
Your mildest influence o'er her favour'd head!
Long may her name, which distant climes shall praise,
Live in our notes, and blossom in our lays!
And, like an odorous plant, whose blushing flower
Paints every dale, and sweetens every bower,
Borne to the skies in clouds of soft perfume
For ever flourish, and for ever bloom!
These grateful songs, ye maids and youths, renew,
While fresh blown violets drink the pearly dew;
O'er Azib's banks while love-lorn damsels rove,
And gales of fragrance breathe from Hagar's grove."
So sung the youth, whose sweetly-warbled strains
Fair Mena heard, and Saba's spicy plains.
Sooth'd with his lay the ravish'd air was calm,
The winds scarce whisper'd o'er the waving palm;
The camels bounded o'er the flowery lawn,
Like the swift ostrich, or the sportful fawn;
Their silken bands the listening rose-buds rent,
And twined their blossoms round his vocal tent·
He sung, till on the bank the moonlight slept,
And closing flowers beneath the night-dew wept,

* A parody of the last line in Pope's translation of the Iliad:
"And peaceful slept the mighty Hector's shade."

† It was not easy in this part of the translation to avoid a turn similar to that of Pope in the known description of the Man of Ross.

Then ceased, and slumber'd in the lap of rest
Till the shrill lark had left his low-built nest.
Now hastes the swain to tune his rapturous tales
In other meadows, and in other vales.

AN ODE IN IMITATION OF ALCÆUS.

Ου λιθοι, ουδε ξυλα, ουδε
Τεχνη τεκτονων αι πολεις εισιν
Αλλ' ενι ποτ' αν ωσιν ΑΝΔΡΕΣ
Ανδρες σωζειν ειδοτες,
Ενταυθα τειχη και πολεις.
Alc. quoted by Aristides.

WHAT constitutes a state?
Not high-raised battlement or labour'd mound,
Thick wall or moated gate;
Not cities proud with spires and turrets crown'd;
Not bays and broad-arm'd ports,
Where, laughing at the storm, rich navies ride;
Not starr'd and spangled courts,
Where low-brow'd baseness wafts perfume to pride.
NO:—Men, high-minded men,
With powers as far above dull brutes endued
In forest, brake, or den,
As beasts excel cold rocks and brambles rude;
Men, who their duties know,
But know their rights, and knowing, dare maintain,
Prevent the long-aim'd blow,
And crush the tyrant while they rend the chain:
These constitute a state;
And sovereign law, that state's collected will,
O'er thrones and globes elate
Sits empress, crowning good, repressing ill.
Smit by her sacred frown
The fiend, discretion, like a vapour sinks,
And e'en th' all dazzling crown
Hides his faint rays, and at her bidding shrinks.
Such was this heaven-loved isle,
Than Lesbos fairer and the Cretan shore!
No more shall freedom smile?
Shall Britons languish, and be men no more?
Since all must life resign,
Those sweet rewards, which decorate the brave,
'Tis folly to decline,
And steal inglorious to the silent grave.
Abergavenny, March 31, 1781.

AN ODE IN IMITATION OF CALLISTRATUS.

Εν μυρτου κλαδι το ξιφος φορησω,
Ωσπερ Αρμοδιος κ' Αριστογειτων,
Οτε τον τυραννον κτανετων
Ισονομους τ' Αθηνας εποιησατην.
κ. τ. λ.

Quod si post Idus illias Martias e Tyrannoctonis quispiam tale aliquod carmen plebi tradidisset inque Suburram et fori circulos et in ora vulgi intulisset, actum profecto fuisset de partibus deque dominatione Cæsarum; plus mehercule valuisset unum Αρμοδιε μελος quam Ciceronis Philippicæ omnes.—*Lowth De Sacra Poesi, Præl.* 1.

VERDANT myrtle's branchy pride
Shall my biting falchion wreathe;
Soon shall grace each manly side
Tubes that speak, and points that breathe.
Thus, Harmodius! shone thy blade,
Thus, Aristogiton! thine:
Whose, when BRITAIN sighs for aid
Whose shall now delay to shine?
Dearest youths, in islands blest,
Not, like recreant idlers dead,
You with fleet Pelides rest,
And with godlike Diomed.
Verdant myrtle's branchy pride
Shall my thirsty blade entwine:
Such, Harmodius! deck'd thy side;
Such, Aristogiton! thine.
They the base Hipparchus slew
At the feast of Pallas crown'd:
Gods!—how swift their poniards flew.
How the monster tinged the ground!
Then in Athens all was peace,
Equal laws and liberty:
Nurse of arts, and age of Greece!
People valiant, firm, and free!
Not less glorious was thy deed,
Wentworth! fix'd in virtue's cause;
Not less brilliant be thy meed,
Lenox! friend to equal laws.
High in freedom's temple raised,
See Fitz-Maurice beaming stand,
For collected virtues praised.
Wisdom's voice, and Valour's hand
Ne'er shall Fate their eyelids close:
They, in blooming regions blest,
With Harmodius shall repose:
With Aristogiton rest.
No, blest chiefs! a hero's crown
Let th' Athenian patriots claim:
You less fiercely won renown;
You assumed a milder name.
They through blood for glory strove
You more blissful tidings bring;
They to death a tyrant drove,
You to fame restored a king.
Rise, BRITANNIA! dauntless rise!
Cheer'd with triple harmony,
Monarch good, and nobles wise
People valiant, firm, and free!

THE FIRST NEMEAN ODE OF PINDAR.*

CALM breathing-place of Alpheus dead,
Ortygia, *graceful* branch of Syracuse renown'd,
Young Dina's *rosy* bed,
Sister of Delos, thee, with sweet, *yet lofty*, sound
Bursting numbers call, to raise
Of tempest-footed steeds the trophies glorious
(Thus Etnean Jove we praise;)
While Chromius' car invites, and Nemea's plain,
For *noble* acts victorious
To weave the encomiastic strain.

From *prospering* gods the song begins;
Next hails that godlike man and virtue's holy meeds

* This ode is translated word for word with the original; those epithets and phrases only being necessarily added which are printed in *italic* letters.

See Argument of the Hymns to Pacith

He the flower of greatness wins,
Whom smiling fortune crowns; and vast heroic deeds
Every muse delights to sing.
Now wake to that *fair* isle the splendid story,
Which the *great* Olympian king,
Jove, gave to Proserpine, and waved his locks
Vowing, that, supreme in glory,
Famed for sweet fruits, and *nymph-loved* rocks,

Sicilia's full nutritious breast
With tower'd and wealthy cities he would crown.
Her the son of Saturn bless'd
With suitors brazen-arm'd for war's renown
By lance and fiery steed; yet oft thy leaves,
Olympic olive! bind their hair
In wreathy gold. Great subjects I prepare:
But none th' immortal verse deceives.

Oft in the portals was I placed
Of that guest-loving man, and pour'd the dulcet strain,
Where becoming dainties graced
His hospitable board; for ne'er with efforts vain
Strangers to his mansion came:
And thus the virtuous, when detraction rages,
Quench with liberal streams her flame.
Let each in virtue's path right onward press,
As each his art engages,
And, urged by genius, win success.

Laborious action strength applies,
And wary conduct, sense: the future to foresee
Nature gives to few, the wise.
Agesidamus' son, she frankly gave to thee
Powerful might and wisdom deep.
I see not in dark cells the hoarded treasure
Grovelling with low care to keep,
But, as wealth flows, to spread it, and to hear
Loud fame, with ample measure
Cheering my friends, since hope and fear

Assail disastrous men. The praise
Of Hercules with rapture I embrace
On the heights, which virtues raise,
The rapid legend old his name shall place;
For, when he *brook'd no more the cheerless gloom,*
And burst into the blaze of day,
The child of Jove with his twin brother lay,
Refulgent from the sacred womb.

Not unobserved the godlike boy
By Juno golden-throned the saffron'd cradle press'd;
Straight heaven's queen with furious joy
Bade *hideous* dragons fleet th' *unguarded* floor infest:
They, the portals opening wide,
Roll'd through the chamber's broad recess *tremendous,*
And in jaws *fire-darting* tried
The slumbering babe to close. He, starting light,
Rear'd his *bold* head *stupendous,*
And first in battle proved his might.

With both resistless hands he clasp'd
Both *struggling horrid* pests, and clothed their necks with death;
They expiring, as he grasp'd,
Pour'd from their throats compress'd, the foul envenom'd breath.

Horror seized the female train,
Who near Alcmena's *genial* couch attended
She, from agonizing pain
Yet weak, *unsandall'd and* unmantled rush'd,
And her loved charge defended,
Whilst he the *fiery* monsters crush'd.

Swift the Cadmean leaders ran
In brazen mail precipitately bold:
First Amphitryon, dauntless man,
Bared his raised falchion from its sheathing gold,
While grinding anguish pierced his *fluttering* breast;
For private woes most keenly bite
Self-loving man; but soon the heart is light,
With sorrow not its own oppress'd.

Standing in deep amazement wild
With rapturous pleasure mix'd, he saw th' enormous force,
Saw the valour of his child:
And fated heralds prompt, as heaven had shaped their course,
Wafted round the varied tale:
Then called he from high Jove's contiguous region,
Him, whose warnings never fail,
Tiresias *blind,* who told, in diction sage,
The chief and thronging legion
What fortunes must his boy engage;

What lawless tyrants of the wood,
What serpents he would slay, what monsters of the main,
What proud foe to human good,
The worst of monstrous forms, *that holy manhood stain,*
His huge arm to death would dash:
How when heaven's host, o'er Phlegra's champaign *hasting,*
With embattled giants *rash*
Vindictive warr'd, his pondrous mace would storm
With dreadful strokes *wide-wasting,*
And dust their glittering locks deform.

He told; and how in blissful peace
Through cycles infinite of gliding time,
When his mortal task should cease,
Sweet prize of perils hard and toil sublime,
In gorgeous mansions he should hold entranced
Soft Hebe, fresh with blooming grace,
And crown, exalting his majestic race,
The bridal feast near Jove advanced.

A CHINESE ODE, PARAPHRASED.

Behold, where yon blue rivulet glides
Along the laughing dale;
Light reeds bedeck its verdant sides,
And frolic in the gale

So shines our prince! in bright array
The virtues round him wait;
And sweetly smiled th' auspicious day,
That raised him o'er our state.

As pliant hands, in shapes refined,
Rich ivory carve and smooth,
His *laws* thus mould each ductile mind,
And every passion soothe.

As gems are taught by patient art
In sparkling ranks to beam,
With *manners* thus he forms the heart,
And spreads a general gleam.

What soft, yet awful dignity!
What meek, yet manly grace!
What sweetness dances in his eye,
And blossoms in his face!

So shines our prince! A sky-born crowd
Of virtues round him blaze:
Ne'er shall oblivion's murky cloud
Obscure his deathless praise.

THE VERBAL TRANSLATION.

BEHOLD yon reach of *the river* KI;
Its green reeds how luxuriant! how luxuriant!
Thus is our prince adorn'd with virtues;
As a carver, as a filer of ivory,
As a cutter, as a polisher of gems
O how elate and sagacious! O how dauntless and composed!
How worthy of fame! How worthy of reverence!
We have a prince adorn'd with virtues,
Whom to the end *of time* we cannot forget."

A TURKISH ODE OF MESIHI.

HEAR! how the nightingales on every spray,
Hail, in wild notes, the sweet return of May;
—The gale that o'er yon waving almond blows,
The verdant bank with silver blossoms strows:
The smiling season decks each flowery glade.
Be gay: too soon the flowers of spring will fade.

† What gales of fragrance scent the vernal air!
Hills, dales, and woods, their loveliest mantles wear,
Who knows what cares await that fatal day,
When ruder gusts shall banish gentle May?
E'en death, perhaps, our valleys will invade.
Be gay: too soon the flowers of spring will fade.

‡ The tulip now its varied hue displays,
And sheds, like Ahmed's eye, celestial rays.
Ah, nation ever faithful, ever true,
The joys of youth, while May invites, pursue!
Will not these notes your timorous minds persuade?
Be gay: too soon the flowers of spring will fade.

IMITATIONS.

• "Thou hearest the tale of the nightingale, 'that the vernal season approaches.' The spring has spread a bower of joy in every grove, where the almond tree sheds its silver blossoms. Be cheerful; be full of mirth; for the spring passes soon away: it will not last."

† "The groves and hills are again adorned with all sorts of flowers; a pavilion of roses, as the seat of pleasure, is raised in the garden. Who knows which of us will be alive when the fair season ends? Be cheerful," &c.

‡ "The edge of the bower is filled with the light of Ahmed; among the plants the fortunate tulips represent his companions. Come, O people of Mohammed! this is the season of merriment. Be cheerful," &c.

• The sparkling dew-drops o'er the lilies play,
Like orient pearls, or like the beams of day.
If love and mirth your wanton thoughts engage,
Attend, ye nymphs! a poet's words are sage;
While thus you sit beneath the trembling shade,
Be gay: too soon the flowers of spring will fade.

† The fresh-blown rose like Zeineb's cheek appears,
When pearls, like dew-drops, glitter in her ears.
The charms of youth at once are seen and past:
And nature says, "They are too sweet to last."
So blooms the rose; and so the blushing maid.
Be gay: too soon the flowers of spring will fade.

‡ See! yon anemonies their leaves unfold,
With rubies flaming and with living gold.
—While crystal showers from weeping clouds descend,
Enjoy the presence of thy tuneful friend:
Now, while the wines are brought, the sofa's laid,
Be gay: too soon the flowers of spring will fade.

§ The plants no more are dried, the meadows dead,
No more the rose-bud hangs her pensive head:
The shrubs revive in valleys, meads, and bowers,
And every stalk is diadem'd with flowers;
In silken robes each hillock stands array'd.
Be gay: too soon the flowers of spring will fade

‖ Clear drops, each morn, impearl the rose's bloom,
And from its leaf the zephyr drinks perfume,
The dewy buds expand their lucid store:
Be this our wealth: ye damsels, ask no more.
Though wise men envy, and though fools upbraid
Be gay: too soon the flowers of spring will fade

¶ The dew-drops sprinkled, by the musky gale,
Are changed to essence ere they reach the dale
The mild blue sky a rich pavilion spreads,
Without our labour, o'er our favour'd heads.
Let others toil in war, in arts, or trade;—
Be gay: too soon the flowers of spring will fade

IMITATIONS.

• "Again the dew glitters on the leaves of the lily, like the water of a bright cimeter. The dew-drops fall through the air on the garden of roses. Listen to me, listen to me, if thou desirest to be delighted. Be cheerful," &c.

† "The roses and tulips are like the bright cheeks of beautiful maids, in whose ears the pearls hang like drops of dew. Deceive not thyself, by thinking that these charms will have a long duration. Be cheerful," &c.

‡ "Tulips, roses, and anemonies, appear in the gardens; the showers and the sunbeams, like sharp lancets, tinge the banks with the colour of blood. Spend this day agreeably with thy friends, like a prudent man. Be cheerful," &c.

§ "The time is passed in which the plants were sick, and the rose-bud hung its thoughtful head on its bosom. The season comes in which mountains and rocks are coloured with tulips. Be cheerful," &c.

‖ "Each morning the clouds shed gems over the rose-garden; the breath of the gale is full of Tartarian musk. Be not neglectful of thy duty through too great a love of the world. Be cheerful," &c.

¶ "The sweetness of the bower has made the air so fragrant, that the dew, before it falls, is changed into rose-water. The sky spreads a pavilion of bright clouds over the garden. Be cheerful," &c.

* Late, gloomy winter chill'd the sullen air,
Till Soliman arose, and all was fair.
Soft in his reign, the notes of love resound,
And pleasure's rosy cup goes freely round.
Here on the bank, which mantling vines o'ershade,
Be gay: too soon the flowers of spring will fade.

† May this rude lay from age to age remain,
A true memorial of this lovely train.
Come, charming maid! and hear thy poet sing
Thyself the rose, and he the bird of spring;
Love bids him sing, and Love will be obey'd.
Be gay: too soon the flowers of spring will fade.

HYMN TO CAMDEO.

THE ARGUMENT.

THE Hindoo god, to whom the following poem is addressed, appears evidently the same with the Grecian Eros and the Roman Cupido; but the Indian description of his person and arms, his family, attendants, and attributes, has new and peculiar beauties.

According to the mythology of Hindoostan, he was the son of Maya, or the general attracting power, and married to Retty, or Affection; and his bosom friend is Bessent or Spring: he is represented as a beautiful youth, sometimes conversing with his mother and consort, in the midst of his gardens and temples; sometimes riding by moonlight on a parrot or lory, and attended by dancing girls or nymphs, the foremost of whom bears his colours, which are a fish on a red ground. His favourite place of resort is a large tract of country round Agra, and principally the plains of Matra, where Krishen also, and the nine Gopia, who are clearly the Apollo and muses of the Greeks, usually spend the night with music and dance. His bow of sugar-cane, or flowers with a string of bees, and his five arrows, each pointed with an Indian blossom of a heating quality, are allegories equally new and beautiful. He has at least twenty-three names, most of which are introduced in the hymn: that of Cam, or Cama, signifies desire, a sense which it also bears in ancient and modern Persian; and it is possible that the words Dipuc and Cupid, which have the same signification, may have the same origin, since we know that the old Hetruscans, from whom great part of the Roman language and religion was derived, and whose system had a near affinity with that of the Persians and Indians, used to write their lines alternately forwards and backwards, as furrows are made by the plough; and, though the two last letters of Cupido may only be the grammatical termination as in libido and capedo, yet the primary root of cupio is contained in the first three letters. The seventh stanza alludes to the bold attempt of this deity to wound the great god Mahadeo, for which he was punished by a flame consuming his corporeal nature, and reducing him to a mental essence; and hence his chief dominion is over the *minds* of mortals, or such deities as he is permitted to subdue.

THE HYMN.

WHAT potent god from Agra's orient bowers
Floats through the lucid air, whilst living flowers
With sunny twine the vocal arbours wreath,
And gales enamour'd heavenly fragrance breathe!
  Hail, power unknown! for at thy beck
  Vales and groves their bosoms deck,
  And every laughing blossom dresses
  With gems of dew his musky tresses.
I feel, I feel thy genial flame divine,
And hallow thee, and kiss thy shrine.

"Know'st thou not me?" Celestial sounds I hear!
"Know'st thou not me?" Ah, spare a mortal ear!
"Behold"—My swimming eyes entranced I raise
But O! they sink before th' excessive blaze.
  Yes, son of Maya, yes I know
  Thy bloomy shafts and cany bow,
  Cheeks with youthful glory beaming
  Locks in braids ethereal streaming,
Thy scaly standard, thy mysterious arms,
And all thy pains and all thy charms.

God of each lovely sight, each lovely sound,
Soul-kindling, world-inflaming, stary-crown'd,
Eternal Cama! Or doth Smara bright,
Or proud Ananga give thee more delight?
  Whate'er thy seat, whate'er thy name,
  Seas, earth, and air, thy reign proclaim:
  Wreathy smiles and roseate pleasures
  Are thy richest, sweetest treasures.
All animals to thee their tribute bring,
And hail thee universal king.

Thy consort mild, Affection ever true,
Graces thy side, her vest of glowing hue;
And in her train twelve blooming girls advance,
Touch golden strings, and knit the mirthful dance.
  Thy dreaded implements they bear,
  And wave them in the scented air,
  Each with pearls her neck adorning,
  Brighter than the tears of morning.
Thy crimson ensign, which before them flies,
Decks with new stars the sapphire skies.

God of the flowery shafts and flowery bow,
Delight of all above and all below!
Thy loved companion, constant from his birth,
In heaven clep'd Bessent, and gay Spring on earth,
  Weaves thy green robe and flaunting bowers,
  And from thy clouds draws balmy showers,
  He with fresh arrows fills thy quiver,
  (Sweet the gift, and sweet the giver!)
And bids the many-plumed warbling throng
Burst the pent blossoms with their song.

He bends the luscious cane, and twists the string
With bees, how sweet! but ah, how keen their sting!
He with five flowerets tips thy ruthless darts,
Which through five senses pierce enraptured hearts:
  Strong Chumpa, rich in odorous gold,
  Warm Amer, nursed in heavenly mould,

IMITATIONS.

* "Whoever thou art, know that the black gusts of autumn had seized the garden; but the king of the world again appeared, dispensing justice to all: in his reign the happy cupbearer desired and obtained the flowing wine. Be cheerful," &c.

† "By these strains I hoped to celebrate this delightful valley: may they be a memorial to its inhabitants, and remind them of this assembly, and these fair maids! Thou art a nightingale with a sweet voice, O Mesihi, when thou walkest with the damsels, whose cheeks are like roses. Be cheerful; be full of mirth; for the spring passes soon away; it will not last!"

Dry Nagkeser, in silver smiling,
Hot Kiticum our sense beguiling,
And last, to kindle fierce the scorching flame,
Loveshaft, which gods bright Bela name.

Can men resist thy power, when Krishen yields,
Krishen, who still in Matra's holy fields
Tunes harps immortal, and to strains divine
Dances by moonlight with the Gopia nine?
But, when thy daring arm untamed
At Mahadeo a loveshaft aim'd,
Heaven shook, and, smit with stony wonder,
Told his deep dread in bursts of thunder,
Whilst on thy beauteous limbs an azure fire
Blazed forth, which never must expire.

O thou for ages born, yet ever young
For ages may thy Brahmin's lay be sung!
And, when thy lory spreads his emerald wings
To waft thee high above the towers of kings,
Whilst o'er thy throne the moon's pale light
Pours her soft radiance through the night,
And to each floating cloud discovers
The haunts of bless'd or joyless lovers,
Thy mildest influence to thy bard impart,
To warm, but not consume, his heart.

TWO HYMNS TO PRACRITI.

THE ARGUMENT.

In all our conversations with learned Hindoos, we find them enthusiastic admirers of poetry, which they consider as a divine art, that had been practised for numberless ages in heaven, before it was revealed on earth by Valmic, whose great heroic poem is fortunately preserved: the Brahmins of course prefer that poetry, which they believe to have been actually inspired; while the Vaidyas, (who are in general perfect grammarians and good poets, but are not suffered to read any of the sacred writings except the Ayurveda, or Body of Medical Tracts,) speak with rapture of their innumerable popular poems, epic, lyric, and dramatic, which were composed by men not literally inspired, but called, metaphorically, the sons of Sereswati, or Minerva; among whom the Pandits of all sects, nations, and degrees, are unanimous in giving the prize of glory to Calidasa, who flourished in the court of Vicramaditya, fifty-seven years before Christ. He wrote several dramas, one of which, entitled Sacontala, is in my possession; and the subject of it appears to be as interesting as the composition is beautiful; besides these he published the Meghaduta, or cloud-messenger, and the Nalodaya, or rise of Nala, both elegant love tales: the Raghuvansa, an heroic poem; and the Cumara Sambhava, or birth of Cumara, which supplied me with materials for the first of the following odes. I have not indeed yet read it; since it could not be correctly copied for me during the short interval in which it is in my power to amuse myself with literature: but I have heard the story told, both in Sanscrit and Persian, by many Pandits, who had no communication with each other; and their outline of it coincided so perfectly, that I am convinced of its correctness: that outline is here filled up, and exhibited in a lyric form, partly in the Indian, partly in the Grecian taste; and great will be my pleasure, when I can again find time for such amusements, in reading the whole poem of Calidasa, and in comparing my descriptions with the original composition. To anticipate the story in a preface, would be to destroy the interest that may be taken in the poem: a disadvantage attending all prefatory arguments, of which those prefixed to the several books of Tasso, and to the dramas of Metastasio, are obvious instances; but, that any interest may be taken in the two hymns addressed to Pracriti, under different names, it is necessary to render them intelligible by a previous explanation of the mythological allusions, which could not but occur in them.

Iswara, or Isa, and Isani, or Isi, are unquestionably the Osiris and Isis of Egypt; for, though neither a resemblance of names, nor a similarity of character, would separately prove the identity of Indian and Egyptian deities, yet, when they both concur, with the addition of numberless corroborating circumstances, they form a proof little short of demonstration. The female divinity, in the mythological systems in the East, represents the active power of the male; and that Isi means active nature appears evidently from the word s'acta, which is derived from s'acti, or power, and applied to those Hindoos who direct their adoration principally to that goddess: this feminine character of Pracriti, or created nature, is so familiar in most languages, and even in our own, that the gravest English writers, on the most serious subjects of religion and philosophy, speak of her operations as if she were actually an animated being; but such personifications are easily misconceived by the multitude, and have a strong tendency to polytheism. The principal operations of nature are, not the absolute annihilation and new creation of what we call material substances, but the temporary extinction and reproduction, or rather, in one word, the transmutation of forms: whence the epithet Polymorphos is aptly given to nature by European philosophers: hence Iswara, Siva, Hara, (for those are his names and near a thousand more) united with Isi, represent the secondary causes, whatever they may be, of natural phenomena, and principally those of temporary destruction and regeneration; but the Indian Isis appears in a variety of characters, especially in those of Parvati, Cali, Durga, and Bhavani, which bear a strong resemblance to the Juno of Homer, to Hecate, to the armed Pallas, and to the Lucretian Venus.

The name Parvati took its rise from a wild poetical fiction. Himalaya, or the Mansion of Snow, is the title given by the Hindoos to that vast chain of mountains, which limits India to the north, and embraces it with its eastern and western arms, both extending to the Ocean; the former of those arms is called Chandrasec'hara, or the Moon's Rock; and the second, which reaches as far west as the mouths of the Indus, was named by the ancients Montes Parveti. These hills are held sacred by the Indians, who suppose them to be the terrestrial haunt of the god Iswara. The mountain Himalaya, being personified, is represented as a powerful monarch, whose wife was Mena: their daughter is named Parvati, or Mountain-born, and Durga, or of difficult access; but the Hindoos believe her to have been married to Siva in a pre-existent state, when she bore the name of Sati. The daughter of Himalaya had two sons; Ganesa, or the Lord of Spirits, adored as the wisest of deities, and always invoked at the beginning of every literary work, and Cumara, Scanda, or Carticeya, commander of the celestial armies.

The pleasing fiction of Cama, the Indian Cupid, and his friend Vasanta, or the Spring, has been the subject of another poem: and here it must be remembered, that the god of Love is named also Smara, Candarpa, and Ananga. One of his arrows is called Mellica, the Nyctanthes of our botanists, who very unadvisedly reject the vernacular names of most Asiatic plants: it is beautifully introduced by Cálidása into this lively couplet;

Mellicamoculo bhati gunjanmattamadhuvratah,
Prayane panchasaunsya sanc'hamapurayanniva.

"The intoxicated bee shines and murmurs in the fresh blown Mellica, like him who gives breath to a white conch in the procession of the god with five arrows."

A critic to whom Cálidása repeated this verse, observed, that the comparison was not exact: since the bee sits on the blossom itself, and does not murmur at the end of the tube, like him who blows a conch. "I was aware o

that," said the poet, "and, therefore, described the bee as intoxicated: a drunken musician would blow the shell at the wrong end." There was more than wit in this answer; it was a just rebuke to a dull critic; for poetry delights in general images, and is so far from being a perfect imitation, that a scrupulous exactness of descriptions and similes, by leaving nothing for the imagination to supply, never fails to diminish or destroy the pleasure of every reader who has an imagination to be gratified.

It may here be observed, that Nymphæa, not Lotos, is the generic name in Europe of the flower consecrated to Isis: the Persians know by the name of Nilufer that species of it which the botanists ridiculously call Nelumbo, and which is remarkable for its curious pericarpium, where each of the seeds contains in miniature the leaves of a perfect vegetable. The lotos of Homer was probably the sugar-cane, and that of Linnæus is a papilionaceous plant; but he gives the same name to another species of the Nymphæa; and the word is so constantly applied among us in India to the Nilufer, that any other would be hardly intelligible: the blue lotos grows in Cashmir and in Persia, but not in Bengal, where we see only the red and white; and hence occasion is taken to feign, that the lotus of Hindoostan was dyed crimson by the blood of Siva.

Cuvera, mentioned in the fourteenth stanza, is the god of wealth, supposed to reside in a magnificent city, called Alacà; and Vrihaspati, or the genius of the planet Jupiter, is the preceptor of the gods in Swerga or the firmament: he is usually represented as their orator, when any message is carried from them to one of their superior deities.

The lamentations of Reti, the wife of Cama, fill a whole book in the Sanscrit poem, as I am informed by my teacher, a learned Vaidya; who is restrained only from reading the book, which contains a description of the nuptials; for the ceremonies of a marriage where Brahma himself officiated as the father of the bridegroom, are too holy to be known by any but Brahmins.

The achievements of Durga in her martial character as the patroness of Virtue, and her battle with a demon in the shape of a buffalo, are the subject of many episodes in the Puránas and Cávyas, or sacred and popular poems; but a full account of them would have destroyed the unity of the ode, and they are barely alluded to in the last stanza.

It seemed proper to change the measure, when the goddess was to be addressed as Bhavani, or the power of fecundity; but such a change, though very common in Sanscrit, has its inconveniences in European poetry: a distinct hymn is therefore appropriated to her in that capacity; for the explanation of which we need only premise, that Lacshmi is the goddess of abundance; that the Cetata is a fragrant and beautiful plant of the Dioecian kind, known to botanists by the name Pandanus; and that the Dúrgótsava, or great festival of Bhavani at the close of the rains, ends in throwing the image of the goddess into the Ganges, or other sacred waters.

I am not conscious of having left unexplained any difficult allusion in the two poems; and have only to add (lest European critics should consider a few of the images as inapplicable to Indian manners) that the ideas of snow and ice are familiar to the Hindoos; that the mountains of Himálaya may be clearly discerned from a part of Bengal; that the Grecian Hæmus is the Sanscrit word *haimas*, meaning snowy; and that funeral urns may be seen perpetually on the banks of the river.

The two hymns are neither translations from any other poems, nor imitations of any; and have nothing of Pindar in them except the measures, which are nearly the same, syllable for syllable, with those of the first and second Nemean Odes: more musical stanzas might perhaps have been formed; but in every art, variety and novelty are considerable sources of pleasure. The style and manner of Pindar have been greatly mistaken; and that a distinct idea of them may be conceived by such, as have not access to that inimitable poet in his own language, I cannot refrain from subjoining the first Nemean Ode,* not only in the same measure as nearly as possible, but almost word for word with the original; those epithets and phrases only being necessarily added, which are printed in Italic letters.

TO DURGA.

I. 1.

From thee begins the solemn air,
Adored Ganésá; next, thy sire we praise,
(Him, from whose red clustering hair
A new-born crescent sheds propitious rays,
Fair as Gangá's curling foam,)
Dread Iswara; who loved o'er awful mountains,
Rapt in prescience deep, to roam,
But chiefly those, whence holy rivers gush,
Bright from their secret fountains,
And o'er the realms of Brahmá rush.

I. 2.

Rock above rock they ride sublime,
And lose their summits in blue fields of day,
Fashion'd first, when rolling time
Vast infant, in his golden cradle lay,
Bidding endless ages run,
And wreathe their giant heads in snows eternal
Gilt by each revolving sun;
Though neither morning beam, nor noontide glare,
In wintry sign or vernal,
Their adamantine strength impair;

I. 3.

Nor e'en the fiercest summer heat
Could thrill the palace, where their monarch reign'd
On his frost impearled seat,
(Such height had unremitted virtue gain'd!)
Himálaya, to whom a lovely child;
Sweet Parvatí, sage Ména bore,
Who new in earliest bloom, saw heaven adore
Her charms; earth languish, till she smiled.

II. 1.

But she to love no tribute paid;
Great Iswara her pious cares engaged:
Him, who gods and fiends dismay'd,
She sooth'd with offerings meek, when most he raged.
On a morn, when, edged with light,
The lake-born flowers their sapphire cups expanded
Laughing at the scatter'd night,
A vale remote and silent pool she sought,
Smooth-footed, lotos-handed,
And braids of sacred blossoms wrought;

II. 2.

Not for her neck, which, unadorn'd,
Bade envying antelopes their beauties hide:
Art she knew not, or she scorn'd;
Nor had her language e'en a name for pride,
To the god, who, fix'd in thought,
Sat in a crystal cave new worlds designing,
Softly sweet her gift she brought,
And spread the garland o'er his shoulders broad,
Where serpents huge lay twining,
Whose hiss the round creation awed.

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* See p. 58.

II. 3.

He view'd, half-smiling, half-severe,
The prostrate maid—that moment through the rocks
He who decks the purple year,
Vasanta, vain of odoriferous locks,
With Cama, horsed on infant breezes flew.
(Who knows not Cama, nature's king?)
Vasanta barb'd the shaft and fix'd the string;
The living bow Candarpa drew.

III. 1

Dire sacrilege! the chosen reed,
That Smara pointed with transcendant art,
Glanced with unimagined speed,
And tinged its blooming barb in Siva's heart:
Glorious flower, in heaven proclaim'd
Rich Mellicà, with balmy breath delicious,
And on earth Nyctanthes named!
Some drops divine, that o'er the lotos blue
Trickled in rills auspicious,
Still mark'd it with a crimson hue.

III. 2.

Soon closed the wound its hallow'd lips;
But nature felt the pain: heaven's blazing eye
Sank absorb'd in sad eclipse,
And meteors rare betray'd the trembling sky;
When a flame, to which compared
The keenest lightnings were but idle flashes,
From that orb all-piercing glared,
Which in the front of wrathful Hara rolls,
And soon to silver ashes
Reduced th' inflamer of our souls.

III. 3.

Vasant, for thee a milder doom,
Accomplice rash, a thundering voice decreed:
"Withering live in joyless gloom,
While ten gay signs the dancing seasons lead.
Thy flowers, perennial once, now annual made,
The fish and ram shall still adorn:
But when the bull has rear'd his golden horn,
Shall, like yon idling rainbow, fade."

IV. 1.

The thunder ceased; the day return'd;
But Siva from terrestrial haunts had fled:
Smit with rapturous love he burn'd,
And sigh'd on gemm'd Cailása's viewless head.
Lonely down the mountain steep,
With fluttering heart, soft Parvati descended;
Nor in drops of nectar'd sleep
Drank solace through the night, but lay alarm'd,
Lest her mean gifts offended
The god her powerful beauty charm'd.

IV. 2.

All arts her sorrowing damsels tried, [smooth.
Her brow, where wrinkled anguish lour'd, to
And, her troubled soul to sooth,
Sagacious Mena mild reproof applied;
But nor art nor counsel sage,
Nor e'en her sacred parent's tender chiding,
Could her only pain assuage:
The mountain drear she sought in mantling shade
Her tears and transports hiding,
And oft to her adorer pray'd.

IV. 3.

There on a crag whose icy rift
Hurl'd night and horror o'er the pool profound,
That with madding eddy swift
Revengeful bark'd his rugged base around,
The beauteous hermit sat; but soon perceived
A Bráhmin old before her stand,
His rude staff quivering in his wither'd hand,
Who, faltering, ask'd for whom she grieved.

V. 1.

"What graceful youth, with accents mild,
Eyes like twin stars, and lips like early morn,
Has thy pensive heart beguiled?"
"No mortal youth (she said, with modest scorn)
E'er beguiled my guiltless heart:
Him have I lost, who to these mountains hoary
Bloom celestial could impart.
Thee I salute, thee venerate, thee deplore,
Dread Siva, source of glory,
Which on these rocks must gleam no more!"

V. 2

"Rare object of a damsel's love,
(The wizard bold replied,) who, rude and wild,
Leaves eternal bliss above,
And roves o'er wastes where nature never smiled,
Mounted on his milk-white bull!
Seek Indra with aërial bow victorious;
Who from vases ever full
Quaffs love and nectar; seek the festive hall,
Rich caves, and mansion glorious
Of young Cuvera, loved by all;

V. 3.

"But spurn that sullen wayward god,
That three-eyed monster, hideous, fierce, untamed
Unattired, ill-girt, unshod——"
"Such fell impiety, (the nymph exclaim'd,)
Who speaks, must agonize; who hears, must die;
Nor can this vital frame sustain
The poisonous taint, that runs from vein to vein;
Death may atone the blasphemy."

VI. 1.

She spoke, and o'er the rifted rocks
Her lovely form with pious frenzy threw;
But beneath her floating locks
And waving robes a thousand breezes flew,
Knitting close their silky plumes,
And in mid-air a downy pillow spreading;
Till in clouds of rich perfumes
Embalm'd they bore her to a mystic wood;
Where streams of glory shedding,
The well-feign'd Bráhmin, Siva, stood.

VI. 2.

The rest my song conceal:
Unhallow'd ears the sacrilege might rue.
Gods alone to gods reveal
In what stupendous notes th' immortals woo.
Straight the sons of light prepared
The nuptial feast, heaven's opal gates unfolding,
Which th' empyreal army shared;
And sage Himálaya shed blissful tears,
With aged eyes beholding
His daughter, empress of the spheres.

VI. 3.

Whilst every lip with nectar glow'd,
The bridegroom blithe his transformation told;
Round the mirthful goblet flow'd,
And laughter free o'er plains of ether roll'd:
"Thee too, like Vishnu, (said the blushing queen,)
Soft Maya, guileful maid, attends;
But in delight supreme the phantasm ends;
Love crowns the visionary scene."

VII. 1.

Then rose Vrihaspati, who reigns
Beyond red Mangala's terrific sphere,
Wandering o'er cerulean plains:
His periods eloquent heaven loves to hear
Soft as dew on waking flowers.
He told how Taraca with snaky legions,
Envious of supernal powers,
Had menaced long old Meru's golden head,
And Indra's beaming regions
With desolation wild had spread:

VII. 2.

How, when the gods to Brahma flew
In routed squadrons, and his help deplored;
'Sons! (he said) from vengeance due
The fiend must wield secure his fiery sword,
(Thus th' unerring Will ordains)
Till from the great Destroyer's pure embraces,
Knit in love's mysterious chains
With her, who, daughter to the mountain-king,
Yon snowy mansion graces,
Cumara, warrior child, shall spring;

VII. 3.

"Who bright in arms of heavenly proof,
His crest a blazing star, his diamond mail
Colour'd in the rainbow's woof,
The rash invaders fiercely shall assail,
And, on a stately peacock borne, shall rush
Against the dragon of the deep;
Nor shall his thundering mace insatiate sleep,
Till their infernal chief it crush."

VIII. 1.

"The splendid host with solemn state
(Still spoke th' ethereal orator unblamed)
Reason'd high in long debate;
Till, through my counsel provident, they claim'd
Hapless Cama's potent aid:
At Indra's wish appear'd the soul's inflamer
And, in vernal arms array'd,
Engaged (ah, thoughtless!) in the bold emprise
To tame wide nature's tamer,
And soften Him who shakes the skies.

VIII. 2.

'See now the God, whom all adored,
An ashy heap, the jest of every gale!
Lost by heaven and earth deplored!
For, love extinguish'd, earth and heaven must fail.
Mark how Reti bears his urn,
And toward her widow'd pile with piercing ditty
Points the flames—ah, see it burn!
How ill the funeral with the feast agrees!
Come, Love's pale sister Pity:
Come, and the lover's wrath appease."

VIII 3

Tumultuous passions whilst he spoke
In heavenly bosoms mix'd their bursting fire,
Scorning frigid Wisdom's yoke.
Disdain, revenge, devotion, hope, desire;
Then grief prevail'd; but pity won the prize
Not Siva could the charm resist;
"Rise, holy love," he said, and kiss'd
The pearls that gush'd from Durga's eyes.

IX. 1.

That instant through the bless'd abode,
His youthful charms renew'd, Ananga came:
High on emerald plumes he rode
With Reti brighten'd by th' eluded flame;
Nor could young Vasanta mourn
(Officious friend!) his darling lord attending,
Though of annual beauty shorn:
"Love-shafts enow one season shall supply,
He menaced unoffending,
To rule the rulers of the sky."

IX. 2

With shouts the boundless mansion rang;
And, in sublime accord, the radiant choir
Strains of bridal rapture sang,
With glowing conquest join'd and martial ire:
"Spring to life, triumphant son,
Hell's future dread, and heaven's eternal wonder
Helm and flaming habergeon
For thee, behold, immortal artists weave,
And edge with keen blue thunder
The blade, that shall th' oppressor cleave."

IX. 3.

O Durga, thou hast deign'd to shield
Man's feeble virtue with celestial might,
Gliding from yon jasper field,
And, on a lion borne, hast braved the fight
For, when the demon Nico thy realms defied,
And arm'd with death each arched horn,
Thy golden lance, O goddess, mountain-born,
Touch'd but the pest—He roar'd and died.

TO BHAVANI.

When time was drown'd in sacred sleep,
And raven darkness brooded o'er the deep,—
Reposing on primeval pillows
Of tossing billows,
The forms of animated nature lay;
Till o'er the wide abyss, where love
Sat like a nestling dove,
From heaven's dun concave shot a golden ray.

Still brighter and more bright it stream'd,
Then, like a thousand suns, resistless gleam'd
Whilst on the placid waters blooming,
The sky perfuming,
An opening lotos rose, and smiling spread
His azure skirts and vase of gold,
While o'er his foliage roll'd
Drops, that impart Bhavani's orient seed.

Mother of gods, rich nature's queen,
Thy genial fire emblazed the bursting scene;

For, on th' expanded blossom sitting,
With sunbeams knitting
That mystic veil for ever unremoved,
Thou badest the softly-kindling flame
Pervade this peopled frame,
And smiles, with blushes tinged, the work approved.

Goddess, around thy radiant throne
The scaly shoals in spangled vesture shone,
Some slowly, through green waves advancing,
Some swiftly glancing,
As each thy mild mysterious power impell'd:
E'en orcs and river dragons felt
Their iron bosoms melt
With scorching heat; for love the mightiest quell'd.

But straight ascending vapours rare
O'ercanopied thy seat with lucid air,
While, through young Indra's new dominions
Unnumber'd pinions
Mix'd with thy beams a thousand varying dyes,
Of birds or insects, who pursued
Their flying loves, or wooed
Them yielding, and with music fill'd the skies.

And now bedeck'd with sparkling isles
Like rising stars, the watery desert smiles;
Smooth plains by waving forests bounded,
With hillocks rounded,
Send forth a shaggy brood, who, frisking light
In mingled flocks of faithful pairs,
Impart their tender cares;
All animals to love their kind invite.

Nor they alone: those vivid gems,
That dance and glitter on their leafy stems,
Thy voice inspires, thy bounty dresses,
Thy rapture blesses,
From yon tall palm, who like a sunborn king,
His proud tiara spreads elate,
To those who throng his gate,
Where purple chieftains vernal tribute bring.

A gale so sweet o'er Ganga breathes,
That in soft smiles her graceful cheek she wreaths.
Mark where her argent brow she raises,
And blushing gazes
On yon fresh Cétaca, whose amorous flower
Throws fragrance from his flaunting hair,
While with his blooming fair
He blends perfume, and multiplies the bower.

Thus, in one vast eternal gyre,
Compact or fluid shapes, instinct with fire,
Lead, as they dance, this gay creation,
Whose mild gradation
Of melting tints illudes the visual ray:
Dense earth in springing herbage lives,
Thence life and nurture gives
To sentient forms, that sink again to clay.

Ye maids and youths on fruitful plains,
Where Lacshmi revels and Bhavani reigns,
Oh, haste! oh, bring your flowery treasures,
To rapid measures
Tripping at eve these hallow'd banks along;
The power, in yon dim shrines adored,
To primal waves restored,
With many a smiling race shall bless your song.

HYMN TO INDRA.

THE ARGUMENT.

So many allusions to Hindoo mythology occur in the following Ode, that it would be scarce intelligible without an explanatory introduction, which, on every account, and on all occasions, appears preferable to notes in the margin.

A distinct idea of the god, whom the poem celebrates, may be collected from a passage in the ninth section o. the Gità, where the sudden change of measure has an effect similar to that of the finest modulation·

te punyamasadya surendra locam
asnanti divyan dividevabhogan,
te tam bhuctwa swergalocam visalam
cshine punye martyalocam visanti.

"These having through virtue reached the mansion of the king of Sura's, feast on the exquisite heavenly food of the gods: they, who have enjoyed this lofty region of Swerga, but whose virtue is exhausted, revisit the habitation of mortals."

Indra, therefore, or the king of Immortals, corresponds with one of the ancient Jupiters (for several of that name were worshipped in Europe,) and particularly with Jupiter the conductor, whose attributes are so nobly described by the Platonic philosophers; one of his numerous titles is Dyupeti, or, in the nominative case before certain letters, Dyupetir; which means the Lord of Heaven, and seems a more probable origin of the Hetruscan word than Juvans Pater; as Diespiter was probably, not the father, but the Lord of day. He may be considered as the Jove of Ennius in this memorable line:

"Aspice hoc sublime candens, quem invocant omnes Jovem"—

where the poet clearly means the firmament, of which Indra is the personification. He is the god of thunder and the five elements, with inferior genii under his command; and is conceived to govern the eastern quarter of the world, but to preside, like the genius or Agathodæman of the ancients over the celestial bands, which are stationed on the summit of Meru or the north-pole, where he solaces the gods with nectar and heavenly music; hence, perhaps, the Hindoos, who give evidence and the magistrates, who hear it, are directed to stand fronting the east or the north.

This imaginary mount is here feigned to have been seen in a vision at Varanasi, very improperly called Banaris, which takes its name from two rivulets that embrace the city; and the bard, who was favoured with the sight, is supposed to have been Vyasa, surnamed Dwaipayana, or Dwelling in an Island; who, if he really composed the Gità, makes very flattering mention of himself in the tenth chapter. The plant lata, which he describes weaving a net round the mountain Mandara, is transported by a poetical liberty to Sumeru, which the great author of the Mahabharat has richly painted in four beautiful couplets: it is the generic name for a creeper, though represented here as a species, of which many elegant varieties are found in Asia.

The Genii named Cinnarus are the male dancers in Swerga, or the heaven of Indra: and the Apsaras are his dancing-girls, answering to the fairies of the Persians, and to the damsels called in the Koran hhûru'lûyûn, or with antelopes' eyes. For the story of Chitrarat'ha, the chief musician of the Indian paradise, whose painted car was burned by Arjun; and for that of the Chaturdesaretna, or fourteen gems, as they are called, which were produced by churning the ocean: the reader must be referred to Mr. Wilkins's learned annotations on his accurate version of the Bhagavadgità. The fable of the pomegranate-flower is borrowed from the popular mythology of Nepal and Tibet.

In this poem the same form of stanza is repeated with variations, on a principle entirely new in modern lyric poetry, which on some future occasion may be explained.

THE HYMN.

But ah! what glories yon blue vault emblaze?
What living meteors from the zenith stream?
Or hath a rapturous dream
Perplex'd the isle-born bard in fiction's maze?
He wakes: he hears; he views no fancied rays;
'Tis Indra mounted on the sun's bright beam;
And round him revels his empyreal train:
How rich their tints! how sweet their strain!

Like shooting stars around his regal seat
A veil of many-colour'd light they weave,
That eyes unholy would of sense bereave:
Their sparkling hands and lightly-tripping feet
Tired gales and panting clouds behind them leave.
With love of song and sacred beauty smit,
The mystic dance they knit:
Pursuing, circling, whirling, twining, leading,
Now chasing, now receding:
Till the gay pageant from the sky descends
On charm'd Sumeru, who with homage bends.

Hail, mountain of delight,
Palace of glory, bless'd by glory's king!
With prospering shade imbower me, whilst I sing
Thy wonders yet unreach'd by mortal flight.
Sky-piercing mountain! in thy bowers of love
No tears are seen, save where medicinal stalks
Weep drops balsamic o'er the silver'd walks;
No plaints are heard, save where the restless dove
Of coy repulse and mild reluctance talks;
Mantled in woven gold, with gems enchased,
With emerald hillocks graced,
From whose fresh laps in young fantastic mazes
Soft crystal bounds and blazes
Bathing the lithe convolvulus, that winds
Obsequious, and each flaunting arbour binds.

When sapient Brahma this new world approved,
On woody wings eight primal mountains moved;
But Indra mark'd Sumeru for his own,
And motionless was every stone

Dazzling the moon he rears his golden head:
Nor bards inspired, nor heaven's all-perfect speech,
Less may unhallow'd rhyme his beauties teach,
Or paint the pavement which th' immortals tread;
Nor thought of man his awful height can reach:
Who sees it, maddens; who approaches, dies;
For, with flame-darting eyes,
Around it roll a thousand sleepless dragons;
While from their diamond flagons
The feasting gods exhaustless nectar sip,
Which glows and sparkles on each fragrant lip.

This feast in memory of the churned wave
Great Indra gave, when Amrit first was won
From impious demons, who to Máyà's eyes
Resign'd the prize, and rued the fight begun.

Now, while each ardent Cinnara persuades
The soft eyed Apsara to break the dance,
And leads her loth, yet with love-beaming glance,
To banks of marjoram and Champac shades,
Celestial Genii toward their king advance
(So call'd by men, in heaven Gandharvas named)
For matchless music famed.

Soon, where the bands in lucid rows assemble,
Flutes breathe, and citherns tremble;
Till Chitraratha sings—His painted car,
Yet unconsumed, gleams like an orient star.

Hush'd was every breezy pinion,
Every breeze his fall suspended:
Silence reign'd; whose sole dominion
Soon was raised, but soon was ended.
He sings, how "whilom from the troubled main
The sovereign elephant Airavan sprang:
The breathing shell, that peals of conquest rang;
The parent cow, whom none implores in vain;
The milk-white steed, the bow with deafening clang
The goddesses of beauty, wealth, and wine:
Flowers, that unfading shine,
Narayan's gem, the moonlight's tender languish;
Blue venom, source of anguish;
The solemn leech, slow-moving o'er the strand,
A vase of long-sought Amrit in his hand.

"To soften human ills dread Siva drank
The poisonous flood, that stain'd his azure neck;
The rest thy mansions deck,
High Swerga! stored in many a blazing rank.

"Thou, god of thunder! satt'st on Meru throned,
Cloud-riding, mountain-piercing, thousand-eyed,
With young Pulomaja, thy blooming bride,
Whilst air and skies thy boundless empire own'd;
Hail, Dyupetir, dismay to Bala's pride!
Or speaks Purander best thy martial fame,
Or Sacra mystic name?
With various praise in odes and hallow'd story
Sweet bards shall hymn thy glory.
Thou, Vasava, from this unmeasured height
Shedd'st pearl, shedd'st odours o'er the sons of light!"

The genius rested; for his powerful art
Had swell'd the monarch's heart with ardour vain,
That threaten'd rash disdain, and seem'd to lower
On gods of loftier power and ampler reign.

He smiled; and, warbling in a softer mode,
Sang "the red lightning hail, and whelming rain,
O'er Gocul green and Vraja's nymph-loved plain
By Indras hurl'd whose altars ne'er had glow'd,
Since infant Crishna ruled the rustic train
Now thrill'd with terror—them the heavenly child
Call'd, and with looks ambrosial smiled,
Then with one finger rear'd the vast Goverdhen,
Beneath whose rocky burden
On pastures dry the maids and herdsmen trod:
The lord of thunder felt a mightier god!"

What furies potent modulation sooths!
E'en the dilated heart of Indra shrinks:
His ruffled brow he smooths,
His lance, half-raised, with listless languor sinks.

A sweeter strain the sage musician chose:
He told, how "Sachi, soft as morning light,
Blithe Sachi, from her lord, Indrani hight,
When through clear skies their car ethereal rose,
Fix'd on a garden trim her wandering sight,
Where gay pomegranates, fresh with early dew,
Vaunted their blossoms new: [dresses
'O! pluck (she said) yon gems, which nature
To grace my darker tresses.'

In form a shepherd's boy, a god in soul,
He hasten'd, and the bloomy treasure stole.

"The reckless peasant, who those glowing flowers,
Hopeful of rubied fruit, had foster'd long,
Seized, and with cordage strong
Shackled the god who gave him showers.

"Straight from seven winds immortal Genii flew,
Green Varuna, whom foamy waves obey,
Bright Vahni, flaming like the lamp of day,
Cuvera, sought by all, enjoy'd by few,
Marut, who bids the winged breezes play,
Stern Yama, ruthless judge, and Isa cold,
With Nairrit mildly bold:
They with the ruddy flash, that points his thunder,
Rend his vain bands asunder.
Th' exulting god resumes his thousand eyes,
Four arms divine, and robes of changing dyes."

Soft memory retraced the youthful scene;
The thunderer yielded to resistless charms,
Then smiled enamour'd on his blushing queen,
And melted in her arms.

Such was the vision, which—on Varan's breast,
Or Asi pure, with offer'd blossoms fill'd—
Dwaipayan slumbering saw; (thus Nared will'd;)
For waking eye such glory never bless'd,
Nor waking ear such music ever thrill'd.
It vanish'd with light sleep: he, rising, praised
The guarded mount high-raised,
And pray'd the thundering power, that sheafy treasures,
Mild showers, and vernal pleasures,
The labouring youth in mead and vale might cheer,
And cherish'd herdsmen bless th' abundant year.

Thee, darter of the swift blue bolt! he sang;
Sprinkler of genial dews and fruitful rains
O'er hills and thirsty plains!
"When through the waves of war thy charger sprang,
Each rock rebellow'd and each forest rang.
Till vanquish'd Asurs felt avenging pains.
Send o'er their seats the snake that never dies,
But waft the virtuous to thy skies!"

GEORGE CRABBE.

GEORGE CRABBE was born at Aldborough, in Suffolk, on the 24th of December, 1754, where his father and grandfather were officers of the customs. He received his education at a neighbouring school, where he gained a prize for one of his poems, and left it with sufficient knowledge to qualify him for an apprentice to a surgeon and apothecary in his native town. His poetical taste is said to have been assisted in developing itself by a perusal of all the scraps of verses which his father used to tear off from different newspapers, and which young Crabbe collected together, and got most of them by heart. The attractions of the muse had probably overcome those of Æsculapius, for, on the completion of his apprenticeship, giving up all hope of succeeding in his profession, he determined at once to quit it, and to depend for support upon his literary abilities. Accordingly, in 1778, he came to London with little more in his pocket than a bundle of his best poems, and took a lodging in the city, where he read and composed, but could prevail upon no bookseller to publish. At length, in 1780, he ventured to print, at his own expense, a poem, entitled The Candidate, which was favourably noticed in the Monthly Review, to the editor of which it was addressed. Finding, however, that he stood no chance of success or popularity whilst he remained personally unknown, he is said to have introduced himself to Edmund Burke, who received him with great kindness, and read his productions with approbation. Our author fortunately found in this gentleman both a friend and a patron; he took Crabbe into his house, and introduced him to Fox; and, under their united auspices, appeared his poem of the Library, in 1781. In the same year, he was ordained deacon, and in the following one, priest, and, for a short time, acted as curate at Aldborough. About the same period, he entered his name at Trinity Hall, Cambridge, but withdrew it without graduating, although he was subsequently presented with the degree of B. C. L. After residing for some time at Belvoir Castle, as chaplain to the Duke of Rutland, by the recommendation of Mr. Burke, our author was introduced to Lord-chancellor Thurlow, who bestowed upon him successively, the living of Frome St. Quintin, in Dorsetshire, and the rectories of Muston and West Allington, in the diocese of Lincoln. In the meantime, in 1785, he published The Newspaper, a poem; followed by a complete edition of his works, in 1807, which were received with marked and universal approbation.

In 1810, appeared his admirable poem of The Borough; in 1812, he published his Tales in Verse; and in 1819, his celebrated Tales of the Hall. He had, in the interim, been presented to the rectory of Trowbridge, with the smaller benefice of Croxton Kerryel, in Leicestershire. His only prose publications are a funeral sermon on one of his early noble patrons, Charles, Duke of Rutland, preached in the chapel of Belvoir Castle, in 1789; and An Essay on the Natural History of the Vale of Belvoir, written for Mr. Nichols' History of Leicestershire.

Mr. Crabbe died February 3d, 1832, at Trowbridge, the scene of his latest ministrations as a Christian pastor. His parishioners, in grateful remembrance of his virtues and labours for their improvement, caused an elegant monument to be erected over his grave in the chancel. His character as a man is not less worthy of admiration, than his genius as a poet. His biography, accompanied by a volume of posthumous poetry, have since been published by his son.

The works of Crabbe have gone through several editions, and deservedly become popular; Mr. Wilson Croker has justly observed of Crabbe, that his having taken a view of life too minute, too humiliating, and too painfully just, may have rendered his popularity less brilliant than that of some of his contemporaries; though for accurate description, and deep knowledge of human nature, no poet of the present age is equal to him. The great charm of his poetry lies in his masterly treatment of the most ordinary subjects, and in his heart-rending but true descriptions of the scenes which his muse delights to visit,—those of poverty and distress. He depicts nature living and circumstantially; and in this respect, his poetry may justly be compared to the painting of Teniers and Ostade

SIR EUSTACE GREY.

SCENE—*A Mad-house.*

Persons—VISITER, PHYSICIAN, AND PATIENT.

Veris miscens falsa.—
Seneca in Herc. furente.

VISITER.

I'LL know no more;—the heart is torn
By views of wo we cannot heal;
Long shall I see these things forlorn,
And oft again their griefs shall feel,
As each upon the mind shall steal;
That wan projector's mystic style
That lumpish idiot leering by,
That peevish idler's ceaseless wile,
And that poor maiden's half form'd smile,
While struggling for the full drawn sigh!—
I'll know no more.

PHYSICIAN.

—Yes, turn again;
Then speed to happier scenes thy way,
When though hast view'd what yet remain,
The ruins of Sir Eustace Grey.
The sport of madness, misery's prey.
But he will no historian need,
His cares, his crimes, will he display,
And show (as one from frenzy freed)
The proud-lost mind, the rash-done deed.

That cell to him is Greyling Hall:—
Approach; he'll bid thee welcome there;
Will sometimes for his servant call,
And sometimes point the vacant chair
He can, with free and easy air,
And appear attentive and polite;
Can veil his woes in manners fair,
And pity with respect excite.

PATIENT.

Who comes?—Approach!—'tis kindly done:
My learn'd physician and a friend,
Their pleasures quit, to visit one
Who cannot to their ease attend,
Nor joys bestow, nor comforts lend,
As when I lived so bless'd, so well,
And dreamt not I must soon contend
With those malignant powers of hell.

PHYSICIAN.

Less warmth, Sir Eustace, or we go—

PATIENT.

See! I am calm as infant love,
A very child, but one of wo,
Whom you should pity, not reprove:—
But men at ease, who never strove
With passions wild, will calmly show
How soon we may their ills remove,
And masters of their madness grow.

Some twenty years, I think, are gone,—
(Time flies, I know not how, away,)
The sun upon no happier shone,
Nor prouder morn than Eustace Grey.
Ask where you would, and all would say,
The man admired and praised of all,
By rich and poor, by grave and gay,
Was the young lord of Greyling Hall.

Yes! I had youth and rosy health;
Was nobly form'd, as man might be;
For sickness then, of all my wealth,
I never gave a single fee:
The ladies fair, the maidens free,
Were all accustom'd then to say,
Who would a handsome figure see
Should look upon Sir Eustace Grey.

He had a frank and pleasant look,
A cheerful eye, and accent bland;
His very speech and manner spoke
The generous heart, the open hand;
About him all was gay or grand,
He had the praise of great and small:
He bought, improved projected, plann'd,
And reign'd a prince at Greyling Hall.

My lady!—she was all we love;
All praise (to speak her worth) is faint;
Her manners show'd the yielding dove
Her morals, the seraphic saint;
She never breathed nor look'd complaint
No equal upon earth had she:—
Now, what is this fair thing I paint?
Alas! as all that live shall be.

There was, beside, a gallant youth,
And him my bosom's friend, I had:—
O! I was rich in very truth,
It made me proud—it made me mad!—
Yes, I was lost—but there was cause:—
Where stood my tale?—I cannot find—
But I had all mankind's applause,
And all the smiles of woman kind.

There were two cherub things beside,
A gracious girl, a glorious boy;
Yet more to swell my full-blown pride,
To varnish higher my fading joy,
Pleasures were ours without alloy,
Nay, Paradise,—till my frail Eve
Our bliss was tempted to destroy;
Deceived, and fated to deceive.

But I deserved; for all that time,
When I was loved, admired, caress'd,
There was within, each secret crime,
Unfelt, uncancell'd, unconfess'd:
I never then my God address'd
In grateful praise or humble prayer;
And if his word was not my jest!
(Dread thought!) it never was my care.

I doubted—fool I was to doubt!
If that all-piercing eye could see,—
If He who looks all worlds throughout,
Would so minute and careful be,
As to perceive and punish me:—
With man I would be great and high,
But with my God so lost, that He,
In his large view, should pass me by.

Thus bless'd with children, friend, and wife
Bless'd far beyond the vulgar lot;
Of all that gladdens human life,
Where was the good that I had not?
But my vile heart had sinful spot,
And heaven beheld its deepening stain;
Eternal justice I forgot,
And mercy sought not to obtain.

Come near,—I'll softly speak the rest!—
Alas! 'tis known to all the crowd,
Her guilty love was all confess'd;
And his who so much truth avow'd,
My faithless friend's.—In pleasure proud
I sat, when these cursed tidings came;
Their guilt, their flight was told aloud,
And envy smiled to hear my shame!

I call'd on vengeance; at the word
She came;—Can I the deed forget?
I held the sword, th' accursed sword,
The blood of his false heart made wet;
And that fair victim paid her debt,
She pined, she died, she loathed to live;—
I saw her dying—see her yet:
Fair fallen thing! my rage forgive!

Those cherubs still, my life to bless,
Were left; could I my fears remove,
Sad fears that check'd each fond caress,
And poison'd all parental love?
Yet that with jealous feelings strove,
And would at last have won my will,
Had I not, wretch! been doom'd to prove
Th' extremes of mortal good and ill.

In youth! health! joy! in beauty's pride!
They droop'd: as flowers when blighted bow,
The dire infection came:—They died,
And I was cursed—as I am now—
Nay, frown not, angry friend,—allow
That I was deeply, sorely tried;
Hear then, and you must wonder how
I could such storms and strifes abide.

Storms!—not that clouds embattled make,
When they afflict this earthly globe;
But such as with their terrors shake
Man's breast, and to the bottom probe;
They make the hypocrite disrobe,
They try us all, if false or true;
For this, one devil had power on Job;
And I was long the slave of two.

PHYSICIAN.

Peace, peace, my friend; these subjects fly;
Collect thy thoughts—go calmly on.—

PATIENT.

And shall I then the fact deny?
I was,—thou know'st,—I was begone,
Like him who fill'd the eastern throne,
To whom the watcher cried aloud!*
That royal wretch of Babylon
Who was so guilty and so proud.

Like him, with haughty, stubborn mind
I, in my state, my comforts sought;
Delight and praise I hoped to find,
In what I builded, planted, bought:
O arrogance! by misery taught—
Soon came a voice! I felt it come;
"Full be his cup, with evil fraught
Demons his guides, and death his doom!"

Then was I cast from out my state;
Two fiends of darkness led my way;
They waked me early, watch'd me late,
My dread by night, my plague by day!
O! I was made their sport, their play,
Through many a stormy troubled year;
And how they used their passive prey
Is sad to tell:—but you shall hear.

And first, before they sent me forth,
Through this unpitying world to run,
They robb'd Sir Eustace of his worth,
Lands, manors, lordships, every one;
So was that gracious man undone,
Was spurn'd as vile, was scorn'd as poor,
Whom every former friend would shun,
And menials drove from every door.

Then those ill-favour'd Ones,* whom none
But my unhappy eyes could view,
Led me, with wild emotion, on,
And, with resistless terror, drew
Through lands we fled, o'er seas we flew,
And halted on a boundless plain:
Where nothing fed, nor breathed, nor grew
But silence ruled the still domain.

Upon that boundless plain, below,
The setting sun's last rays were shed,
And gave a mild and sober glow,
Where all were still, asleep, or dead;
Vast ruins in the midst were spread,
Pillars and pediments sublime,
Where the gray moss had form'd a bed,
And clothed the crumbling spoils of time.

There was I fix'd, I know not how,
Condemn'd for untold years to stay:
Yet years were not;—one dreadful *now*
Endured no change of night or day;
The same mild evening's sleeping ray
Shone softly solemn and serene.
And all that time I gazed away,
The setting sun's sad rays were seen.

At length a moment's sleep stole on,—
Again came my commission'd foes;
Again through sea and land we're gone,
No peace, no respite, no repose:
Above the dark broad sea we rose,
We ran through bleak and frozen land,
I had no strength their strength t' oppose,
An infant in a giant's hand.

They placed me where these streamers play,
Those nimble beams of brilliant light;
It would the stoutest heart dismay,
To see, to feel, that dreadful sight:

* Prophecy of Daniel, chap. iv. 22.

* Vide Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress.

So swift, so pure, so cold, so bright,
They pierced my frame with icy wounds,
And all that half year's polar night,
Those dancing streamers wrapp'd me round.

Slowly that darkness pass'd away,
When down upon the earth I fell,—
Some hurried sleep was mine by day;
But, soon as toll'd the evening bell,
They forced me on, where ever dwell
Far distant men in cities fair,
Cities of whom no trav'llers tell,
Nor feet but mine were wanderers there.

Their watchmen stare and stand aghast,
As on we hurry through the dark;
The watch-light blinks as we go past,
The watch-dog shrinks and fears to bark;
The watch-tower's bell sounds shrill; and, hark!
The free wind blows—we've left the town—
A wide sepulchral ground I mark,
And on a tombstone place me down.

What monuments of mighty dead!
What tombs of various kinds are found!
And stones erect their shadows shed
On humble graves, with wickers bound;
Some risen fresh above the ground,
Some level with the native clay,
What sleeping millions wait the sound,
"Arise, ye dead, and come away!"

Alas! they stay not for that call;
Spare me this wo! ye demons, spare!—
They come! the shrouded shadows all,—
'Tis more than mortal brain can bear;
Rustling they rise, they sternly glare
At man upheld by vital breath;
Who, led by wicked fiends, should dare
To join the shadowy troops of death!

Yes, I have felt all man can feel,
Till he shall pay his nature's debt;
Ills that no hope has strength to heal,
No mind the comfort to forget:
Whatever cares the heart can fret,
The spirits wear, the temper gall,
Wo, want, dread, anguish, all beset
My sinful soul!—together all!

Those fiends upon a shaking fen
Fix'd me, in dark tempestuous night;
There never trod the foot of men,
There flock'd the fowl in wintery flight;
There danced the moor's deceitful light
Above the pool where sedges grow;
And when the morning sun shone bright,
It shone upon a field of snow.

They hung me on a bough so small,
The rook could build her nest no higher;
They fix'd me on the trembling ball
That crowns the steeple's quivering spire;
They set me where the seas retire,
But drown with their returning tide;
And made me flee the mountain's fire,
When rolling from its burning side.

I've hung upon the ridgy steep
Of cliffs, and held the rambling brier;
I've plunged below the billowy deep,
Where air was sent me to respire;
I've been where hungry wolves retire;
And (to complete my woes) I've ran
Where bedlam's crazy crew conspire
Against the life of reasoning man.

I've furl'd in storms the flapping sail,
By hanging from the topmast-head;
I've served the vilest slaves in jail,
And pick'd the dunghill's spoil for bread,
I've made the badger's hole my bed
I've wander'd with a gipsy crew;
I've dreaded all the guilty dread,
And done what they would fear to do

On sand, where ebbs and flows the flood,
Midway they placed and bade me die;
Propp'd on my staff, I stoutly stood
When the swift waves came rolling by;
And high they rose, and still more high.
Till my lips drank the bitter brine;
I sobb'd convulsed, then cast mine eye,
And saw the tide's reflowing sign.

And then, my dreams were such as naught
Could yield but my unhappy case;
I've been of thousand devils caught,
And thrust into that horrid place,
Where reign dismay, despair, disgrace;
Furies with iron fangs were there,
To torture that accursed race,
Doom'd to dismay, disgrace, despair.

Harmless I was; yet hunted down
For treasons, to my soul unfit;
I've been pursued through many a town,
For crimes that petty knaves commit;
I've been adjudged t' have lost my wit,
Because I preach'd so loud and well;
And thrown into the dungeon's pit,
For trampling on the pit of hell.

Such were the evils, man of sin,
That I was fated to sustain;
And add to all, without—within,
A soul defiled with every stain
That man's reflecting mind can pain;
That pride, wrong, rage, despair, can make,
In fact, they'd nearly touch'd my brain,
And reason on her throne would shake.

But pity will the vilest seek,
If punish'd guilt will not repine,—
I heard a heavenly Teacher speak,
And felt the Sun of mercy shine;
I hail'd the light! the birth divine!
And then was seal'd among the few;
Those angry fiends beheld the sign,
And from me in an instant flew.

Come, hear how thus the charmers cry
To wandering sheep, the strays of sin,
While some the wicket-gate pass by,
And some will knock and enter in:

Full joyful 'tis a soul to win,
For he that winneth souls is wise;
Now hark! the holy strains begin,
And thus the sainted preacher cries:*—

"Pilgrim, burden'd with thy sin,
Come the way to Zion's gate,
There, till Mercy let thee in,
Knock and weep, and watch and wait.
Knock!—He knows the sinner's cry:
Weep!—He loves the mourner's tears:
Watch!—for saving grace is nigh:
Wait!—till heavenly light appears

'Hark! it is the Bridegroom's voice;
Welcome pilgrim to thy rest;
Now within the gate rejoice,
Safe and seal'd, and bought and bless'd!
Safe—from all the lures of vice,
Seal'd—by signs the chosen know,
Bought—by love and life the price,
Bless'd—the mighty debt to owe.

'Holy Pilgrim! what for thee
In a world like this remain?
From thy guarded breast shall flee,
Fear and shame, and doubt and pain.
Fear—the hope of Heaven shall fly,
Shame—from glory's view retire,
Doubt—in certain rapture die,
Pain—in endless bliss expire."

But though my day of grace was come,
Yet still my days of grief I find;
The former clouds' collected gloom
Still sadden the reflecting mind;
The soul, to evil things consign'd,
Will of their evil some retain;
The man will seem to earth inclined,
And will not look erect again.

Thus, though elect, I feel it hard
To lose what I possess'd before,
To be from all my wealth debarr'd,—
The brave Sir Eustace is no more:
But old I wax and passing poor,
Stern, rugged men my conduct view;
They chide my wish, they bar my door,
'Tis hard—I weep—you see I do.—

Must you, my friends, no longer stay?
Thus quickly all my pleasures end;
But I'll remember, when I pray,
My kind physician and his friend:
And those sad hours, you deign to spend
With me, I shall requite them all;
Sir Eustace for his friends shall send,
And thank their love at Greyling Hall

VISITER.

The poor Sir Eustace!—Yet his hope
Leads him to think of joys again;
And when his earthly visions droop,
His views of heavenly kind remain:—
But whence that meek and humbled strain,
That spirit wounded, lost, resign'd?
Would not so proud a soul disdain
The madness of the poorest mind?

PHYSICIAN.

No! for the more he swell'd with pride,
The more he felt misfortune's blow;
Disgrace and grief he could not hide,
And poverty had laid him low:
Thus shame and sorrow working slow
At length this humble spirit gave.
Madness on these began to grow,
And bound him to his fiends a slave.

Though the wild thoughts had touch'd his brain
Then was he free: —so, forth he ran,
To soothe or threat, alike were vain:
He spake of fiends, look'd wild and wan;
Year after year, the hurried man
Obey'd those fiends from place to place;
Till his religious change began
To form a frenzied child of grace.

For, as the fury lost its strength,
The mind reposed; by slow degrees
Came lingering hope, and brought at length,
To the tormented spirit, ease:
This slave of sin, whom fiends could seize,
Felt or believed their power had end;—
"'Tis faith," he cried, "my bosom frees,
And now my Saviour is my friend."

But ah! though time can yield relief,
And soften woes it cannot cure;
Would we not suffer pain and grief,
To have our reason sound and sure?
Then let us keep our bosoms pure,
Our fancy's favourite flights suppress,
Prepare the body to endure,
And bend the mind to meet distress;
And then His guardian care implore,
Whom demons dread and men adore.

THE HALL OF JUSTICE

PART I

Confiteor facere hoc annos; sed et altera causa est,
Anxietas animi, continuusque dolor. Ovid

MAGISTRATE, VAGRANT, CONSTABLE, &c.

VAGRANT.

TAKE, take away thy barbarous hand,
And let me to thy master speak;
Remit awhile the harsh command,
And hear me, or my heart will break.

MAGISTRATE.

Fond wretch! and what canst thou relate,
But deeds of sorrow, shame, and sin?
Thy crime is proved, thou know'st thy fate;
But come, thy tale!—begin, begin!—

* It has been suggested to me, that this change from restlessness to repose, in the mind of Sir Eustace, is wrought by a methodistic call; and it is admitted to be such: a sober and rational conversion could not have happened while the disorder of the brain continued: yet the verses which follow, in a different measure, are not intended to make any religious persuasion appear ridiculous; they are to be supposed as the effect of memory in the disordered mind of the speaker, and, though evidently enthusiastic in respect to language, are not meant to convey any impropriety of sentiment.

VAGRANT.

My crime!—This sickening child to feed,
I seized the food, your witness saw;
I knew your laws forbade the deed,
But yielded to a stronger law.

Know'st thou, to Nature's great command
All human laws are frail and weak?
Nay! frown not—stay his eager hand,
And hear me, or my heart will break.

In this, th' adopted babe I hold
With anxious fondness to my breast,
My heart's sole comfort I behold,
More dear than life, when life was bless'd;
I saw her pining, fainting, cold,
I begg'd—but vain was my request.

I saw the tempting food, and seized—
My infant sufferer found relief;
And, in the pilfer'd treasure pleased,
Smiled on my guilt, and hush'd my grief.

But I have griefs of other kind,
Troubles and sorrows more severe;
Give me to ease my tortured mind,
Lend to my woes a patient ear;
And let me—if I may not find
A friend to help—find one to hear.

Yet nameless let me plead—my name
Would only wake the cry of scorn;
A child of sin, conceived in shame,
Brought forth in wo, to misery born.

My mother dead, my father lost,
I wander'd with a vagrant crew;
A common care, a common cost,
Their sorrows and their sins I knew;
With them, by want on error forced,
Like them, I base and guilty grew.

Few are my years, not so my crimes;
The age, which these sad looks declare,
Is Sorrow's work, it is not Time's,
And I am old in shame and care.

Taught to believe the world a place
Where every stranger was a foe,
Train'd in the arts that mark our race,
To what new people could I go?
Could I a better life embrace,
Or live as virtue dictates? No!

So through the land I wandering went,
And little found of grief or joy;
But lost my bosom's sweet content
When first I loved—the Gipsy-Boy.

A sturdy youth he was and tall,
His looks would all his soul declare;
His piercing eyes were deep and small,
And strongly curl'd his raven hair.

Yes, Aaron had each manly charm,
All in the May of youthful pride,
He scarcely fear'd his father's arm,
And every other arm defied.—

Oft, when they grew in anger warm,
(Whom will not love and power divide?)
I rose, their wrathful souls to calm,
Not yet in sinful combat tried.

His father was our party's chief,
And dark and dreadful was his look;
His presence fill'd my heart with grief,
Although to me he kindly spoke.

With Aaron I delighted went,
His favour was my bliss and pride;
In growing hope our days we spent,
Love growing charms in either spied,
It saw them, all which Nature lent,
It lent them, all which she denied.

Could I the father's kindness prize,
Or grateful looks on him bestow,
Whom I beheld in wrath arise,
When Aaron sunk beneath his blow?

He drove him down with wicked hand,
It was a dreadful sight to see;
Then vex'd him, till he left the land
And told his cruel love to me;—
The clan were all at his command,
Whatever his command might be.

The night was dark, the lanes were deep,
And one by one they took their way;
He bade me lay me down and sleep,
I only wept and wish'd for day

Accursed be the love he bore,
Accursed was the force he used,
So let him of his God implore
For mercy, and be so refused!

You frown again,—to show my wrong,
Can I in gentle language speak?
My woes are deep, my words are strong,—
And hear me, or my heart will break

MAGISTRATE.

I hear thy words, I feel thy pain:
Forbear awhile to speak thy woes;
Receive our aid, and then again
The story of thy life disclose.

For, though seduced and led astray,
Thou'st travell'd far and wander'd long;
Thy God hath seen thee all the way,
And all the turns that led thee wrong.

PART II.

Quondam ridentes oculi, nunc fonte perenni
Deplorant pœnus nocte dieque suas.
CORN. GALLI *Eleg.*

MAGISTRATE.

COME, now again thy woes impart,
Tell all thy sorrows, all thy sin;
We cannot heal the throbbing heart
Till we discern the wounds within.

Compunction weeps our guilt away,
The sinner's safety is his pain;
Such pangs for our offences pay,
And these severer griefs are gain.

VAGRANT.

The son came back—he found us wed,
Then dreadful was the oath he swore;—
His way through Blackburn Forest led,—
His father we beheld no more.

Of all our daring clan not one
Would on the doubtful subject dwell;
For all esteem'd the injured son,
And fear'd the tale which he could tell.

But I had mightier cause for fear,
For slow and mournful round my bed
saw a dreadful form appear,—
It came when I and Aaron wed.

(Yes! we were wed, I know my crime,—
We slept beneath the elmin tree;
But I was grieving all the time,
And Aaron frown'd my tears to see.

For he not yet had felt the pain
That rankles in a wounded breast;
He waked to sin, then slept again,
Forsook his God, yet took his rest.—

But I was forced to feign delight,
And joy in mirth and music sought,—
And memory now recalls the night,
With such surprise and horror fraught,
That reason felt a moment's flight,
And left a mind to madness wrought.)

When waking on my heaving breast
I felt a hand as cold as death;
A sudden fear my voice suppress'd,
A chilling terror stopp'd my breath.—

I scream'd—no words can utter how!
For there my father-husband stood,—
And thus he said:—"Will God allow,
The great avenger, just and good,
A wife to break her marriage vow,
A son to shed his father's blood!"

I trembled at the dismal sounds,
But vainly strove a word to say;
So, pointing to his bleeding wounds,
The threatening spectre stalk'd away.*

I brought a lovely daughter forth,
His father's child, in Aaron's bed;
He took her from me in his wrath,
"Where is my child?"—"Thy child is dead."

'Twas false.—We wander'd far and wide,
Through town and country, field and fen,
Till Aaron, fighting, fell and died,
And I became a wife again.

I then was young:—my husband sold
My fancied charms for wicked price;
He gave me oft, for sinful gold,
The slave, but not the friend of vice:—
Behold me, Heaven! my pains behold,
And let them for my sins suffice!

The wretch who lent me thus for gain,
Despised me when my youth was fled,
Then came disease, and brought me pain:—
Come, death, and bear me to the dead!
For though I grieve, my grief is vain,
And fruitless all the tears I shed.

True, I was not to virtue train'd,
Yet well I knew my deeds were ill;
By each offence my heart was pain'd,
I wept, but I offended still;
My better thoughts my life disdain'd,
But yet the viler led my will.

My husband died, and now no more
My smile was sought, or ask'd my hand
A widow'd vagrant, vile and poor,
Beneath a vagrant's vile command.

Ceaseless I roved the country round,
To win my bread by fraudful arts,
And long a poor subsistence found,
By spreading nets for simple hearts.

Though poor, and abject, and despised;
Their fortunes to the crowd I told;
I gave the young the love they prized,
And promised wealth to bless the old;
Schemes for the doubtful I devised,
And charms for the forsaken sold.

At length fit arts like these confined
In prison with a lawless crew,
I soon perceived a kindred mind,
And there my long-lost daughter knew.

His father's child, whom Aaron gave
To wander with a distant clan,
The miseries of the world to brave,
And be the slave of vice and man.

She knew my name—we met in pain,
Our parting pangs can I express?
She sail'd a convict o'er the main,
And left an heir to her distress.

This is that heir to shame, and pain,
For whom I only could descry
A world of trouble and disdain:
Yet, could I bear to see her die,
Or stretch her feeble hands in vain,
And, weeping, beg of me supply?

No! though the fate thy mother knew
Was shameful! shameful though thy race
Have wander'd all, a lawless crew,
Outcasts, despised in every place;

Yet as the dark and muddy tide,
When far from its polluted source,
Becomes more pure, and, purified,
Flows in a clear and happy course;—

In thee, dear infant! so may end
Our shame, in thee our sorrows cease!
And thy pure course will then extend,
In floods of joy, o'er vales of peace.

O! by the God who loves to spare,
Deny me not the boon I crave;
Let this loved child your mercy share,
And let me find a peaceful grave;
Make her yet spotless soul your care,
And let my sins their portion have
Her for a better fate prepare,
And punish whom 'twere sin to save.

* The state of mind here described will account for a vision of this nature without having recourse to any supernatural appearance

MAGISTRATE.

Recall the word, renounce the thought,
Command thy heart, and bend thy knee:
There is to all a pardon brought,
A ransom rich, assured, and free;
'Tis full when found, 'tis found if sought,
O! seek it, till 'tis seal'd to thee.

VAGRANT.

But how my pardon shall I know?

MAGISTRATE.

By feeling dread that 'tis not sent,
By tears for sin that freely flow,
By grief, that all thy tears are spent,
By thoughts on that great debt we owe,
With all the mercy God has lent,
By suffering what thou canst not show,
Yet showing how thine heart is rent,
Till thou canst feel thy bosom glow,
And say, "My Saviour, I repent!"

WOMAN:

To a woman I never addressed myself in the language of decency and friendship, without receiving a decent and friendly answer. If I was hungry or thirsty, wet or sick, they did not hesitate, like men, to perform a generous action: in so free and kind a manner did they contribute to my relief, that if I was dry, I drank the sweetest draught; and if hungry, I ate the coarsest morsel with a double relish."—*Mr. Ledyard, as quoted by M. Parke in his Travels into Africa.*

PLACE the white man on Afric's coast,
Whose swarthy sons in blood delight,
Who of their scorn to Europe boast,
And paint their very demons white:
There, while the sterner sex disdains
To soothe the woes they cannot feel,
Woman will strive to heal his pains,
And weep for those she cannot heal;
Hers is warm pity's sacred glow;
From all her stores, she bears a part,
And bids the spring of hope re-flow,
That languish'd in the fainting heart.

"What though so pale his haggard face,
So sunk and sad his looks,"—she cries;
"And far unlike our nobler race,
With crisped locks and rolling eyes;
Yet misery marks him of our kind;
We see him lost, alone, afraid;
And pangs of body, griefs in mind,
Pronounce him man, and ask our aid.

"Perhaps in some far-distant shore,
There are who in these forms delight;
Whose milky features please them more
Than ours of jet, thus burnish'd bright;
Of such may be his weeping wife,
Such children for their sire may call,
And if we spare his ebbing life,
Our kindness may preserve them all."

Thus her compassion woman shows,
Beneath the line her acts are these;
Nor the wide waste of Lapland-snows
Can her warm flow of pity freeze:—

"From some sad land the stranger comes
Where joys like ours are never found,
Let's soothe him in our happy homes,
Where freedom sits with plenty crown'd

"'Tis good the fainting soul to cheer,
To see the famish'd stranger fed;
To milk for him the mother deer,
To smooth for him the furry bed.
The powers above our Lapland bless
With good no other people know;
T' enlarge the joys that we possess
By feeling those that we bestow!"

Thus in extremes of cold and heat,
Where wandering man may trace his kind;
Wherever grief and want retreat,
In woman they compassion find;
She makes the female breast her seat,
And dictates mercy to the mind.

Man may the sterner virtues know,
Determined justice, truth severe:
But female hearts with pity glow,
And woman holds affliction dear;
For guiltless woes her sorrows flow,
And suffering vice compels her tear;
'Tis hers to soothe the ills below,
And bid life's fairer views appear;
To woman's gentle kind we owe
What comforts and delights us here;
They its gay hopes on youth bestow,
And care they soothe and age they cheer.

TALE I.

THE DUMB ORATORS; OR, THE BENEFIT OF SOCIETY

With fair round belly with good capon lined,
With eyes severe——
Full of wise saws and modern instances.
As you like it, act ii. sc. 7.

Deep shame hath struck me dumb.
King John, act iv. sc. 2.

He gives the bastinado with his tongue,
Our ears are cudgell'd.
King John, act iv. sc. 2.

Let's kill all the lawyers;
Now show yourselves men: 'tis for liberty:
We will not leave one lord or gentleman.
Henry VI. part 2, act ii. sc. 7.

And thus the whirligig of time brings in his revenges.
Twelfth Night, act v. scene last

THAT all men would be cowards if they dare,
Some men we know have courage to declare;
And this the life of many a hero shows,
That like the tide, man's courage ebbs and flows;
With friends and gay companions round them, thei
Men boldly speak and have the hearts of men;
Who, with opponents seated, miss the aid
Of kind applauding looks, and grow afraid;
Like timid travellers in the night, they fear
Th' assault of foes, when not a friend is near.
In contest mighty, and of conquest proud
Was Justice Bolt, impetuous, warm, and loud;
His fame, his prowess all the country knew,
And disputants, with one so fierce, were few

He was a younger son, for law design'd,
With dauntless look and persevering mind;
While yet a clerk, for disputation famed,
No efforts tired him, and no conflicts tamed.
Scarcely he lade his master's desk adieu,
When both his brothers from the world withdrew.
An ample fortune he from them possess'd,
And was with saving care and prudence bless'd.
Now would he go and to the country give
Example how an English 'squire should live;
How bounteous, yet how frugal man may be,
By a well-order'd hospitality;
He would the rights of all so well maintain,
That none should idle be, and none complain.
All this and more he purposed—and what man
Could do, he did to realize his plan:
But time convinced him that we cannot keep
A breed of reasoners like a flock of sheep;
For they, so far from following as we lead,
Make that a cause why they will not proceed.
Man will not follow where a rule is shown,
But loves to take a method of his own;
Explain the way with all your care and skill,
This will he quit, if but to prove he will.—
Yet had our justice honour; and the crowd,
Awed by his presence, their respect avow'd.
In later years he found his heart incline,
More than in youth, to generous food and wine;
But no indulgence check'd the powerful love
He felt to teach, to argue, and reprove.
Meetings, or public calls, he never miss'd—
To dictate often, always to assist.
Oft he the clergy join'd, and not a cause
Pertain'd to them but he could quote the laws;
He upon tithes and residence display'd
A fund of knowledge for the hearer's aid;
And could on glebe and farming, wool and grain,
A long discourse, without a pause, maintain.
To his experience and his native sense
He join'd a bold imperious eloquence;
The grave, stern look of men inform'd and wise,
A full command of feature, heart, and eyes,
An awe compelling frown, and fear inspiring size.
When at the table, not a guest was seen
With appetite so lingering, or so keen;
But when the outer man no more required,
The inner waked, and he was man inspired.
His subjects then were those, a subject true
Presents in fairest form to public view!
Of church and state, of law, with mighty strength
Of words he spoke, in speech of mighty length:
And now, into the vale of years declined,
He hides too little of the monarch mind:
He kindles anger by untimely jokes,
And opposition by contempt provokes;
Mirth he suppresses by his awful frown,
And humble spirits, by disdain, keeps down;
Blamed by the mild, approved by the severe,
The prudent fly him, and the valiant fear.
For overbearing is his proud discourse,
And overwhelming of his voice the force;
And overpowering is he when he shows
What floats upon a mind that always overflows
This ready man at every meeting rose,
Something to hint, determine, or propose;
And grew so fond of teaching, that he taught
Those who instruction needed not or sought:
Happy our hero, when he could excite
Some thoughtless talker to the wordy fight:
Let him a subject at his pleasure choose,
Physic or law, religion or the muse;
On all such themes he was prepared to shine,
Physician, poet, lawyer, and divine.
Hemm'd in by some tough argument, borne down
By press of language, and the awful frown,
In vain for mercy shall the culprit plead;
His crime is past, and sentence must proceed:
Ah! suffering man, have patience, bear thy woes
For lo! the clock—at ten the justice goes.
This powerful man, on business or to please
A curious taste, or weary grown of ease,
On a long journey travell'd many a mile
Westward, and halted midway in our isle;
Content to view a city large and fair,
Though none had notice—what a man was there!
Silent two days, he then began to long
Again to try a voice so loud and strong:
To give his favourite topics some new grace,
And gain some glory in such distant place;
To reap some present pleasure, and to sow
Seeds of fair fame, in after-time to grow:
Here will men say, "We heard, at such an hour
The best of speakers—wonderful his power."
Inquiry made, he found that day would meet
A learned club, and in the very street:
Knowledge to gain and give, was the design;
To speak, to hearken, to debate, and dine:
This pleased our traveller, for he felt his force
In either way, to eat or to discourse.
Nothing more easy than to gain access
To men like these, with his polite address;
So he succeeded, and first look'd around,
To view his objects and to take his ground;
And therefore silent chose a while to sit,
Then enter boldly by some lucky hit;
Some observation keen or stroke severe,
To cause some wonder or excite some fear.
Now, dinner past, no longer he suppress'd
His strong dislike to be a silent guest;
Subjects and words were now at his command—
When disappointment frown'd on all he plann'd:
For, hark!—he heard, amazed, on every side
His church insulted, and her priests belied;
The laws reviled, the ruling power abused
The land derided, and its foes excused:—
He heard, and ponder'd—What, to men so vile,
Should be his language? For his threatening style
They were too many;—if his speech were meek,
They would despise such poor attempts to speak:
At other times with every word at will,
He now sat lost, perplex'd, astonish'd, still.
Here were Socinians, Deists, and indeed
All who, as foes to England's church, agreed;
But still with creeds unlike, and some without a creed:
Here, too, fierce friends of liberty he saw,
Who own'd no prince and who obey no law;
There were reformers of each different sort,
Foes to the laws, the priesthood, and the court;
Some on their favourite plans alone intent,
Some purely angry and malevolent:
The rash were proud to blame their country's laws
The vain, to seem supporters of a cause;
One call'd for change that he would dread to see
Another sigh'd for Gallic liberty!

And numbers joining with the forward crew,
For no one reason—but that numbers do.
"How," said the justice, "can this trouble rise,
This shame and pain, from creatures I despise?"
And conscience answer'd—"The prevailing cause
Is thy delight in listening to applause;
Here, thou art seated with a tribe, who spurn
Thy favourite themes, and into laughter turn
Thy fears and wishes; silent and obscure
Thyself, shalt thou the long harangue endure;
And learn, by feeling, what it is to force
On thy unwilling friends the long discourse:
What though thy thoughts be just, and these, it seems,
Are traitors' projects, idiots' empty schemes?
Yet, minds like bodies cramm'd, reject their food,
Nor will be forced and tortured for their good!"
At length, a sharp, shrewd, sallow man arose,
And begg'd he briefly might his mind disclose;
"It was his duty, in these worst of times,
T' inform the govern'd of their rulers' crimes:"
This pleasant subject to attend, they each
Prepared to listen, and forbore to teach.
Then voluble and fierce the wordy man
Through a long chain of favourite horrors ran:—
First, of the church, from whose enslaving power
He was deliver'd, and he bless'd the hour;
"Bishops and deans, and prebendaries all,"
He said, "were cattle fattening in the stall;
Slothful and pursy, insolent and mean,
Were every bishop, prebendary, dean,
And wealthy rector: curates, poorly paid,
Were only dull, he would not them upbraid."
From priests he turn'd to canons, creeds, and prayers,
Rubrics and rules, and all our church affairs:
Churches themselves, desk, pulpit, altar, all
The justice reverenced—and pronounced their fall.
Then from religion Hammond turn'd his view,
To give our rulers the correction due;
Not one wise action had these triflers plann'd;
There was, it seem'd, no wisdom in the land;
Save in this patriot tribe, who meet at times
To show the statesman's errors and his crimes.
Now here was Justice Bolt compell'd to sit,
To hear the deist's scorn, the rebel's wit;
The fact mis-stated, the envenomed lie,
And staring, spell-bound, made not one reply.
Then were our laws abused; and with the laws
All who prepare, defend, or judge a cause:
"We have no lawyer whom a man can trust,"
Proceeded Hammond, "if the laws were just;
But they are evil; 'tis the savage state
Is only good, and ours sophisticate!
See! the free creatures in their woods and plains,
Where without laws each happy monarch reigns,
King of himself—while we a number dread,
By slaves commanded and by dunces led;
O, let the name with either state agree—
Savage our own we'll name, and civil theirs shall be."
The silent justice still astonish'd sate,
And wonder'd much whom he was gazing at;
Twice he essay'd to speak, but in a cough
The faint, indignant, dying speech went off:
"But who is this?" thought he; "a demon vile,
With wicked meaning and a vulgar style:
Hammond they call him; they can give the name
Of man to devils.—Why am I so tame?
Why crush I not the viper?"—Fear replied,
"Watch him a while, and let his strength be tried
He will be foil'd, if man; but if his aid
Be from beneath, 'tis well to be afraid."
"We are call'd free!" said Hammond—"dolefi times
When rulers add their insults to their crimes.
For should our scorn expose each powerful vice,
It would be libel, and we pay the price."
Thus with licentious words the man went on,
Proving that liberty of speech was gone;
That all were slaves; nor had we better chance
For better times than as allies to France.
Loud groan'd the stranger—Why, he must relate,
And own'd, "In sorrow for his country's fate."
"Nay, she were safe," the ready man replied,
"Might patriots rule her, and could reasoners guide
When all to vote, to speak, to teach, are free,
Whate'er their creeds or their opinions be;
When books of statutes are consumed in flames,
And courts and copyholds are empty names;
Then will be times of joy: but ere they come,
Havoc, and war, and blood must be our doom."
The man here paused; then loudly for reform
He call'd, and hail'd the prospect of the storm;
The wholesome blast, the fertilizing flood—
Peace gain'd by tumult, plenty bought with blood:
Sharp means, he own'd; but when the land's disease
Asks cure complete, no medicines are like these.
Our justice now, more led by fear than rage,
Saw it in vain with madness to engage;
With imps of darkness no man seeks to fight
Knaves to instruct, or set deceivers right:
Then as the daring speech denounced these woes
Sick at the soul, the grieving guest arose;
Quick on the board his ready cash he threw,
And from the demons to his closet flew:
There when secured, he pray'd with earnest zeal,
That all they wish'd these patriot souls might feel;
"Let them to France, their darling country haste,
And all the comforts of a Frenchman taste;
Let them his safety, freedom, pleasure know,
Feel all their rulers on the land bestow;
And be at length dismiss'd by one unerring blow;
Not hack'd and hew'd by one afraid to strike,
But shorn by that which shears all men alike;
Nor, as in Britain, let them curse delay
Of law, but borne without a form away—
Suspected, tried, condemn'd, and carted in a day;
O! let them taste what they so much approve,
These strong fierce freedoms of the land they love"*
Home came our hero, to forgot no more
The fear he felt and ever must deplore:
For though he quickly join'd his friends again
And could with decent force his themes maintain
Still it occurred, that, in a luckless time,
He fail'd to fight with heresy and crime

* The reader will perceive in these and the preceding verses, allusions to the state of France, as that country was circumstanced some years since, rather than as it appears to be in the present date,—several years elapsing between the alarm of the loyal magistrate on the occasion now related, and a subsequent event that farther illustrates the remark with which the narrative commences

It was observed his words were not so strong,
His tones so powerful, his harangues so long,
As in old times—for he would often drop
The lofty look, and of a sudden stop;
When conscience whisper'd, that he once was still,
And let the wicked triumph at their will;
And therefore now, when not a foe was near,
He had no right so valiant to appear.
Some years had pass'd, and he perceived his fears
Yield to the spirit of his earlier years—
When at a meeting, with his friends beside,
He saw an object that awaked his pride;
His shame, wrath, vengeance, indignation—all
Man's harsher feelings did that sight recall.
For lo! beneath him fix'd, our man of law
That lawless man, the foe of order, saw:
Once fear'd, now scorn'd; once dreaded, now abhorr'd:
A wordy man, and evil every word:
Again he gazed—"It is," said he, "the same;
Caught and secure: his master owes him shame:"
So thought our hero, who each instant found
His courage rising, from the numbers round.
As when a felon has escaped and fled,
So long, that law conceives the culprit dead;
And back recall'd her myrmidons, intent
On some new game, and with a stronger scent;
Till she beholds him in a place, where none
Could have conceived the culprit would have gone;
There he sits upright in his seat, secure,
As one whose conscience is correct and pure;
This rouses anger for the old offence,
And scorn for all such seeming and pretence;
So on this Hammond look'd our hero bold,
Remembering well that vile offence of old,
And now he saw the rebel dared t' intrude
Among the pure, the loyal, and the good:
The crime provoked his wrath, the folly stirr'd his blood:
Nor wonder was it if so strange a sight
Caused joy with vengeance, terror with delight;
Terror like this a tiger might create,
A joy like that to see his captive state,
At once to know his force and then decree his fate.
Hammond, much praised by numerous friends, was come
To read his lectures, so admired at home;
Historic lectures, where he loved to mix
His free plain hints on modern politics:
Here, he had heard, that numbers had design,
Their business finish'd, to sit down and dine;
This gave him pleasure, for he judged it right
To show by day, that he could speak at night.
Rash the design—for he perceived, too late,
Not one approving friend beside him sate;
The greater number whom he traced around
Were men in black, and he conceived they frown'd.
"I will not speak," he thought; "no pearls of mine
Shall be presented to this herd of swine!"
Not this avail'd him, when he cast his eye
On Justice Bolt; he could not fight, nor fly:
He saw a man to whom he gave the pain,
Which now he felt must be returned again;
His conscience told him with what keen delight
He, at that time, enjoy'd a stranger's fright;
That stranger now befriended—he alone,
For all his insult, friendless, to atone;
Now he could feel it cruel that a heart
Should be distress'd, and none to take its part.
"Though one by one," said Pride, "I would defy
Much greater men, yet meeting every eye,
I do confess a fear; but he will pass me by."
Vain hope! the justice saw the foe's distress,
With exultation he could not suppress;
He felt the fish was hook'd, and so forbore,
In playful spite, to draw it to the shore.
Hammond look'd round again; but none were near,
With friendly smile, to still his growing fear;
But all above him seem'd a solemn row
Of priests and deacons, so they seem'd below;
He wonder'd who his right-hand man might be—
Vicar of Holt cum Uppingham was he;
And who the man of that dark frown possess'd—
Rector of Bradley and of Barton-west;
"A pluralist," he growl'd—but check'd the word,
That warfare might not, by his zeal, be stirr'd.
But now began the man above to show
Fierce looks and threatenings to the man below;
Who had some thoughts his peace by flight to seek—
But how then lecture, if he dared not speak!—
Now as the justice for the war prepared,
He seem'd just then to question if he dared:
"He may resist, although his power be small,
And growing desperate may defy us all;
One dog attack, and he prepares for flight—
Resist another, and he strives to bite;
Nor can I say, if this rebellious cur
Will fly for safety, or will scorn to stir."
Alarm'd by this, he lash'd his soul to rage,
Burn'd with strong shame, and hurried to engage.
As a male turkey struggling on the green,
When by fierce harriers, torriers, mongrels seen,
He feels the insult of the noisy train,
And skulks aside, though moved by much disdain,
But when that turkey, at his own barn-door,
Sees one poor straying puppy, and no more,
(A foolish puppy who had left the pack,
Thoughtless what foe was threatening at his back,)
He moves about, as ship prepared to sail,
He hoists his proud rotundity of tail,
The half-seal'd eyes and changeful neck he shows,
Where in its quickening colours, vengeance glows,
From red to blue the pendent wattles turn,
Blue mix'd with red, as matches when they burn;
And thus th' intruding snarler to oppose,
Urged by enkindling wrath, he gobbling goes.
So look'd our hero in his wrath, his cheeks
Flush'd with fresh fires and glow'd in tingling streaks;
His breath by passion's force a while restrain'd,
Like a stopp'd current, greater force regain'd
So spoke, so look'd he, every eye and ear
Were fix'd to view him, or were turn'd to hear.
"My friends, you know me, you can witness all
How, urged by passion, I restrain my gall;
And every motive to revenge withstand—
Save when I hear abused my native land.
"Is it not known, agreed, confirm'd, confess'd,
That of all people we are govern'd best?
We have the force of monarchies; are free,
As the most proud republicans can be;
And have those prudent counsels that arise
In grave and cautious aristocracies;
And live there those, in such all-glorious state,
Traitors protected in the land they hate?

Rebels, still warring with the laws that give
To them subsistence?—Yes, such wretches live.
"Ours is a church reform'd, and now no more
Is aught for man to mend or to restore;
'Tis pure in doctrines, 'tis correct in creeds,
Has naught redundant, and it nothing needs;
No evil is therein—no wrinkle, spot,
Stain, blame, or blemish:—I affirm there's not.
"All this you know—now mark what once befell,
With grief I bore it, and with shame I tell;
I was entrapp'd—yes, so it came to pass,
'Mid heathen rebels, a tumultuous class;
Each to his country bore a hellish mind,
Each like his neighbour was of cursed kind;
The land that nursed them they blasphemed; the laws,
Their sovereign's glory, and their country's cause;
And who their mouth, their master-fiend, and who
Rebellion's oracle?—You, caitiff, you!"
He spoke, and standing stretch'd his mighty arm,
And fix'd the man of words, as by a charm.
"How raved that railer! Sure some hellish power
Restrain'd my tongue in that delirious hour,
Or I had hurl'd the shame and vengeance due
On him, the guide of that infuriate crew;
But to mine eyes such dreadful looks appear'd,
Such mingled yell of lying words I heard,
That I conceived around were demons all,
And till I fled the house, I fear'd its fall.
"O! could our country from her coasts expel
Such foes! to nourish those who wish her well:
This her mild laws forbid, but we may still
From us eject them by our sovereign will;
This let us do."—He said, and then began
A gentler feeling for the silent man;
E'en in our hero's mighty soul arose
A touch of pity for experienced woes,
But this was transient, and with angry eye
He sternly look'd, and paused for a reply.
'Twas then the man of many words would speak—
But, in his trial, had them all to seek:
To find a friend he look'd the circle round,
But joy or scorn in every feature found;
He sipp'd his wine, but in those times of dread
Wine only adds confusion to the head;
In doubt he reason'd with himself—"And how
Harangue at night, if I be silent now?
From pride and praise received, he sought to draw
Courage to speak, but still remain'd the awe;
One moment rose he with a forced disdain,
And then abash'd sunk sadly down again;
While in our hero's glance he seem'd to read,
"Slave and insurgent! what hast thou to plead?"
By desperation urged, he now began:
"I seek no favour—I—the Rights of Man!
Claim; and I—nay!—but give me leave—and I
Insist—a man—that is—and in reply,
I speak."—Alas, each new attempt was vain:
Confused he stood, he sate, he rose again;
At length he growl'd defiance, sought the door,
Cursed the whole synod, and was seen no more.
"Laud we," said Justice Bolt, "the Powers above;
Thus could our speech the sturdiest foe remove."
Exulting now he gained new strength of fame,
And lost all feelings of defeat and shame.
"He dared not strive, you witness'd—dared not lift
His voice, nor drive at his accursed drift:
So all shall tremble, wretches who oppose
Our church or state—thus be it to our foes."
He spoke, and, seated with his former air,
Look'd his full self, and fill'd his ample chair,
Took one full bumper to each favourite cause,
And dwelt all night on politics and laws,
With high applauding voice, that gain'd him high applause.

TALE II.

THE PARTING HOUR.

I did not take my leave of him, but had
Most pretty things to say: ere I could tell him
How I would think of him, at certain hours,
Such thoughts and such;—or ere I could
Give him that parting kiss, which I had set
Betwixt two charming words—comes in my father—
Cymbeline, act i. sc. 4

Grief hath changed me since you saw me last,
And careful hours with Time's deformed hand
Have written strange defeatures o'er my face.
Comedy of Errors, act v. sc. 1.

O! if thou be the same Egeon, speak,
And speak unto the same Emilia.
Ibid. act v. sc. 5

I ran it through, e'en from my boyish days
To the very moment that she bade me tell it:
Wherein I spake of most disastrous chances,
Of moving accidents, by flood and field;
Of being taken by th' insolent foe
And sold to slavery.
Othello, act i. sc. 3

An old man, broken with the storms of fate,
Is come to lay his weary bones among you;
Give him a little earth for charity.
Henry VIII. act iv. sc. 2

MINUTELY trace man's life; year after year
Through all his days let all his deeds appear,
And then, though some may in that life be strange,
Yet there appears no vast nor sudden change:
The links that bind those various deeds are seen,
And no mysterious void is left between.
But let these binding links be all destroy'd
All that through years he suffer'd or enjoy'd;
Let that vast gap be made, and then behold—
This was the youth, and he is thus when old;
Then we at once the work of time survey,
And in an instant see a life's decay;
Pain mix'd with pity in our bosoms rise,
And sorrow takes new sadness from surprise.
Beneath yon tree, observe an ancient pair—
A sleeping man; a woman in her chair,
Watching his looks with kind and pensive air
No wife, nor sister she, nor is the name
Nor kindred of this friendly pair the same;
Yet so allied are they, that few can feel
Her constant, warm, unwearied, anxious zeal;
Their years and woes, although they long have loved,
Keep their good name and conduct unreproved

Thus life's small comforts they together share,
And while life lingers for the grave prepare
No other subjects on their spirits press,
Nor gain such interest as the past distress;
Grievous events that from the memory drive
Life's common cares, and those alone survive,
Mix with each thought, in every action share,
Darken each dream, and blend with every prayer.

To David Booth, his fourth and last born boy,
Allen his name, was more than common joy;
And as the child grew up, there seem'd in him
A more than common life in every limb,
A strong and handsome stripling he became
And the gay spirit answer'd to the frame,
A lighter, happier lad was never seen,
For ever easy, cheerful, or serene;
His early love he fix'd upon a fair
And gentle maid—they were a handsome pair.

They at an infant-school together play'd,
Where the foundation of their love was laid;
The boyish champion would his choice attend
In every sport, in every fray defend.
As prospects open'd and as life advanced,
They walk'd together, they together danced;
On all occasions, from their early years,
They mix'd their joys and sorrows, hopes and fears;
Each heart was anxious, till it could impart
Its daily feelings to its kindred heart;
As years increased, unnumber'd petty wars
Broke out between them, jealousies and jars;
Causeless indeed, and follow'd by a peace,
That gave to love—growth, vigour, and increase.
Whilst yet a boy, when other minds are void,
Domestic thoughts young Allen's hours employ'd;
Judith in gaining hearts had no concern,
Rather intent the matron's part to learn;
Thus early prudent and sedate they grew,
While lovers thoughtful—and though children, true.

To either parents not a day appear'd,
When with this love they might have interfered:
Childish at first, they cared not to restrain;
And strong at last, they saw restriction vain;
Nor knew they when that passion to reprove—
Now idle fondness, now resistless love.

So while the waters rise, the children tread
On the broad estuary's sandy bed;
But soon the channel fills, from side to side
Comes danger rolling with the deepening tide;
Yet none who saw the rapid current flow
Could the first instant of that danger know.

The lovers waited till the time should come
When they together could possess a home:
In either house were men and maids unwed,
Hopes to be soothed, and tempers to be led.
Then Allen's mother of his favourite maid
Spoke from the feelings of a mind afraid:
Dress and amusements were her sole employ,"
She said, "entangling her deluded boy;"
And yet, in truth, a mother's jealous love
Had much imagined and could little prove;
Judith had beauty; and if vain, was kind,
Discreet, and mild, and had a serious mind.

Dull was their prospect—when the lovers met,
They said, we must not—dare not venture yet:

"O! could I labour for thee," Allen cried,
"Why should our friends be thus dissatisfied?
On my own arm I could depend, but they
Still urge obedience—must I yet obey?"
Poor Judith felt the grief, but grieving begg'd delay.

At length a prospect came that seem'd to smile,
And faintly woo them, from a western isle;
A kinsman there a widow's hand had gain'd,
"Was old, was rich, and childless yet remain'd;
Would some young Booth to his affairs attend,
And wait a while, he might expect a friend."
The elder brothers, who were not in love,
Fear'd the false seas, unwilling to remove;
But the young Alfen, an enamour'd boy,
Eager an independence to enjoy,
Would through all perils seek it,—by the sea,—
Through labour, danger, pain, or slavery.
The faithful Judith his design approved,
For both were sanguine, they were young and loved.

The mother's slow consent was then obtain'd;
The time arrived, to part alone remain'd:
All things prepared, on the expected day
Was seen the vessel anchor'd in the bay.
From her would seamen in the evening come,
To take th' adventurous Allen from his home;
With his own friends the final day he pass'd,
And every painful hour, except the last.
The grieving father urged the cheerful glass,
To make the moments with less sorrow pass;
Intent the mother look'd upon her son,
And wish'd th' assent withdrawn, the deed undone;
The younger sister, as he took his way,
Hung on his coat, and begg'd for more delay:
But his own Judith call'd him to the shore,
Whom he must meet, for they might meet no more:
And there he found her—faithful, mournful, true.
Weeping and waiting for a last adieu!
The ebbing tide had left the sand, and there
Moved with slow steps the melancholy pair;
Sweet were the painful moments—but how sweet
And without pain, when they again should meet!
Now either spoke, as hope and fear impress'd
Each their alternate triumph in the breast.

Distance alarm'd the maid—she cried, "'Tis far!"
And danger too—"it is a time of war:
Then in those countries are diseases strange,
And women gay, and men are prone to change;
What then may happen in a year, when things
Of vast importance every moment brings!
But hark! an oar!" she cried, yet none appear'd—
'Twas love's mistake, who fancied what it fear'd
And she continued—"Do, my Allen, keep
Thy heart from evil, let thy passions sleep;
Believe it good, nay glorious, to prevail
And stand in safety where so many fail;
And do not, Allen, or for shame, or pride,
Thy faith abjure, or thy profession hide;
Can I believe his love will lasting prove,
Who has no reverence for the God I love?
I know thee well! how good thou art and kind;
But strong the passions that invade thy mind—
Now, what to me hath Allen to commend?"
"Upon my mother," said the youth, "attend;

Forget her spleen, and in my place appear;
Her love to me will make my Judith dear:
Oft I shall think, (such comfort lovers seek,)
Who speaks of me, and fancy what they speak;
Then write on all occasions, always dwell
On hope's fair prospects, and be kind and well,
And ever choose the fondest, tenderest style."
She answer'd "No," but answer'd with a smile.
"And now, my Judith, at so sad a time,
Forgive my fear, and call it not my crime,
When with our youthful neighbours 'tis thy chance
To meet in walks, the visit, or the dance,
When every lad would on my lass attend,
Choose not a smooth designer for a friend:
That fawning Philip!—nay, be not severe,
A rival's hope must cause a lover's fear."
Displeased she felt, and might in her reply
Have mix'd some anger, but the boat was nigh,
Now truly heard!—it soon was full in sight;—
Now the sad farewell, and the long good-night;—
For, see—his friends come hastening to the beach,
And now the gunwale is within the reach:
"Adieu—farewell!—remember!"—and what more
Affection taught was utter'd from the shore!
But Judith left them with a heavy heart,
Took a last view, and went to weep apart!
And now his friends went slowly from the place,
Where she stood still the dashing oar to trace,
Till all were silent!—for the youth she pray'd,
And softly then return'd the weeping maid.
They parted, thus by hope and fortune led,
And Judith's hours in pensive pleasure fled;
But when return'd the youth?—the youth no more
Return'd exulting to his native shore;
But forty years were past, and then there came
A worn-out man, with wither'd limbs and lame,
His mind oppress'd with woes, and bent with age his frame:
Yes! old and grieved, and trembling with decay,
Was Allen landing in his native bay,
Willing his breathless form should blend with kindred clay.
In an autumnal eve he left the beach,
In such an eve he chanced the port to reach;
He was alone; he press'd the very place
Of the sad parting, of the last embrace:
There stood his parents, there retired the maid,
So fond, so tender, and so much afraid;
And on that spot, through many a year, his mind
Turn'd mournful back, half-sinking, half-resign'd.
No one was present; of its crew bereft.
A single boat was in the billows left;
Sent from some anchor'd vessel in the bay,
At the returning tide to sail away:
O'er the black stern the moonlight softly play'd,
The loosen'd foresail flapping in the shade;
All silent else on shore; but from the town
A drowsy peal of distant bells came down:
From the tall houses here and there, a light
Served some confused remembrance to excite.
"There," he observed, and new emotions felt.
"Was my first home; and yonder Judith dwelt:
Dead! dead are all! I long—I fear to know,"
He said, and walk'd impatient, and yet slow.
Sudden there broke upon his grief a noise
Of merry tumult and of vulgar joys:
Seamen returning to their ship, were come,
With idle numbers straying from their home;
Allen among them mix'd, and in the old
Strove some familiar features to behold;
While fancy aided memory:—"Man! what cheer?"
A sailor cried; "art thou at anchor here?"
Faintly he answer'd, and then tried to trace
Some youthful features in some aged face:
A swarthy matron he beheld, and thought
She might unfold the very truths he sought
Confused and trembling, he the dame address'd:
"The Booths! yet live they?" pausing and oppress'd;
Then spake again;—"Is there no ancient man,
David his name?—assist me if you can.—
Flemmings there were—and Judith, doth she live?"
The woman gazed, nor could an answer give;
Yet wondering stood, and all were silent by,
Feeling a strange and solemn sympathy.
The woman musing said,—"She knew full well
Where the old people came at last to dwell;
They had a married daughter and a son,
But they were dead, and now remain'd not one."
"Yes," said an elder, who had paused intent
On days long pass'd, "there was a sad event;—
One of these Booths—it was my mother's tale—
Here left his lass, I know not where to sail:
She saw their parting, and observed the pain
But never came th' unhappy man again."
"The ship was captured," Allen meekly said,
"And what became of the forsaken maid?"
The woman answer'd: "I remember now,
She used to tell the lasses of her vow,
And of her lover's loss, and I have seen
The gayest hearts grow sad where she has been.
Yet in her grief she married, and was made
Slave to a wretch, whom meekly she obey'd,
And early buried: but I know no more.
And hark! our friends are hastening to the shore."
Allen soon found a lodging in the town,
And walk'd, a man unnoticed, up and down.
This house, and this, he knew, and thought a face
He sometimes could among a number trace:
Of names remember'd there remain'd a few,
But of no favourites, and the rest were new;
A merchant's wealth, when Allen went to sea,
Was reckon'd boundless.—Could he living be?
Or lived his son? for one he had, the heir
To a vast business and a fortune fair.
No! but that heir's poor widow, from her shed,
With crutches went to take her dole of bread.
There was a friend whom he had left a boy
With hope to sail the master of a hoy,
Him, after many a stormy day, he found
With his great wish, his life's whole purpose crown'd.
This hoy's proud captain look'd in Allen's face—
"Yours is, my friend," said he, "a woful case;
We cannot all succeed; I now command
The Betsy sloop, and am not much at land;
But when we meet you shall your story tell
Of foreign parts—I bid you now farewell!"
Allen so long had left his native shore,
He saw but few whom he had seen before;
The older people, as they met him, cast
A pitying look, oft speaking as they pass'd.

"The man is Allen Booth, and it appears
He dwelt among us in his early years;
We see the name engraved upon the stones,
Where this poor wanderer means to lay his bones."
Thus where he lived and loved—unhappy change!
He seems a stranger, and finds all are strange.
But now a widow, in a village near,
Chanced of the melancholy man to hear;
Old as she was, to Judith's bosom came
Some strong emotions at the well-known name;
He was her much-loved Allen, she had stay'd
Ten troubled years, a sad afflicted maid;
Then was she wedded, of his death assured,
And much of misery in her lot endured;
Her husband died; her children sought their bread
In various places, and to her were dead.
The once fond lovers met; not grief nor age,
Sickness or pain, their hearts could disengage:
Each had immediate confidence; a friend
Both now beheld, on whom they might depend:
"Now is there one to whom I can express
My nature's weakness and my soul's distress."
Allen look'd up, and with impatient heart—
"Let me not lose thee—never let us part:
So Heaven this comfort to my sufferings give,
It is not all distress to think and live."
Thus Allen spoke—for time had not removed
The charms attach'd to one so fondly loved;
Who with more health, the mistress of their cot,
Labours to soothe the evils of his lot.
To her, to her alone, his various fate,
At various times, 'tis comfort to relate;
And yet his sorrow—she too loves to hear
What wrings her bosom, and compels the tear.
First he related how he left the shore,
Alarm'd with fears that they should meet no more:
Then, ere the ship had reach'd her purposed course,
They met and yielded to the Spanish force;
Then 'cross th' Atlantic seas they bore their prey,
Who grieving landed from their sultry bay;
And marching many a burning league, he found
Himself a slave upon a miner's ground:
There a good priest his native language spoke,
And gave some ease to his tormenting yoke;
Kindly advanced him in his master's grace,
And he was station'd in an easier place:
There, hopeless ever to escape the land,
He to a Spanish maiden gave his hand;
In cottage shelter'd from the blaze of day
He saw his happy infants round him play;
Where summer shadows, made by lofty trees,
Waved o'er his seat, and soothed his reveries;
E'en then he thought of England, nor could sigh,
But his fond Isabel demanded, "Why?"
Grieved by the story, she the sigh repaid,
And wept in pity for the English maid:
Thus twenty years were pass'd, and pass'd his views
Of further bliss, for he had wealth to lose:
His friend now dead, some foe had dared to paint
"His faith as tainted: he his spouse would taint;
Make all his children infidels, and found
An English heresy on Christian ground."
"Whilst I was poor," said Allen, "none would care
What my poor notions of religion were,
None ask'd me whom I worshipp'd, how I pray'd,
If due obedience to the laws were paid
My good adviser taught me to be still,
Nor to make converts had I power or will.
I preach'd no foreign doctrine to my wife,
And never mention'd Luther in my life;
I, all they said, say what they would, allow'd
And when the fathers bade me bow, I bow'd
Their forms I follow'd, whether well or sick,
And was a most obedient Catholic.
But I had money, and these pastors found
My notions vague, heretical, unsound:
A wicked book they seized; the very Turk
Could not have read a more pernicious work.
To me pernicious, who if it were good
Or evil question'd not, nor understood:
O! had I little but the book possess'd,
I might have read it, and enjoy'd my rest."
Alas! poor Allen, through his wealth was seen
Crimes that by poverty conceal'd had been:
Faults that in dusty pictures rest unknown
Are in an instant through the varnish shown.
He told their cruel mercy; how at last,
In Christian kindness for the merits past,
They spared his forfeit life, but bade him fly
Or for his crime and contumacy die;
Fly from all scenes, all objects of delight:
His wife, his children, weeping in his sight,
All urging him to flee, he fled, and cursed his flight.
He next related how he found a way,
Guideless and grieving, to Campeachy Bay:
There in the woods he wrought, and there, among
Some labouring seamen, heard his native tongue:
The sound, one moment, broke upon his pain
With joyful force; he long'd to hear again:
Again he heard; he seized an offer'd hand,
"And when beheld you last our native land?"
He cried, "and in what country? quickly say"—
The seamen answer'd—strangers all were they;
One only at his native port had been;
He, landing once, the quay and church had seen,
For that esteem'd; but nothing more he knew.
Still more to know, would Allen join the crew,
Sail where they sail'd, and many a peril past,
They at his kinsman's isle their anchor cast;
But him they found not, nor could one relate
Aught of his will, his wish, or his estate
This grieved not Allen; then again he sail'd
For England's coast, again his fate prevail'd:
War raged, and he, an active man and strong,
Was soon impress'd, and served his country long.
By various shores he pass'd, on various seas,
Never so happy as when void of ease.—
And then he told how in a calm distress'd,
Day after day, his soul was sick of rest;
When, as a log upon the deep they stood,
Then roved his spirit to the inland wood;
Till, while awake, he dream'd, that on the seas
Were his loved home, the hill, the stream, the trees:
He gazed, he pointed to the scenes:—"There stand
My wife, my children, 'tis my lovely land;
See! there my dwelling—O! delicious scene
Of my best life—unhand me—are ye men?"
And thus the frenzy ruled him, till the wind
Brush'd the fond pictures from the stagnant mind.
He told of bloody fights, and how at length
The rage of battle gave his spirit strength;

'Twas in the Indian seas his limb he lost,
And he was left half dead upon the coast;
But living gain'd, 'mid rich aspiring men,
A fair subsistence by his ready pen.
Thus," he continued, "pass'd unvaried years,
Without events producing hopes or fears.
Augmented pay procured him decent wealth,
But years advancing undermined his health:
Then oft-times in delightful dreams he flew
To England's shore, and scenes his childhood knew
He saw his parents, saw his favourite maid,
No feature wrinkled, not a charm decay'd;
And thus excited in his bosom rose
A wish so strong, it baffled his repose;
Anxious he felt on English earth to lie,
To view his native soil, and there to die.
He then described the gloom, the dread he found,
When first he landed on the chosen ground,
Where undefined was all he hoped and fear'd,
And how confused and troubled all appear'd;
His thoughts in past and present scenes employ'd,
All views in future blighted and destroy'd;
His were a medley of bewildering themes,
Sad as realities, and wild as dreams.
Here his relation closes, but his mind
Flies back again some resting place to find;
Thus silent, musing through the day, he sees
His children sporting by those lofty trees,
Their mother singing in the shady scene,
Where the fresh springs burst o'er the lively green;—
So strong his eager fancy, he affrights
The faithful widow by its powerful flights;
For what disturbs him he aloud will tell,
And cry—"'Tis she, my wife! my Isabel!
Where are my children?"—Judith grieves to hear
How the soul works in sorrows so severe;
Assiduous all his wishes to attend,
Deprived of much, he yet may boast a friend;
Watch'd by her care, in sleep, his spirit takes
Its flight, and watchful finds her when he wakes.
'Tis now her office; her attention see!
While her friend sleeps beneath that shading tree,
Careful she guards him from the glowing heat,
And pensive muses at her Allen's feet.
And where is he? Ah! doubtless in those scenes
Of his best days, amid the vivid greens,
Fresh with unnumber'd rills, where every gale
Breathes the rich fragrance of the neighb'ring vale;
Smiles not his wife, and listen's as there comes
The night-bird's music from the thickening glooms?
And as he sits with all these treasures nigh,
Blaze not with fairy light the phosphor-fly,
When like a sparkling gem it wheels illumined by?
This is the joy that now so plainly speaks
In the warm transient flushing of his cheeks;
For he is listening to the fancied noise
Of his own children, eager in their joys:
All this he feels, a dream's delusive bliss
Gives the expression, and the glow like this.
And now his Judith lays her knitting by,
These strong emotions in her friend to spy;
For she can fully of their nature deem——
But see! he breaks the long-protracted theme,
And wakes and cries—"My God! twas but a dream."

TALE III.

THE GENTLEMAN FARMER

....Pause then,
And weigh thy value with an even hand;
If thou beest rated by thy estimation,
Thou dost deserve enough.
Merchant of Venice, act ii. sc. 7

Because I will not do them wrong to mistrust any, I will do myself the right to trust none; and the fine is, (for which I may go the finer,) I will live a bachelor.
Much Ado about Nothing, act i. sc. 3.

Throw physic to the dogs, I'll none of it.
Macbeth, act v. sc. 3

His promises are, as he then was, mighty.
And his performance, as he now is, nothing.
Henry VIII. act iv. sc. 2.

GWYN was a farmer, whom the farmers all,
Who dwelt around, the Gentleman would call;
Whether in pure humility or pride,
They only knew, and they would not decide.
Far different he from that dull plodding tribe,
Whom it was his amusement to describe;
Creatures no more enliven'd than a clod,
But treading still as their dull fathers trod;
Who lived in times when not a man had seen
Corn sown by drill, or thresh'd by a machine:
He was of those whose skill assigns the prize
For creatures fed in pens, and stalls, and sties;
And who, in places where improvers meet,
To fill the land with fatness, had a seat;
Who in large mansions live like petty kings,
And speak of farms but as amusing things;
Who plans encourage, and who journals keep,
And talk with lords about a breed of sheep.
Two are the species in this genus known;
One, who is rich in his profession grown,
Who yearly finds his ample stores increase,
From fortune's favours and a favouring lease;
Who rides his hunter, who his house adorns;
Who drinks his wine, and his disbursements scorns;
Who freely lives, and loves to show he can—
This is the farmer made the gentleman.
The second species from the world is sent,
Tired with its strife, or with his wealth content;
In books and men beyond the former read,
To farming solely by a passion led,
Or by a fashion: curious in his land;
Now planning much, now changing what he plann'd;
Pleased by each trial, not by failures vex'd,
And ever certain to succeed the next;
Quick to resolve, and easy to persuade—
This is the gentleman, a farmer made.
Gwyn was of these; he from the world withdrew
Early in life, his reasons known to few;
Some disappointment said, some pure good sense,
The love of land, the press of indolence;
His fortune known, and coming to retire,
If not a farmer, men had call'd him 'squire
Forty and five his years, no child or wife
Cross'd the still tenor of his chosen life;
Much land he purchased, planted far around,
And let some portions of superfluous ground
To farmers near him, not displeased to say,
"My tenants," nor "our worthy landlord," they.

Fix'd in his farm, he soon display'd his skill
In small-boned lambs, the horse-shoe, and the drill;
From these he rose to themes of nobler kind,
And show'd the riches of a fertile mind;
To all around their visits he repaid,
And thus his mansion and himself display'd.
His rooms were stately, rather fine than neat,
And guests politely call'd his house a seat;
At much expense was each apartment graced,
His taste was gorgeous, but it still was taste:
In full festoons the crimson curtains fell,
The sofas rose in bold elastic swell;
Mirrors in gilded frames display'd the tints
Of glowing carpets and of colour'd prints;
The weary eye saw every object shine,
And all was costly, fanciful, and fine.

As with his friends he pass'd the social hours,
His generous spirit scorn'd to hide its powers;
Powers unexpected, for his eye and air
Gave no sure signs that eloquence was there;
Oft he began with sudden fire and force,
As loath to lose occasion for discourse;
Some, 'tis observed, who feel a wish to speak,
Will a due place for introduction seek;
On to their purpose step by step they steal,
And all their way, by certain signals, feel;
Others plunge in at once, and never heed
Whose turn they take, whose purpose they impede;
Resolved to shine, they hasten to begin,
Of ending thoughtless—and of these was Gwyn.
And thus he spake—

"It grieves me to the soul
To see how man submits to man's control;
How overpower'd and shackled minds are led
In vulgar tracks, and to submission bred;
The coward never on himself relies,
But to an equal for assistance flies;
Man yields to custom as he bows to fate,
In all things ruled—mind, body, and estate;
In pain, in sickness, we for cure apply
To them we know not, and we know not why;
But that the creature has some jargon read,
And got some Scotchman's system in his head;
Some grave impostor, who will health ensure,
Long as your patience or your wealth endure;
But mark them well, the pale and sickly crew,
They have not health, and can they give it you?
These solemn cheats their various methods choose;
A system fires them, as a bard his muse:
Hence wordy wars arise; the learn'd divide,
And groaning patients curse each erring guide.

"Next, our affairs are govern'd, buy or sell,
Upon the deed the law must fix its spell;
Whether we hire or let, we must have still
The dubious aid of an attorney's skill;
They take a part in every man's affairs,
And in all business some concern is theirs;
Because mankind in ways prescribed are found
Like flocks that follow on a beaten ground,
Each abject nature in the way proceeds,
That now to sheering, now to slaughter leads.

"Should you offend, though meaning no offence,
You have no safety in your innocence;
The statute broken then is placed in view,
And men must pay for crimes they never knew:
Who would by law regain his plunder'd store,
Would pick up fallen mercury from the floor;
If he pursues it, here and there it slides;
He would collect it, but it more divides;
This part and this he stops, but still in vain,
It slips aside, and breaks in parts again,
Till, after time and pains, and care and cost,
He finds his labour and his object lost.

"But most it grieves me, (friends alone are round,
To see a man in priestly fetters bound:
Guides to the soul, these friends of Heaven contrive
Long as man lives, to keep his fears alive;
Soon as an infant breathes, their rites begin;
Who knows not sinning, must be freed from sin.
Who needs no bond, must yet engage in vows;
Who has no judgment, must a creed espouse:
Advanced in life, our boys are bound by rules
Are catechised in churches, cloisters, schools,
And train'd in thraldom to be fit for tools:
The youth grown up, he now a partner needs,
And lo! a priest, as soon as he succeeds.
What man of sense can marriage rites approve?
What man of spirit can be bound to love?
Forced to be kind! compell'd to be sincere!
Do chains and fetters make companions dear?
Prisoners indeed we bind; but though the bond
May keep them safe, it does not make them fond
The ring, the vow, the witness, license, prayers,
All parties know! made public all affairs!
Such forms men suffer, and from these they date
A deed of love begun with all they hate:
Absurd! that none the beaten road should shun,
But love to do what other dupes have done.

"Well, now your priest has made you one of twain,
Look you for rest? Alas! you look in vain.
If sick, he comes; you cannot die in peace,
Till he attends to witness your release;
To vex your soul, and urge you to confess
The sins you feel, remember, or can guess:
Nay, when departed, to your grave he goes
But there indeed he hurts not your repose.

"Such are our burdens; part we must sustain,
But need not link new grievance to the chain
Yet men like idiots will their frames surround
With these vile shackles, nor confess they're bound:
In all that most confines them they confide,
Their slavery boast, and make their bonds their pride;
E'en as the pressure galls them, they declare,
(Good souls!) how happy and how free they are!
As madmen, pointing round their wretched cells,
Cry, 'lo! the palace where our honour dwells.'

"Such is our state: but I resolve to live
By rules my reason and my feelings give;
No legal guards shall keep enthrall'd my mind,
No slaves command me, and no teachers blind.

"Tempted by sins, let me their strength defy
But have no second in a surplice by;
No bottle-holder, with officious aid,
To comfort conscience, weaken'd and afraid;
Then if I yield, my frailty is not known;
And, if I stand, the glory is my own.

"When Truth and Reason are our friends, we seem
Alive! awake!—the superstitious dream.

"O! then, fair Truth, for thee alone I seek,
Friend to the wise, supporter of the weak:
From thee we learn whate'er is right and just;
Forms to despise, professions to distrust;

Creeds to reject, pretensions to deride,
And, following thee, to follow none beside."
Such was the speech; it struck upon the ear
Like sudden thunder, none expect to hear.
He saw men's wonder with a manly pride,
And gravely smiled at guest electrified:
"A farmer this!" they said; "O! let him seek
That place where he may for his country speak;
On some great question to harangue for hours,
While speakers hearing, envy nobler powers!"
Wisdom like this, as all things rich and rare,
Must be acquired with pains, and kept with care;
In books he sought it, which his friends might view,
When their kind host the guarding curtain drew.
There were historic works for graver hours,
And lighter verse, to spur the languid powers;
There metaphysics, logic there had place;
But of devotion not a single trace—
Save what is taught in Gibbon's florid page,
And other guides of this inquiring age;
There Hume appear'd, and near, a splendid book
Composed by Gay's good lord of Bolingbroke:
With these were mix'd the light, the free, the vain,
And from a corner peep'd the sage Tom Paine:
Here four neat volumes Chesterfield were named,
For manners much and easy morals famed;
With chaste Memoirs of Females, to be read
When deeper studies had confused the head.
Such his resources, treasures where he sought
For daily knowledge till his mind was fraught:
Then when his friends were present, for their use
He would the riches he had stored produce;
He found his lamp burn clearer, when each day
He drew for all he purposed to display:
For these occasions, forth his knowledge sprung,
As mustard quickens on a bed of dung;
All was prepared, and guests allow'd the praise,
For what they saw he could so quickly raise.
Such this new friend; and when the year came round,
The same impressive, reasoning sage was found;
Then, too, was seen the pleasant mansion graced
With a fair damsel—his no vulgar taste;
The neat Rebecca—sly, observant, still,
Watching his eye, and waiting on his will;
Simple yet smart her dress, her manners meek,
Her smiles spoke for her, she would seldom speak;
But watch'd each look, each meaning to detect,
And (pleased with notice) felt for all neglect.
With her lived Gwyn a sweet harmonious life,
Who, forms excepted, was a charming wife:
The wives indeed, so made by vulgar law,
Affected scorn, and censured what they saw;
And what they saw not, fancied; said 'twas sin,
And took no notice of the wife of Gwyn:
But he despised their rudeness, and would prove
Theirs was compulsion and distrust, not love;
"Fools as they were! could they conceive that things
And parsons' blessings were substantial things?"
They answered "Yes;" while he contemptuous spoke
Of the low notions held by simple folk;
Yet, strange that anger in a man so wise
Should from the notions of these fools arise,
Can they so vex us, whom we so despise?
Brave as he was, our hero felt a dread
Lest those who saw him kind should think him led;
If to his bosom fear a visit paid,
It was, lest he should be supposed afraid;
Hence sprang his orders; not that he desired
The things when done; obedience he required;
And thus, to prove his absolute command,
Ruled every heart, and moved each subject hand
Assent he ask'd for every word and whim,
To prove that *he alone was king of him.*
The still Rebecca, who her station knew,
With ease resign'd the honours not her due;
Well pleased, she saw that men her board would grace,
And wish'd not there to see a female face;
When by her lover she his spouse was styled,
Polite she thought it, and demurely smiled;
But when he wanted wives and maidens round
So to regard her, she grew grave and frown'd:
And sometimes whisper'd, "Why should you respect
These people's notions, yet their forms reject?"
Gwyn, though from marriage bond and fetter free
Still felt abridgement in his liberty;
Something of hesitation he betray'd,
And in her presence thought of what he said.
Thus fair Rebecca, though she walk'd astray,
His creed rejecting, judged it right to pray,
To be at church, to sit with serious looks,
To read her Bible and her Sunday books.
She hated all those new and daring themes,
And call'd his free conjectures, "devil's dreams:"
She honour'd still the priesthood in her fall,
And claim'd respect and reverence for them all;
Call'd them "of sin's destructive power the foes,
And not such blockheads as he might suppose."
Gwyn to his friends would smile, and sometimes say
"'Tis a kind fool, why vex her in her way?"
Her way she took, and still had more in view,
For she contrived that he should take it too.
The daring freedom of his soul, 'twas plain,
In part was lost in a divided reign;
A king and queen, who yet in prudence swayed
Their peaceful state, and were in turn obey'd.
Yet such our fate, that when we plan the best,
Something arises to disturb our rest:
For though in spirits high, in body strong,
Gwyn something felt—he knew not what—wrong;
He wish'd to know, for he believed the thing,
If unremoved, would other evil bring:
"She must perceive, of late he could not eat,
And when he walked, he trembled on his feet
He had forebodings, and he seem'd as one
Stopp'd on the road, or threaten'd by a dun;
He could not live, and yet, should he apply
To those physicians—he must sooner die."
The mild Rebecca heard with some disdain,
And some distress, her friend and lord complain
His death she fear'd not, but had painful doubt
What his distemper'd nerves might bring about;
With power like hers she dreaded an ally,
And yet there was a person in her eye;—
She thought, debated, fix'd; "Alas!" she said,
"A case like yours must be no more delay'd:
You hate these doctors, well! but were a friend
And doctor one, your fears would have an end
My cousin Mollet—Scotland holds him now—
Is above all men skilful, all allow;
Of late a doctor, and within a while
He means to settle in this favour'd isle;

Should he attend you, with his skill profound,
You must be safe, and shortly would be sound.'
When men in health against physicians rail,
They should consider that their nerves may fail:
Who calls a lawyer rogue, may find, too late,
On one of these depends his whole estate:
Nay, when the world can nothing more produce,
The priest, th' insulted priest, may have his use;
Ease, health, and comfort lift a man so high.
These powers are dwarfs that he can scarcely spy;
Pain, sickness, languor keep a man so low,
That these neglected dwarfs to giants grow.
Happy is he who through the medium sees
Of clear good sense—but Gwyn was not of these.
He heard, and he rejoiced: "Ah! let him come,
And till he fixes, make my house his home."
Home came the doctor—he was much admired;
He told the patient what his case required;
His hours for sleep, his time to eat and drink;
When he should ride, read, rest, compose, or think.
Thus join'd peculiar skill and art profound,
To make the fancy-sick no more than fancy-sound.
With such attention who could long be ill?
Returning health proclaim'd the doctor's skill.
Presents and praises from a grateful heart
Were freely offered on the patient's part;
In high repute the doctor seem'd to stand,
But still had got no footing in the land;
And, as he saw the seat was rich and fair,
He felt disposed to fix his station there:
To gain his purpose he perform'd the part
Of a good actor, and prepared to start:
Not like a traveller in a day serene,
When the sun shone and when the roads were clean;
Not like the pilgrim, when the morning gray,
The ruddy eve succeeding, sends his way;
But in a season when the sharp east wind
Had all its influence on a nervous mind;
When past the parlour's front it fiercely blew,
And Gwyn sat pitying every bird that flew,
This strange physician said—"Adieu! adieu!
Farewell!—Heaven bless you!—if you should—
but no,
You need not fear—farewell! 'tis time to go."
The doctor spoke, and, as the patient heard,
His old disorders (dreadful train!) appear'd;
"He felt the tingling tremor, and the stress
Upon his nerves that he could not express;
Should his good friend forsake him, he perhaps
Might meet his death, and surely a relapse."
So, as the doctor seem'd intent to part,
He cried in terror, "O! be where thou art:
Come, thou art young, and unengaged; O! come,
Make me thy friend, give comfort to mine home:
I have now symptoms that require thine aid,
Do, doctor, stay;"— th' obliging doctor stay'd.
Thus Gwyn was happy; he had now a friend,
And a meek spouse on whom he could depend:
But now possess'd of male and female guide,
Divided power he thus must subdivide:
In earlier days he rode, or sat at ease
Reclined, and having but himself to please,
Now if he would a favourite nag bestride,
He sought permission: "Doctor, may I ride?"
(Rebecca's eye her sovereign pleasure told,)
"I think you may, but guarded from the cold,
Ride forty minutes."—Free and happy soul!
He scorn'd submission, and a man's control;
But where such friends in every care unite
All for his good, obedience is delight.
Now Gwyn a sultan bade affairs adieu,
Led and assisted by the faithful two;
The favourite fair, Rebecca, near him sat,
And whisper'd whom to love, assist, or hate,
While the chief vizier eased his lord of cares,
And bore himself the burden of affairs:
No dangers could from such alliance flow,
But from that law that changes all below.
When wintry winds with leaves bestrew'd the ground,
And men were coughing all the village round;
When public papers of invasion told,
Diseases, famines, perils new and old;
When philosophic writers fail'd to clear
The mind of gloom, and lighter works to cheer:
Then came fresh terrors on our hero's mind,
Fears unforeseen, and feelings undefined.
"In outward ills," he cried, "I rest assured
Of my friend's aid; they will in time be cured:
But can his art subdue, resist, control
These inward griefs and troubles of the soul?
O! my Rebecca! my disordered mind,
No help in study, none in thought can find;
What must I do, Rebecca?" She proposed
The parish-guide; but what could be disclosed
To a proud priest?—"No! him have I defied,
Insulted, slighted,—shall he be my guide?
But one there is, and if report be just,
A wise good man, whom I may safely trust:
Who goes from house to house, from ear to ear,
To make his truths, his gospel truths, appear;
True if indeed they be, 'tis time that I should hear
Send for that man, and if report be just,
I, like Cornelius, will the teacher trust;
But if deceiver, I the vile deceit
Shall soon discover, and discharge the cheat."
To doctor Mollet was the grief confess'd,
While Gwyn the freedom of his mind express'd;
Yet own'd it was to ills and errors prone,
And he for guilt and frailty must atone.
"My books, perhaps," the wavering mortal cried,
"Like men deceive; I would be satisfied;
And to my soul the pious man may bring
Comfort and light—do let me try the thing."
The cousins met, what pass'd with Gwyn was told
"Alas!" the doctor said, "how hard to hold
These easy minds, where all impressions made
At first sink deeply, and then quickly fade;
For while so strong these new-born fancies reign,
We must divert them, to oppose in vain:
You see him valiant now, he scorns to hear
The bigot's threatenings, or the zealot's creed;
Shook by a dream, he next for truth receives
What frenzy teaches, and what fear believes;
And this will place him in the power of one
Whom we must seek, because we cannot shun."
Wisp had been ostler at a busy inn,
Where he beheld and grew in dread of sin;
Then to a Baptists' meeting found his way,
Became a convert, and was taught to pray;
Then preach'd; and being earnest and sincere,
Brought other sinners to religious fear;
Together grew his influence and his fame,
Till our dejected hero heard his name:
His little failings were, a grain of pride,
Raised by the numbers he assumed to guide

A love of presents, and of lofty praise
For his meek spirit and his humble ways;
But though this spirit would on flattery feed,
No praise could blind him and no arts mislead:—
To him the doctor made the wishes known
Of his good patron, but conceal'd his own;
He of all teachers had distrust and doubt,
And was reserved in what he came about;
Though on a plain and simple message sent,
He had a secret and a bold intent:
Their minds, at first were deeply veil'd; disguise
Form'd the slow speech, and oped the eager eyes;
Till by degrees sufficient light was thrown
On every view, and all the business shown.
Wisp, as a skilful guide who led the blind,
Had powers to rule and awe the vapourish mind;
But not the changeful will, the wavering fear to bind:
And should his conscience give him leave to dwell
With Gwyn, and every rival power expel,
(A dubious point,) yet he, with every care,
Might soon the lot of the rejected share;
And other Wisps he found like him to reign,
And then be thrown upon the world again.
He thought it prudent then, and felt it just,
The present guides of his new friend to trust;
True, he conceived, to touch the harder heart
Of the cool doctor, was beyond his art;
But mild Rebecca he could surely sway,
While Gwyn would follow where she led the way:
So to do good, (and why a duty shun,
Because rewarded for the good when done?)
He with his friends would join in all they plann'd,
Save when his faith or feelings should withstand;
There he must rest, sole judge of his affairs,
While they might rule exclusively in theirs.
When Gwyn his message to the teacher sent,
He fear'd his friends would show their discontent;
And prudent seem'd it to th' attendant pair,
Not all at once to show an aspect fair:
On Wisp they seem'd to look with jealous eye,
And fair Rebecca was demure and shy;
But by degrees the teacher's worth they knew,
And were so kind, they seem'd converted too.
Wisp took occasion to the nymph to say,
"You must be married: will you name the day?"
She smiled,—"'Tis well; but should he not comply,
Is it quite safe th' experiment to try?"—
"My child," the teacher said, "who feels remorse,
(And feels not he?) must wish relief of course;
And can he find it, while he fears the crime?—
You must be married; will you name the time?"
Glad was the patron as a man could be,
Yet marvell'd too, to find his guides agree;
"But what the cause?" he cried; "'tis genuine love for me."
Each found his part, and let one act describe
The powers and honours of th' accordant tribe:—
A man for favour to the mansion speeds,
And cons his threefold task as he proceeds;
To teacher Wisp he bows with humble air,
And begs his interest for a barn's repair:
Then for the doctor he inquires, who loves
To hear applause for what his skill improves,
And gives for praise, assent,—and to the fair
He brings of pullets a delicious pair;
Thus sees a peasant with discernment nice,
A love of power, conceit, and avarice.
Lo! now the change complete: the convert Gwyn
Has sold his books, and has renounced his sin;
Mollet his body orders, Wisp his soul,
And o'er his purse the lady takes control;
No friends beside he needs, and none attend-
Soul, body, and estate, has each a friend;
And fair Rebecca leads a virtuous life—
She rules a mistress, and she reigns a wife.

TALE IV.

PROCRASTINATION.

Heaven witness
I have been to you ever true and humble.
Henry VIII. act iv. sc. 4.

Gentle lady,
When first I did impart my love to you,
I freely told you all the wealth I had.
Merchant of Venice, act iii. sc. 2.

The fatal time
Cuts off all ceremonies and vows of love,
And ample interchange of sweet discourse,
Which so long sunder'd friends should dwell upon.
Richard III. act v. sc. 3.

I know thee not, old man; fall to thy prayers.
Henry IV. Part 2, act v. sc. 5.

Farewell
Thou pure impiety, thou impious purity,
For thee I'll lock up all the gates of love.
Much Ado about Nothing, act iv. sc. 2.

Love will expire, the gay, the happy dream
Will turn to scorn, indifference, or esteem:
Some favour'd pairs, in this exchange are bless'd
Nor sigh for raptures in a state of rest;
Others, ill match'd, with minds unpair'd repent
At once the deed and know no more content;
From joy to anguish they, in haste, decline,
And with their fondness, their esteem resign:
More luckless still their fate, who are the prey
Of long protracted hope and dull delay;
'Mid plans of bliss the heavy hours pass on,
Till love is wither'd, and till joy is gone.
This gentle flame two youthful hearts possess'd,
The sweet disturber of unenvied rest:
The prudent Dinah was the maid beloved,
And the kind Rupert was the swain approved:
A wealthy aunt her gentle niece sustain'd,
He, with a father, at his desk remain'd;
The youthful couple, to their vows sincere,
Thus loved expectant; year succeding year,
With pleasant views and hopes, but not a prospect near.
Rupert some comfort in his station saw,
But the poor virgin lived in dread and awe;
Upon her anxious looks the widow smiled,
And bade her wait, "for she was yet a child."
She for her neighbour had a due respect,
Nor would his son encourage or reject;
And thus the pair, with expectations vain,
Beheld the seasons change, and change again:
Meantime the nymph her tender tales perused,
Where cruel aunts impatient girls refused;

While hers, though teasing, boasted to be kind,
And she, resenting, to be all resign'd.
The dame was sick, and when the youth applied
For her consent, she groan'd, and cough'd and cried:
Talk'd of departing, and again her breath
Drew hard, and cough'd, and talk'd again of death:
'Here you may live, my Dinah! here the boy
And you together my estate enjoy;"
Thus to the lovers was her mind express'd,
Till they forebore to urge the fond request.
Servant, and nurse, and comforter, and friend,
Dinah had still some duty to attend;
But yet their walk, when Rupert's evening call
Obtain'd an hour, made sweet amends for all;
So long they now each other's thoughts had known,
That nothing seem'd exclusively their own;
But with the common wish, the mutual fear,
They now had travell'd to their thirtieth year.
At length a prospect open'd; but, alas!
Long time must yet, before the union, pass;
Rupert was call'd in other clime, t' increase
Another's wealth, and toil for future peace;
Loath were the lovers; but the aunt declared
'Twas fortune's call, and they must be prepared;
"You now are young, and for this brief delay,
And Dinah's care, what I bequeath will pay;
All will be yours; nay, love, suppress that sigh;
The kind must suffer, and the best must die:"
Then came the cough, and strong the signs it gave
Of holding long contention with the grave.
The lovers parted with a gloomy view,
And little comfort but that both were true;
He for uncertain duties doom'd to steer,
While hers remain'd too certain and severe.
Letters arrived, and Rupert fairly told
"His cares were many, and his hopes were cold;
The view more clouded, that was never fair,
And love alone preserved him from despair:"
In other letters, brighter hopes he drew,
"His friends were kind, and he believed them true."
When the sage widow Dinah's grief descried,
She wonder'd much, why one so happy sigh'd:
Then bade her see how her poor aunt sustain'd
The ills of life nor murmur'd nor complain'd.
To vary pleasures, from the lady's chest
Were drawn the pearly string and tabby vest;
Beads, jewels, laces, all their value shown,
With the kind notice,—"They will be your own."
This hope, these comforts, cherish'd day by day,
To Dinah's bosom made a gradual way;
Till love of treasure had as large a part,
As love of Rupert, in the virgin's heart.
Whether it be that tender passions fail,
From their own nature, while the strong prevail;
Or whether avarice, like the poison tree,*
Kills all beside it, and alone will be;
Whatever cause prevail'd, the pleasure grew
In Dinah's soul, she loved the hoards to view;
With lively joy those comforts she survey'd,
And love grew languid in the careful maid.

Now the grave niece partook the widow's cares,
Look'd to the great and ruled the small affairs;
Saw clean'd the plate, arranged the china show
And felt her passion for a shilling grow:
Th' indulgent aunt increased the maid's delight,
By placing tokens of her wealth in sight;
She loved the value of her bonds to tell,
And spake of stocks, and how they rose and fell.
This passion grew, and gain'd at length such sway,
That other passions shrank to make its way,
Romantic notions now the heart forsook,
She read but seldom, and she changed her book:
And for the verses she was wont to send,
Short was her prose, and she was Rupert's friend.
Seldom she wrote, and then the widow's cough,
And constant call, excused her breaking off;
Who, now oppress'd, no longer took the air,
But sate and dozed upon an easy chair.
The cautious doctor saw the case was clear,
But judged it best to have companions near;
They came, they reason'd, they prescribed—at last,
Like honest men, they said their hopes were past;
Then came a priest—'tis comfort to reflect,
When all is over, there was no neglect;
And all was over—by her husband's bones,
The widow rests beneath the sculptured stones,
That yet record their fondness and their fame,
While all they left the virgin's care became;
Stocks, bonds, and buildings;—it disturb'd her rest,
To think what load of troubles she possess'd:
Yet, if a trouble, she resolved to take
Th' important duty, for the donor's sake;
She too was heiress to the widow's taste,
Her love of hoarding and her dread of waste.
Sometimes the past would on her mind intrude,
And then a conflict full of care ensued;
The thoughts of Rupert on her mind would press
His worth she knew, but doubted his success;
Of old she saw him heedless; what the boy
Forebore to save, the man would not enjoy;
Oft had he lost the chance that care would seize,
Willing to live, but more to live at ease:
Yet could she not a broken vow defend,
And Heaven, perhaps, might yet enrich her friend
Month after month was pass'd, and all were spent
In quiet comfort and in rich content:
Miseries there were, and woes the world around,
But these had not her pleasant dwelling found:
She knew that mothers grieved, and widows wept,
And she was sorry, said her prayers, and slept:
Thus pass'd the seasons, and to Dinah's board
Gave what the seasons to the rich afford;
For she indulged, nor was her heart so small,
That one strong passion should engross it all.
A love of splendour now with avarice strove,
And oft appeared to be the stronger love:
A secret pleasure fill'd the widow's breast,
When she reflected on the hoards possess'd;
But livelier joy inspired th' ambitious maid,
When she the purchase of those hoards display'd
In small but splendid room she loved to see
That all was placed in view and harmony;
There, as with eager glance she look'd around,
She much delight in every object found;
While books devout were near her—to destroy
Should it arise, an overflow of joy.

* Allusion is here made, not to the well known species of *sumach*, called the poison-oak, or *toxicodendron*, but to the *upas*, or poison tree of Java: whether it be real or imaginary, this is no proper place for inquiry.

Within that fair apartment, guests might see
The comforts cull'd for wealth by vanity:
Around the room an Indian paper blazed,
With lively tint and figures boldly raised;
Silky and soft upon the floor below,
Th' elastic carpet rose with crimson glow,
All things around implied both cost and care,
What met the eye was elegant or rare:
Some curious trifles round the room were laid
By hope presented to the wealthy maid;
Within a costly case of varnish'd wood,
In level rows her polish'd volumes stood;
Shown as a favour to a chosen few,
To prove what beauty for a book could do:
A silver urn with curious work was fraught,
A silver lamp from Grecian pattern wrought:
Above her head, all gorgeous to behold,
A time-piece stood on feet of burnish'd gold;
A stag's head crest adorn'd the pictured case,
Through the pure crystal shone th' enamell'd face:
And while on brilliants moved the hands of steel,
It click'd from prayer to prayer, from meal to meal.
Here as the lady sate, a friendly pair
Stept in t' admire the view, and took their chair:
They then related how the young and gay
Were thoughtless wandering in the broad highway;
How tender damsels sail'd in tilted boats,
And laugh'd with wicked men in scarlet coats;
And how we live in such degenerate times,
That men conceal their wants and show their crimes;
While vicious deeds are screen'd by fashion's name,
And what was once our pride is now our shame.
Dinah was musing, as her friends discoursed,
When these last words a sudden entrance forced
Upon her mind, and what was once her pride
And now her shame, some painful views supplied;
Thoughts of the past within her bosom press'd,
And there a change was felt, and was confess'd:
While thus the virgin strove with secret pain,
Her mind was wandering o'er the troubled main;
Still she was silent, nothing seem'd to see,
But sate and sigh'd in pensive revery.
The friends prepared new subjects to begin,
When tall Susannah, maiden starch, stalk'd in;
Not in her ancient mode, sedate and slow,
As when she came, the mind she knew, to know;
Nor as, when listening half an hour before,
She twice or thrice tapp'd gently at the door;
But, all decorum cast in wrath aside,
"I think the devil's in the man!" she cried;
"A huge tall sailor, with his tawny cheek,
And pitted face, will with my lady speak;
He grinn'd an ugly smile, and said he knew,
Please you, my lady, 'twould be joy to you;
What must I answer?"—Trembling and distress'd
Sank the p...e Dinah, by her fears oppress'd;
When thus alarm'd, and brooking no delay,
Swift to her room the stranger made his way.
"Revive, my love!" said he, "I've done thee harm,
Give me thy pardon," and he look'd alarm:
Meantime the prudent Dinah had contrived
Her soul to question, and she then revived.
"See! my good friend," and then she raised her head,
"The bloom of life, the strength of youth is fled;
Living we die; to us the world is dead;
We parted bless'd with health, and I am now
Age-struck and feeble, so I find art thou;
Thine eye is sunken, furrow'd is thy face,
And downward look'st thou—so we run our race
And happier they, whose race is nearly run,
Their troubles over, and their duties done."
"True, lady, true, we are not girl and boy,
But time has left us something to enjoy."
"What! thou hast learn'd my fortune?—yes, I live
To feel how poor the comforts wealth can give;
Thou too, perhaps, art wealthy; but our fate
Still mocks our wishes, wealth is come too late."
"To me nor late nor early; I am come
Poor as I left thee to my native home:
Nor yet," said Rupert, "will I grieve; 'tis mine
To share thy comforts, and the glory thine;
For thou wilt gladly take that generous part
That both exalts and gratifies the heart;
While mine rejoices."—"Heavens!" return'd the maid,
"This talk to one so wither'd and decay'd?
No! all my care is now to fit my mind
For other spousal, and to die resign'd:
As friend and neighbour, I shall hope to see
These noble views, this pious love in thee;
That we together may the change await,
Guides and spectators in each other's fate;
When fellow pilgrims, we shall daily crave
The mutual prayer that arms us for the grave."
Half angry, half in doubt, the lover gazed
On the meek maiden, by her speech amazed:
"Dinah," said he, "dost thou respect thy vows?
What spousal mean'st thou?—thou art Rupert spouse;
The chance is mine to take, and thine to give,
But, trifling this, if we together live:
Can I believe, that, after all the past,
Our vows, our loves, thou wilt be false at last?
Something thou hast—I know not what—in view
I find thee pious—let me find thee true."
"Ah! cruel this; but do, my friend, depart;
And to its feelings leave my wounded heart."
"Nay, speak at once; said, Dinah, let me know
Mean'st thou to take me, now I'm wreck'd, in tow?
Be fair; nor longer keep me in the dark;
Am I forsaken for a trimmer spark?
Heaven's spouse thou art not; nor can I believe
That God accepts her who will man deceive:
True I am shatter'd, I have service seen,
And service done, and have in trouble been;
My cheek (it shames me not) has lost its red,
And the brown buff is o'er my features spread;
Perchance my speech is rude; for I among
Th' untamed have been, in temper and in tongue
Have been trepann'd, have lived in toil and care,
And wrought for wealth I was not doom'd to share
It touch'd me deeply, for I felt a pride
In gaining riches for my destined bride:
Speak then my fate; for these my sorrows past,
Time lost, youth fled, hope wearied, and at last
This doubt of thee—a childish thing to tell,
But certain truth—my very throat they swell;
They stop the breath, and but for shame could I
Give way to weakness, and with passion cry;
These are unmanly struggles, but I feel
This hour must end them, and perhaps will heal.

Here Dinah sigh'd as if afraid to speak—
And then repeated—"They were frail and weak;
His soul she loved, and hoped he had the grace
To fix his thoughts upon a better place."
She ceased;—with steady glance, as if to see
The very root of this hypocrisy,—
He her small fingers moulded in his hard
And bronzed broad hand; then told her his regard,
His best respect were gone, but love had still
Hold in his heart, and govern'd yet the will—
Or he would curse her:—saying this, he threw
The hand in scorn away, and bade adieu
To every lingering hope, with every care in view.
Proud and indignant, suffering, sick, and poor,
He grieved unseen; and spoke of love no more—
Till all he felt in indignation died,
As hers had sunk in avarice and pride.
In health declining, as in mind distress'd,
To some in power his troubles he confess'd,
And shares a parish-gift;—at prayers he sees
The pious Dinah dropp'd upon her knees;
Thence as she walks the street with stately air,
As chance directs, oft meet the parted pair:
When he, with thickset coat of badge-man's blue,
Moves near her shaded silk of changeful hue;
When his thin locks of gray approach her braid,
A costly purchase made in beauty's aid;
When his frank air, and his unstudied pace,
Are seen with her soft manner, air, and grace,
And his plain artless look with her sharp meaning face;
It might some wonder in a stranger move,
How these together could have talk'd of love.
Behold them now!—see there a tradesman stands,
And humbly hearkens to some fresh commands;
He moves to speak, she interrupts him—"Stay,"
Her air expresses—"Hark! to what I say:"
Ten paces off, poor Rupert on a seat
Has taken refuge from the noonday heat,
His eyes on her intent, as if to find
What were the movements of that subtle mind:
How still! how earnest is he!—it appears
His thoughts are wandering through his earlier years;
Through years of fruitless labour, to the day
When all his earthly prospects died away:
'Had I," he thinks, "been wealthier of the two,
Would she have found me so unkind, untrue?
Or knows not man when poor, what man when rich will do?
Yes, yes! I feel that I had faithful proved,
And should have soothed and raised her, bless'd and loved."
But Dinah moves—she had observed before
The pensive Rupert at an humble door:
Some thoughts of pity raised by his distress,
Some feeling touch of ancient tenderness;
Religion, duty urged the maid to speak
In terms of kindness to a man so weak:
But pride forbad, and to return would prove
She felt the shame of his neglected love;
Nor rapt in silence could she pass, afraid
Each eye should see her, and each heart upbraid;
One way remain'd—the way the Levite took,
Who without mercy could on misery look:
(A way perceived by craft, approved by pride,)
She cross'd, and pass'd him on the other side.

TALE V.

THE PATRON.

It were all one,
That I should love a bright peculiar star,
And think to wed it; she is so much above me:
In her bright radiance and collateral heat
Must I be comforted, not in her sphere.
All's Well that Ends Well, act I. sc. 1.

Poor wretches, that depend
On greatness' favours, dream as I have done,—
Wake and find nothing.
Cymbeline, act v. sc. 4.

And since——
Th' affliction of my mind amends, with which
I fear a madness held me.
Tempest, act v.

* * *

A BOROUGH BAILIFF, who to law was train'd
A wife and sons in decent state maintain'd;
He had his way in life's rough ocean steer'd,
And many a rock and coast of danger clear'd;
He saw where others fail'd, and care had he
Others in him should not such failings see;
His sons in various busy states were placed,
And all began the sweets of gain to taste,
Save John, the younger; who, of sprightly parts,
Felt not a love for money-making arts:
In childhood feeble, he, for country air,
Had long resided with a rustic pair;
All round whose room were doleful ballads, songs
Of lovers' sufferings and of ladies' wrongs,
Of peevish ghosts who came at dark midnight,
For breach of promise, guilty men to fright;
Love, marriage, murder, were the themes, with these,
All that on idle, ardent spirits seize;
Robbers at land and pirates on the main,
Enchanters foil'd, spells broken, giants slain;
Legends of love, with tales of halls and bowers,
Choice of rare songs, and garlands of choice flowers
And all the hungry mind without a choice devours
From village children kept apart by pride,
With such enjoyments, and without a guide,
Inspired by feelings all such works infused,
John snatch'd a pen, and wrote as he perused:
With the like fancy he could make his knight
Slay half a host and put the rest to flight;
With the like knowledge, he could make him ride
From isle to isle at Partheniss's side;
And with a heart yet free, no busy brain
Form'd wilder notions of delight and pain,
The raptures smiles create, the anguish of disdain.
Such were the fruits of John's poetic toil,
Weeds, but still proofs of vigour in the soil:
He nothing purposed but with vast delight,
Let Fancy loose, and wonder'd at her flight:
His notions of poetic worth were high,
And of his own still hoarded poetry;—
These to his father's house he bore with pride,
A miser's treasure, in his room to hide;
Till spurr'd by glory, to a reading friend
He kindly show'd the sonnets he had penn'd:
With erring judgment, though with heart sincere,
That friend exclaim'd, "These beauties must appear."
In magazines they claim'd their share of fame,
Though undistinguish'd by their author's name;

And with delight the young enthusiast found
The muse of Marcus with applauses crown'd.
This heard the father, and with some alarm:
"The boy," said he, "will neither trade nor farm;
He for both law and physic is unfit;
Wit he may have, but cannot live on wit·
Let him his talents then to learning give,
Where verse is honour'd, and where poets live.
John kept his terms at college unreproved,
Took his degree, and left the life he loved;
Nor yet ordain'd, his leisure he employ'd
In the light labours he so much enjoy'd;
His favourite notions and his daring views
Were cherish'd still, and he adored the muse.
"A little time, and he should burst to light,
And admiration of the world excite;
And every friend, now cool and apt to blame
His fond pursuit, would wonder at his fame."
When led by fancy, and from view retired,
He call'd before him all his heart desired;
"Fame shall be mine, then wealth shall I possess,
And beauty next an ardent lover bless;
For me the maid shall leave her nobler state,
Happy to raise and share her poet's fate."
He saw each day his father's frugal board
With simple fare by cautious prudence stored·
Where each indulgence was foreweigh'd with care,
And the grand maxims were to save and spare
Yet in his walks, his closet, and his bed,
All frugal cares and prudent counsels fled;
And bounteous Fancy, for his glowing mind,
Wrought various scenes, and all of glorious kind;
Slaves of the *ring* and *lamp!* what need of you,
When Fancy's self such magic deeds can do?
Though rapt in visions of no vulgar kind,
To common subjects stoop'd our poet's mind;
And oft, when wearied with more ardent flight,
He felt a spur satiric song to write;
A rival burgess his bold muse attack'd,
And whipp'd severely for a well-known fact;
For while he seem'd to all demure and shy,
Our poet gazed at what was passing by;
And e'en his father smiled when playful wit
From his young bard, some haughty object hit.
From ancient times the borough where they dwelt
Had mighty contest at elections felt:
Sir Godfrey Ball, 'tis true, had held in pay
Electors many for the trying day;
But in such golden chains to bind them all
Required too much for e'en Sir Godfrey Ball.
A member died, and to supply his place,
Two heroes enter'd for th' important race;
Sir Godfrey's friend and Earl Fitzdonnel's son,
Lord Frederick Damer, both prepared to run;
And partial numbers saw with vast delight
Their good young lord oppose the proud old knight.
Our poet's father, at a first request,
Gave the young lord his vote and interest;
And what he could our poet, for he stung
The foe by verse satiric, said and sung.
Lord Frederick heard of all this youthful zeal,
And felt as lords upon a canvass feel;
He read the satire, and he saw the use
That such cool insult, and such keen abuse
Might on the wavering minds of voting men produce;
Then too his praises were in contrast seen,
"A lord as noble as the knight was mean."
"I much rejoice," he cried, "such worth to find·
To this the world must be no longer blind
His glory will descend from sire to son,
The Burns of English race, the happier Chatterton."
Our poet's mind, now hurried and elate,
Alarm'd the anxious parent for his fate;
Who saw with sorrow, should their friend succeed,
That much discretion would the poet need.
Their friend succeeded, and repaid the zeal
The poet felt, and made opposers feel,
By praise (from lords how soothing and how sweet)
And invitation to his noble seat.
The father ponder'd, doubtful if the brain
Of his proud boy such honour could sustain;
Pleased with the favours offer'd to a son,
But seeing dangers few so ardent shun.
Thus, when they parted, to the youthful breast
The father's fears were by his love impress'd:
"There will you find, my son, the courteous ease
That must subdue the soul it means to please;
That soft attention which e'en beauty pays
To wake our passions, or provoke our praise;
There all the eye beholds will give delight,
Where every sense is flatter'd like the sight
This is your peril; can you from such scene
Of splendour part, and feel your mind serene,
And in the father's humble state resume
The frugal diet and the narrow room?"
To this the youth with cheerful heart replied,
Pleased with the trial, but as yet untried;
And while professing patience, should he fail,
He suffer'd hope o'er reason to prevail.
Impatient, by the morning mail convey'd,
The happy guest his promised visit paid;
And now arriving at the hall, he tried
For air composed, serene, and satisfied;
As he had practised in his room alone,
And there acquired a free and easy tone:
There he had said, "Whatever the degree
A man obtains, what more than man is he?"
And when arrived—"This room is but a room;
Can aught we see the steady soul o'ercome?
Let me in all a manly firmness show,
Upheld by talents, and their value know."
This reason urged; but it surpass'd his skill
To be in act as manly as in will:
When he his lordship and the lady saw,
Brave as he was, he felt oppress'd with awe;
And spite of verse, that so much praise had won,
The poet found he was the bailiff's son.
But dinner came, and the succeeding hours
Fix'd his weak nerves, and raised his failing powers;
Praised and assured, he ventured once or twice
On some remark, and bravely broke the ice;
So that at night, reflecting on his words,
He found, in time, he might converse with lords
Now was the sister of his patron seen—
A lovely creature, with majestic mien;
Who, softly smiling while she look'd so fair,
Praised the young poet with such friendly air;
Such winning frankness in her looks express'd,
And such attention to her brother's guest,
That so much beauty, join'd with speech so kind
Raised strong emotions in the poet's mind;

Till reason fail'd his bosom to defend
From the sweet power of this enchanting friend.—
Rash boy! what hope thy frantic mind invades?
What love confuses, and what pride persuades?
Awake to truth! shouldst thou deluded feed
On hopes so groundless, thou art mad indeed.
What say'st thou, wise one? "that all powerful love
Can fortune's strong impediments remove;
Nor is it strange that worth should wed to worth,
The pride of genius with the pride of birth."
While thou art dreaming thus, the beauty spies
Love in thy tremor, passion in thine eyes;
And with th' amusement pleased, of conquest vain,
She seeks her pleasure, careless of thy pain;
She gives thee praise to humble and confound,
Smiles to insnare, and flatters thee to wound.
Why has she said that in the lowest state
The noble mind ensures a noble fate?
And why thy daring mind to glory call?
That thou mayst dare and suffer, soar and fall.
Beauties are tyrants, and if they can reign,
They have no feeling for their subject's pain;
Their victim's anguish gives their charms applause,
And their chief glory is the wo they cause:
Something of this was felt, in spite of love,
Which hope, in spite of reason, would remove.
Thus lived our youth, with conversation, books,
And lady Emma's soul-subduing looks;
Lost in delight, astonish'd at his lot,
All prudence banish'd, all advice forgot—
Hopes, fears, and every thought, were fix'd upon the spot.
'Twas autumn yet, and many a day must frown
On Brandon-Hall, ere went my lord to town;
Meantime the father, who had heard his boy
Lived in a round of luxury and joy,
And justly thinking that the youth was one
Who, meeting danger, was unskill'd to shun;
Knowing his temper, virtue, spirit, zeal,
How prone to hope and trust, believe and feel;
These on the parent's soul their weight impress'd,
And thus he wrote the counsels of his breast.
"John, thou'rt a genius; thou hast some pretence,
I think, to wit, but hast thou sterling sense?
That which, like gold, may through the world go forth,
And always pass for what 'tis truly worth?
Whereas this genius like a bill, must take
Only the value our opinions make.
"Men famed for wit, of dangerous talents vain,
Treat those of common parts with proud disdain;
The powers that wisdom would, improving, hide,
They blaze abroad with inconsiderate pride;
While yet but mere probationers for fame,
They seize the honour they should then disclaim:
Honour so hurried to the light must fade,
The lasting laurels flourish in the shade.
"Genius is jealous; I have heard of some
Who, if unnoticed, grew perversely dumb;
Nay, different talents would their envy raise;
Poets have sicken'd at a dancer's praise;
And one, the happiest writer of his time,
Grew pale at hearing Reynolds was sublime;
That Rutland's dutchess wore a heavenly smile—
And I said he, neglected all the while!
"A waspish tribe are these, on gilded wings,
Humming their lays, and brandishing their stings;
And thus they move their friends and foes among,
Prepared for soothing or satiric song.
"Hear me, my boy; thou hast a virtuous mind—
But be thy virtues of the sober kind;
Be not a Quixote, ever up in arms
To give the guilty and the great alarms:
If never heeded, thy attack is vain;
And if they heed thee, they'll attack again;
Then too in striking at that heedless rate,
Thou in an instant mayst decide thy fate.
"Leave admonition—let the vicar give
Rules how the nobles of his flock should live;
Nor take that simple fancy to thy brain,
That thou canst cure the wicked and the vain.
"Our Pope, they say, once entertain'd the whim,
Who fear'd not God should be afraid of him;
But grant they fear'd him, was it further said,
That he reform'd the hearts he made afraid?
Did Chartres mend? Ward, Waters, and a score
Of flagrant felons, with his floggings sore?
Was Cibber silenced? No; with vigour bless'd,
And brazen front, half earnest, half in jest,
He dared the bard to battle, and was seen
In all his glory match'd with Pope and spleen;
Himself he stripp'd, the harder blow to hit,
Then boldly match'd his ribaldry with wit;
The poet's conquest Truth and Time proclaim,
But yet the battle hurt his peace and fame.
"Strive not too much for favour; seem at ease,
And rather pleased thyself, than bent to please:
Upon thy lord with decent care attend,
But not too near; thou canst not be a friend
And favourite be not, 'tis a dangerous post—
Is gain'd by labour, and by fortune lost:
Talents like thine may make a man approved,
But other talents trusted and beloved.
Look round, my son, and thou wilt early see
The kind of man thou art not form'd to be.
"The real favourites of the great are they
Who to their views and wants attention pay,
And pay it ever; who, with all their skill,
Dive to the heart, and learn the secret will;
If that be vicious, soon can they provide
The favourite ill, and o'er the soul preside;
For vice is weakness, and the artful know
Their power increases as the passions grow;
If indolent the pupil, hard their task;
Such minds will ever for amusement ask;
And great the labour! for a man to choose
Objects for one whom nothing can amuse;
For ere those objects can the soul delight,
They must to joy the soul herself excite;
Therefore it is, this patient, watchful kind
With gentle friction stir the drowsy mind:
Fix'd on their end, with caution they proceed,
And sometimes give, and sometimes take the lead
Will now a hint convey, and then retire,
And let the spark awake the lingering fire;
Or seek new joys and livelier pleasures bring,
To give the jaded sense a quickening spring.
"These arts, indeed, my son must not pursue;
Nor must he quarrel with the tribe that do:
It is not safe another's crimes to know,
Nor is it wise our proper worth to show:—
'My lord,' you say, 'engaged me for that worth'
True, and preserve it ready to come forth·

If question'd, fairly answer—and that done,
Shrink back, be silent, and thy father's son;
For they who doubt thy talents scorn thy boast,
But they who grant them will dislike thee most:
Observe the prudent; they in silence sit,
Display no learning, and affect no wit;
They hazard nothing, nothing they assume,
But know the useful art of *acting dumb*.
Yet to their eyes each varying look appears,
And every word finds entrance at their ears.
"Thou art religion's advocate—take heed,
Hurt not the cause, thy pleasure 'tis to plead;
With wine before thee, and with wits beside,
Do not in strength of reasoning powers confide;
What seems to thee convincing, certain, plain,
They will deny, and dare thee to maintain;
And thus will triumph o'er thy eager youth,
While thou wilt grieve for so disgracing truth.
"With pain I've seen, these wrangling wits among,
Faith's weak defenders, passionate and young;
Weak thou art not, yet not enough on guard,
Where wit and humour keep their watch and ward:
Men gay and noisy will o'erwhelm thy sense,
Then loudly laugh at Truth's and thy expense;
While the kind ladies will do all they can
To check their mirth, and cry, '*The good young man!*'
"Prudence, my boy, forbids thee to commend
The cause or party of thy noble friend;
What are his praises worth, who must be known
To take a patron's maxims for his own?
When ladies sing, or in thy presence play,
Do not, dear John, in rapture melt away;
'Tis not thy part, there will be listeners round,
To cry *divine!* and doat upon the sound;
Remember too, that though the poor have ears,
They take not in the music of the spheres;
They must not feel the warble and the thrill,
Or be dissolved in ecstasy at will;
Besides, 'tis freedom in a youth like thee
To drop his awe, and deal in ecstasy!
"In silent ease, at least in silence dine,
Nor one opinion start of food or wine:
Thou know'st that all the science thou canst boast
Is of thy father's simple boil'd and roast;
Nor always these; he sometimes saved his cash,
By interlinear days of frugal hash:
Wine hadst thou seldom; wilt thou be so vain
As to decide on claret or champagne?
Dost thou from me derive this taste sublime,
Who order port the dozen at a time?
When (every glass held precious in our eyes)
We judged the value by the bottle's size:
Then never merit for thy praise assume,
Its worth well knows each servant in the room.
"Hard, boy, thy task to steer thy way among
That servile, supple, shrewd, insidious throng;
Who look upon thee as of doubtful race,
An interloper, one who wants a place:
Freedom with these let thy free soul condemn,
Nor with thy heart's concerns associate them.
"Of all be cautious—but be most afraid
Of the pale charms that grace my lady's maid;
Of those sweet dimples, of that fraudful eye,
The frequent glance design'd for thee to spy;
The soft bewitching look, the fond bewailing sigh:
Let others frown and envy; she the while
(Insidious syren!) will demurely smile;
And for her gentle purpose, every day
Inquire thy wants, and meet thee in thy way;
She has her blandishments, and though so weak,
Her person pleases, and her actions speak:
At first her folly may her aim defeat;
But kindness shown at length will kindness meet
Have some offended? them will she disdain,
And, for thy sake, contempt and pity feign;
She hates the vulgar, she admires to look
On woods and groves, and doles upon a book;
Let her once see thee on her features dwell,
And hear one sigh, then liberty farewell.
"But, John, remember we cannot maintain
A poor, proud girl, extravagant and vain.
"Doubt much of friendship: shouldst thou find a friend
Pleased to advise thee, anxious to commend;
Should he the praises he has heard report,
And confidence (in thee confiding) court;
Much of neglectful patrons should he say,
And then exclaim—'How long must merit stay!'
Then show how high thy modest hopes may stretch,
And point to stations far beyond thy reach;
Let such designer, by thy conduct, see
(Civil and cool) he makes no dupe of thee;
And he will quit thee, as a man too wise
For him to ruin first, and then despise.
"Such are thy dangers;—yet if thou canst steer
Past all the perils, all the quicksands clear,
Then may'st thou profit; but if storms prevail,
If foes beset thee, if thy spirits fail,—
No more of winds or waters be the sport,
But in thy father's mansion find a port."
Our poet read.—"It is in truth," said he,
"Correct in part, but what is *this* to me?
I love a foolish Abigail! in base
And sordid office! fear not such disgrace:
Am I so blind?" "Or thou wouldst surely see
That lady's fall, if she should stoop to thee!"
"The cases differ." "True! for what surprise
Could from thy marriage with the maid arise?
But through the island would the shame be spread
Should the fair mistress deign with thee to wed."
John saw not this; and many a week had pass'd
While the vain beauty held her victim fast;
The noble friend still condescension show'd,
And, as before, with praises overflow'd;
But his grave lady took a silent view
Of all that pass'd, and smiling, pitied too.
Cold grew the foggy morn, the day was brief,
Loose on the cherry hung the crimson leaf;
The dew dwelt ever on the herb; the woods
Roar'd with strong blasts, with mighty showers the floods:
All green was vanish'd, save of pine and yew
That still display'd their melancholy hue,
Save the green holly with its berries red,
And the green moss that o'er the gravel spread.
To public views my lord must soon attend;
And soon the ladies—would they leave their friend?
The time was fix'd—approach'd—was near—was come:
The trying time that fill'd his soul with gloom·
Thoughtful our poet in the morning rose,
And cried, "One hour my fortune will disclose·

Terrific hour! from thee have I to date
Life's loftier views, or my degraded state,
For now to be what I have been before
Is so to fall, that I can rise no more."
The morning meal was past, and all around
The mansion rang with each discordant sound;
Haste was in every foot, and every look
The traveller's joy for London journey spoke:
Not so our youth; whose feelings, at the noise
Of preparation, had no touch of joys;
He pensive stood, and saw each carriage drawn,
With lackeys mounted, ready on the lawn:
The ladies came; and John in terror threw
One painful glance, and then his eyes withdrew;
Not with such speed, but he in other eyes
With anguish read—"I pity, but despise—
Unhappy boy! presumptuous scribbler!—you
To dream such dreams!—be sober, and adieu!"
Then came the noble friend—"And will my lord
Vouchsafe no comfort? drop no soothing word?
Yes, he must speak." He speaks, "My good young friend,
You know my views; upon my care depend;
My hearty thanks to your good father pay,
And be a student.—Harry, drive away."
Stillness reign'd all around; of late so full
The busy scene, deserted now and dull:
Stern is his nature who forbears to feel
Gloom o'er his spirits on such trials steal;
Most keenly felt our poet as he went
From room to room without a fix'd intent.
'And here," he thought, "I was caress'd; admired
Were here my songs; she smiled, and I aspired:
The change how grievous!" As he mused, a dame
Busy and peevish to her duties came;
Aside the tables and the chairs she drew,
And sang and mutter'd in the poet's view:—
"This was her fortune; here they leave the poor;
Enjoy themselves, and think of us no more:
I had a promise—" here his pride and shame
Urged him to fly from this familiar dame;
He gave one farewell look, and by a coach
Reach'd his own mansion at the night's approach.
His father met him with an anxious air,
Heard his sad tale, and check'd what seem'd despair.
Hope was in him corrected, but alive;
My lord would something for a friend contrive;
His word was pledged; our hero's feverish mind
Admitted this, and half his grief resign'd;
But when three months had fled, and every day
Drew from the sickening hopes their strength away,
The youth became abstracted, pensive, dull;
He utter'd nothing, though his heart was full:
Teased by inquiring words and anxious looks,
And all forgetful of his muse and books;
Awake he mourn'd, but in his sleep perceived
A lovely vision that his pain relieved:
His soul transported, hail'd the happy seat,
Where once his pleasure was so sure and sweet;
Where joys departed came in blissful view,
Till reason waked, and not a joy he knew.
Questions now vex'd his spirit, most from those
Who are call'd friends because they are not foes:
'John!" they would say; he starting, turn'd around;
John!" there was something shocking in the sound;
Ill brook'd he then the pert familiar phrase,
The untaught freedom, and th' inquiring gaze,
Much was his temper touch'd, his spleen provoked,
When ask'd how ladies talk'd, or walk'd, or look'd?
"What said my lord of politics? how spent
He there his time? and was he glad he went?"
At length a letter came, both cool and brief,
But still it gave the burden'd heart relief:
Though not inspired by lofty hopes, the youth
Placed much reliance on Lord Frederick's truth;
Summon'd to town, he thought the visit one
Where something fair and friendly would be done
Although he judged not, as before his fall,
When all was love and promise at the hall.
Arrived in town, he early sought to know
The fate which dubious friendship would bestow.
At a tall building trembling he appear'd,
And his low rap was indistinctly heard;
A well known servant came—"A while," said he,
"Be pleased to wait, my lord has company."
Alone our hero sat; the news in hand,
Which though he read, he could not understand:
Cold was the day: in days so cold as these
There needs a fire, where minds and bodies freeze.
The vast and echoing room, the polish'd grate,
The crimson chairs, the sideboard with its plate;
The splendid sofa, which, though made for rest,
He then had thought it freedom to have press'd;
The shining tables, curiously inlaid,
Were all in comfortless proud style display'd,
And to the troubled feelings terror gave,
That made the once dear friend, the sickening slave.
"Was he forgotten?" Thrice upon his ear
Struck the loud clock, yet no relief was near.
Each rattling carriage, and each thundering stroke
On the loud door, the dream of fancy broke:
Oft as a servant chanced the way to come,
"Brings he a message?" no! he pass'd the room:
At length 'tis certain: "Sir, you will attend
At twelve on Thursday!" Thus the day had end.
Vex'd by these tedious hours of needless pain,
John left the noble mansion with disdain;
For there was something in that still, cold place,
That seem'd to threaten and portend disgrace.
Punctual again the modest rap declared
The youth attended, then was all prepared;
For the same servant, by his lord's command,
A paper offer'd to his trembling hand:
"No more!" he cried; "disdains he to afford
One kind expression, one consoling word?"
With troubled spirit he began to read
That "In the church my lord could not succeed;"
Who had "to peers of either kind applied,
And was with dignity and grace denied:
While his own livings were by men possess'd,
Not likely in their chancels yet to rest.
And therefore, all things weigh'd, (as he, my lord,
Had done maturely, and he pledged his word,)
Wisdom it seem'd for John to turn his view
To busier scenes, and bid the church adieu!"
Here grieved the youth; he felt his father's pride
Must with his own be shock'd and mortified:
But when he found his future comforts placed
Where he, alas! conceived himself disgraced—
In some appointment on the London quays,
He bade farewell to honour and to ease;

His spirit fell, and from that hour assured
How vain his dreams, he suffer'd and was cured.
Our poet hurried on, with wish to fly
From all mankind, to be conceal'd, and die.
Alas! what hopes, what high romantic views
Did that one visit to the soul infuse,
Which, cherish'd with such love, 'twas worse than death to lose!
Still he would strive, though painful was the strife,
To walk in this appointed road of life;
On these low duties duteous he would wait,
And patient bear the anguish of his fate.
Thanks to the patron, but of coldest kind,
Express'd the sadness of the poet's mind;
Whose heavy hours were pass'd with busy men
In the dull practice of th' official pen;
Who to superiors must in time impart
(The custom this) his progress in their art:
But so had grief on his perception wrought,
That all unheeded were the duties taught;
No answers gave he when his trial came,
Silent he stood, but suffering without shame;
And they observed that words severe or kind
Made no impression on his wounded mind;
For all perceived from whence his failure rose,
Some grief whose cause he deign'd not to disclose.
A soul averse from scenes and works so new,
Fear ever shrinking from the vulgar crew;
Distaste for each mechanic law and rule,
Thoughts of past honour and a patron cool;
A grieving parent, and a feeling mind,
Timid and ardent, tender and refined:
These all with mighty force the youth assail'd,
Till his soul fainted, and his reason fail'd:
When this was known, and some debate arose
How they who saw it should the fact disclose,
He found their purpose, and in terror fled
From unseen kindness, with mistaken dread.
Meantime the parent was distress'd to find
His son no longer for a priest design'd;
But still he gain'd some comfort by the news
Of John's promotion, though with humbler views:
For he conceived that in no distant time
The boy would learn to scramble, and to climb:
He little thought a son, his hope and pride,
His favour'd boy was now a home denied:
Yes! while the parent was intent to trace
How men in office climb from place to place,
By day, by night, o'er moor, and heath, and hill,
Roved the sad youth, with ever-changing will,
Of every aid bereft, exposed to every ill.
Thus as he sat, absorb'd in all the care
And all the hope that anxious fathers share,
A friend abruptly to his presence brought,
With trembling hand, the subject of his thought;
Whom he had found afflicted and subdued
By hunger, sorrow, cold, and solitude.
Silent he entered the forgotten room,
As ghostly forms may be conceived to come;
With sorrow-shrunken face and hair upright,
He look'd dismay, neglect, despair, affright;
But dead to comfort, and on misery thrown,
His parent's loss he felt not, nor his own.
The good man, struck with horror, cried aloud,
And drew around him an astonish'd crowd;
The sons and servants to the father ran,
To share the feelings of the grieved old man.
"Our brother, speak!" they all exclaim'd; "explain
Thy grief, thy suffering:"—but they ask'd in vain
The friend told all he knew; and all was known,
Save the sad causes whence the ills had grown:
But, if obscure the cause, they all agreed
From rest and kindness must the cure proceed:
And he was cured; for quiet, love, and care
Strove with the gloom, and broke on the despair,
Yet slow their progress, and, as vapours move
Dense and reluctant from the wintry grove,
All is confusion till the morning light
Gives the dim scene obscurely to the sight;
More and yet more refined the trunks appear,
Till the wild prospect stands distinct and clear;
So the dark mind of our young poet grew
Clear and sedate; the dreadful mist withdrew:
And he resembled that bleak wintry scene,
Sad, though unclouded; dismal, though serene.
At times he utter'd, "What a dream was mine!
And what a prospect! glorious and divine!
O! in that room, and on that night, to see
These looks, that sweetness beaming all on me;
That syren flattery—and to send me then,
Hope-raised and soften'd, to those heartless men;
That dark brow'd stern director pleased to show
Knowledge of subjects, I disdain'd to know;
Cold and controlling—but 'tis gone, 'tis past;
I had my trial, and have peace at last."
Now grew the youth resign'd; he bade adieu
To all that hope, to all that fancy drew;
His frame was languid, and the hectic heat
Flush'd on his pallid face, and countless beat
The quickening pulse, and faint the limbs that bore
The slender form that soon would breathe no more.
Then hope of holy kind the soul sustain'd,
And not a lingering thought of earth remain'd;
Now Heaven had all, and he could smile at love,
And the wild sallies of his youth reprove;
Then could he dwell upon the tempting days,
The proud aspiring thought, the partial praise;
Victorious now, his worldly views were closed,
And on the bed of death the youth reposed.
The father grieved—but as the poet's heart
Was all unfitted for his earthly part;
As, he conceived, some other haughty fair
Would, had he lived, have led him to despair;
As, with this fear, the silent grave shut out
All feverish hope, and all tormenting doubt;
While the strong faith the pious youth possess'd,
His hope enlivening, gave his sorrows rest;
Soothed by these thoughts, he felt a mournful joy
For his aspiring and devoted boy.
Meantime the news through various channels spread,
The youth, once favour'd with such praise, was dead.
"Emma," the lady cried, "my words attend,
Your syren smiles have kill'd your humble friend;
The hope you raised can now delude no more,
Nor charms, that once inspired, can now restore."
Faint was the flush of anger and of shame
That o'er the cheek of conscious beauty came:
"You censure not," said she, "the sun's bright rays,
When fools imprudent dare the dangerous gaze:
And should a stripling look till he were blind,
You would not justly call the light unkind

But is he dead? and am I to suppose
The power of poison in such looks as those?'
She spoke, and, pointing to the mirror, cast
A pleased gay glance, and court'sied as she pass'd
My lord, to whom the poet's fate was told,
Was much affected, for a man so cold:
'Dead!" said his lordship, "run distracted, mad!
Upon my soul I'm sorry for the lad;
And now, no doubt, th' obliging world will say
That my harsh usage help'd him on his way:
What! I suppose, I should have nursed his muse,
And with champagne have brighten'd up his views;
Then had he made me famed my whole life long,
And stunn'd my ears with gratitude and song.
Still should the father hear that I regret
Our joint misfortune—yes! I'll not forget."—
Thus they:—The father to his grave convey'd
The son he loved, and his last duties paid.
"There lies my boy," he cried, "of care bereft
And Heaven be praised, I've not a genius left:
No one among ye, sons! is doom'd to live
On high-raised hopes of what the great may give;
None, with exalted views and fortunes mean,
To die in anguish, or to live in spleen:
Your pious brother soon escaped the strife
Of such contention, but it cost his life;
You then, my sons, upon yourselves depend,
And in your own exertions find the friend."

TALE VI.

THE FRANK COURTSHIP.

Yes, faith, it is my cousin's duty to make a courtesy, and say, "Father, as it please you;" but for all that, cousin, let him be a handsome fellow, or else make another courtesy, and say, "Father, as it pleases me."
Much Ado about Nothing, act ii. sc. 1.

He cannot flatter, he!
An honest mind and plain—he must speak truth.
King Lear, act ii. sc. 2.

God hath given you one face, and you make yourselves another; you jig, you amble, you nick-name God's creatures, and make your wantonness your ignorance.
Hamlet, act iii. sc. 1.

What fire is in mine ears? Can this be true?
Am I contemn'd for pride and scorn so much?
Much Ado about Nothing, act ii. sc. 1.

Grave Jonas Kindred, Sybil Kindred's sire,
Was six feet high, and look'd six inches higher;
Erect, morose, determined, solemn, slow,
Who knew the man, could never cease to know;
His faithful spouse, when Jonas was not by,
Had a firm presence and a steady eye;
But with her husband dropp'd her look and tone,
And Jonas ruled unquestion'd and alone.
He read, and oft would quote the sacred words,
How pious husbands of their wives were lords;
Sarah called Abraham lord! and who could be,
So Jonas thought, a greater man than he?
Himself he view'd with undisguised respect,
And never pardon'd freedom or neglect.
They had one daughter, and this favourite child
Had oft the father of his spleen beguiled;
Soothed by attention from her early years,
She gain'd all wishes by her smiles or tears:
But Sybil then was in that playful time,
When contradiction is not held a crime;
When parents yield their children idle praise
For faults corrected in their after days.
Peace in the sober house of Jonas dwelt,
Where each his duty and his station felt:
Yet not that peace some favour'd mortals find,
In equal views and harmony of mind;
Not the soft peace that blesses those who love,
Where all with one consent in union move;
But it was that which one superior will
Commands, by making all inferiors still;
Who bids all murmurs, all objections cease,
And with imperious voice announces—Peace!
They were, to wit, a remnant of that crew,
Who, as their foes maintain, their sovereign slew
An independent race, precise, correct,
Who ever married in the kindred sect:
No son or daughter of their order wed
A friend to England's king who lost his head;
Cromwell was still their saint, and when they met,
They mourn'd that saints* were not our rulers yet.
Fix'd were their habits: they arose betimes,
Then pray'd their hour, and sang their party rhymes:
Their meals were plenteous, regular, and plain;
The trade of Jonas brought him constant gain;
Vender of hops and malt, of coals and corn—
And, like his father, he was merchant born:
Neat was their house; each table, chair and stool
Stood in its place, or moving moved by rule;
No lively print or picture graced the room;
A plain brown paper lent its decent gloom;
But here the eye, in glancing round, survey'd
A small recess that seem'd for china made;
Such pleasing pictures seem'd this pencill'd ware,
That few would search for nobler objects there—
Yet turn'd by chosen friends, and there appear'd
His stern, strong features, whom they all revered
For there in lofty air was seen to stand
The bold protector of the conquer'd land;
Drawn in that look with which he wept and swore,
Turn'd out the members, and made fast the door,
Ridding the house of every knave and drone,
Forced, though it grieved his soul, to rule alone.
The stern still smile each friend approving gave,
Then turn'd the view, and all again were grave.
There stood a clock, though small the owner's need,
For habit told when all things should proceed;
Few their amusements, but when friends appear'd,
They with the world's distress their spirits cheer'd
The nation's guilt, that would not long endure
The reign of men so modest and so pure:
Their town was large, and seldom pass'd a day
But some had fail'd, and others gone astray;
Clerks had absconded, wives eloped, girls flown
To Gretna Green, or sons rebellious grown;
Quarrels and fires arose;—and it was plain
The times were bad; the saints had ceased to reign!
A few yet lived to languish and to mourn
For good old manners never to return.

* This appellation is here used not ironically, nor with malignity; but it is taken merely to designate a morosely devout people, with peculiar austerity of manners.

Jonas had sisters, and of these was one
Who lost a husband and an only son;
Twelve months her sables she in sorrow wore,
And mourn'd so long, that she could mourn no more.
Distant from Jonas, and from all her race.
She now resided in a lively place;
There, by the sect unseen, at whist she play'd,
Nor was of churchmen or their church afraid:
If much of this the graver brother heard,
He something censured, but he little fear'd;
He knew her rich and frugal; for the rest
He felt no care, or, if he felt, suppress'd;
Nor for companion when she ask'd her niece,
Had he suspicions that disturb'd his peace;
Frugal and rich, these virtues as a charm
Preserved the thoughtful man from all alarm;
An infant yet, she soon would home return,
Nor stay the manners of the world to learn;
Meantime his boys would all his care engross,
And be his comforts if he felt the loss.

The sprightly Sybil, pleased and unconfined,
Felt the pure pleasure of the opening mind:
All here was gay and cheerful; all at home
Unvaried quiet, and unruffled gloom:
There were no changes, and amusements few;
Here all was varied, wonderful, and new:
There were plain meals, plain dresses, and grave looks;
Here, gay companions and amusing books:
And the young beauty soon began to taste
The light vocations of the scene she graced.

A man of business feels it as a crime
On calls domestic to consume his time;
Yet this grave man had not so cold a heart,
But with his daughter he was grieved to part:
And he demanded that in every year
The aunt and niece should at his house appear.

"Yes! we must go, my child, and by our dress
A grave conformity of mind express;
Must sing at meeting, and from cards refrain,
The more t' enjoy when we return again."

Thus spake the aunt, and the discerning child
Was pleased to learn how fathers are beguiled.
Her artful part the young dissembler took,
And from the matron caught th' approving look:
When thrice the friends had met, excuse was sent
For more delay, and Jonas was content;
Till a tall maiden by her sire was seen,
In all the bloom and beauty of sixteen;
He gazed admiring;—she, with visage prim,
Glanced an arch look of gravity on him;
For she was gay at heart, but wore disguise,
And stood a vestal in her father's eyes:
Pure, pensive, simple, sad; the damsel's heart,
When Jonas praised, reproved her for the part;
For Sybil, fond of pleasure, gay and light,
Had still a secret bias to the right;
Vain as she was—and flattery made her vain—
Her simulation gave her bosom pain.

Again return'd, the matron and the niece
Found the late quiet gave their joy increase;
The aunt, infirm, no more her visits paid,
But still with her sojourn'd the favourite maid.
Letters were sent when franks could be procured,
And when they could not, silence was endured;
All were in health, and if they older grew,
It seem'd a fact that none among them knew:
The aunt and niece still led a pleasant life,
And quiet days had Jonas and his wife.

Near him a widow dwelt of worthy fame,
Like his her manners, and her creed the same:
The wealth her husband left, her care retain'd
For one tall youth, and widow she remain'd;
His love respectful all her care repaid,
Her wishes watch'd, and her commands obey'd.

Sober he was and grave from early youth,
Mindful of forms, but more intent on truth;
In a light drab he uniformly dress'd,
And look serene th' unruffled mind express'd;
A hat with ample verge his brows o'erspread,
And his brown locks curl'd graceful on his head;
Yet might observers in his speaking eye
Some observation, some acuteness spy;
The friendly thought it keen, the treacherous deem'd it sly;
Yet not a crime could foe or friend detect,
His actions all were, like his speech, correct;
And they who jested on a mind so sound,
Upon his virtues must their laughter found;
Chaste, sober, solemn, and devout they named
Him who was thus, and not of *this* ashamed.

Such were the virtues Jonas found in one
In whom he warmly wish'd to find a son:
Three years had pass'd since he had Sybil seen;
But she was doubtless what she once had been,
Lovely and mild, obedient and discreet;
The pair must love whenever they should meet
Then ere the widow or her son should choose
Some happier maid, he would explain his views.
Now she, like him, was politic and shrewd,
With strong desire of lawful gain imbued
To all he said she bow'd with much respect,
Pleased to comply, yet seeming to reject;
Cool and yet eager, each admired the strength
Of the opponent, and agreed at length:
As a drawn battle shows to each a force,
Powerful as his, he honours it of course;
So in these neighbours, each the power discern'd
And gave the praise that was to each return'd.

Jonas now ask'd his daughter; and the aunt,
Though loath to lose her, was obliged to grant:—
But would not Sybil to the matron cling,
And fear to leave the shelter of her wing?
No! in the young there lives a love of change,
And to the easy they prefer the strange!
Then too the joys she once pursued with zeal,
From whist and visits sprung, she ceased to feel,
When with the matrons Sybil first sat down,
To cut for partners and to stake her crown,
This to the youthful maid preferment seem'd,
Who thought what woman she was then esteem'd
But in few years, when she perceived, indeed,
The real woman to the girl succeed,
No longer tricks and honours fill'd her mind,
But other feelings, not so well defined;
She then reluctant grew, and thought it hard
To sit and ponder o'er an ugly card;
Rather the nut tree shade the nymph preferr'd,
Pleased with the pensive gloom and evening bird
Thither, from company retired, she took
The silent walk, or read the favourite book

The father's letter, sudden, short, and kind,
Awaked her wonder, and disturb'd her mind;
She found new dreams upon her fancy seize
Wild roving thoughts and endless reveries

The parting came; and when the aunt perceived
The tears of Sybil, and how much she grieved,
To love for her that tender grief she laid,
That various, soft, contending passions made.
When Sybil rested in her father's arms
His pride exulted in a daughter's charms;
A maid accomplish'd he was pleased to find,
Nor seem'd the form more lovely than the mind:
But when the fit of pride and fondness fled,
He saw his judgment by his hopes misled;
High were the lady's spirits, far more free
Her mode of speaking than a maid's should be;
Too much, as Jonas thought, she seem'd to know,
And all her knowledge was disposed to show;
"Too gay her dress, like theirs who idly dote
On a young coxcomb, or a coxcomb's coat;
In foolish spirits when our friends appear,
And vainly grave when not a man is near."
Thus Jonas, adding to his sorrow blame,
And terms disdainful to his sister's name:—
"The sinful wretch has by her arts defiled
The ductile spirit of my darling child."
"The maid is virtuous," said the dame.—Quoth he,
"Let her give proof, by acting virtuously:
Is it in gaping when the elders pray?
In reading nonsense half a summer's day?
In those mock forms that she delights to trace,
Or her loud laughs in Hezekiah's face?
She—O Susannah!—to the world belongs;
She loves the follies of its idle throngs,
And reads soft tales of love, and sings love's softening songs.
But, as our friend is yet delay'd in town,
We must prepare her till the youth comes down.
You shall advise the maiden; I will threat;
Her fears and hopes may yield us comfort yet."
Now the grave father took the lass aside,
Demanding sternly, "Wilt thou be a bride?"
She answer'd, calling up an air sedate,
"I have not vow'd against the holy state."
"No folly, Sybil," said the parent; "know
What to their parents virtuous maidens owe
A worthy, wealthy youth, whom I approve,
Must thou prepare to honour and to love.
Formal to thee his air and dress may seem,
But the good youth is worthy of esteem;
Shouldst thou with rudeness treat him; of disdain
Should he with justice or of slight complain,
Or of one taunting speech give certain proof
Girl! I reject thee from my sober roof."
"My aunt," said Sybil, "will with pride protect
One whom a father can for this reject;
Nor shall a formal, rigid, soulless boy
My manners alter, or my views destroy!"
Jonas then lifted up his hands on high,
And uttering something 'twixt a groan and sigh,
Left the determined maid, her doubtful mother by.
"Hear me," she said; "incline thy heart, my child,
And fix thy fancy on a man so mild:
Thy father, Sybil, never could be moved
By one who loved him, or by one he loved
Union like ours is but a bargain made
By slave and tyrant—he will be obey'd;
Then calls the quiet, comfort;—but thy youth
Is mild by nature, and as frank as truth."
"But will he love?" said Sybil; "I am told
That these mild creatures are by nature cold."
"Alas!" the matron answer'd, "much I dread
That dangerous love by which the young are led!
That love is earthy; you the creature prize,
And trust your feelings and believe your eyes:
Can eyes and feelings inward worth descry?
No! my fair daughter, on our choice rely!
Your love, like that display'd upon the stage,
Indulged is folly, and opposed is rage;—
More prudent love our sober couples show,
All that to mortal beings, mortals owe;—
All flesh is grass—before you give a heart,
Remember, Sybil, that in death you part;
And should your husband die before your love,
What needless anguish must a widow prove!
No! my fair child, let all such visions cease;
Yield but esteem, and only try for peace."
"I must be loved," said Sybil; "I must see
The man in terrors who aspires to me;
At my forbidding frown, his heart must ache,
His tongue must falter, and his frame must shake.
And if I grant him at my feet to kneel,
What trembling, fearful pleasure must he feel!
Nay! such the raptures that my smiles inspire,
That reason's self must for a time retire."
"Alas! for good Josiah," said the dame,
"These wicked thoughts would fill his soul with shame;
He kneel and tremble at a thing of dust!
He cannot, child."—The child replied, "He must."
They ceased: the matron left her with a frown,
So Jonas met her when the youth came down:
"Behold," said he, "thy future spouse attends;
Receive him, daughter, as the best of friends;
Observe, respect him; humble be each word
That welcomes home thy husband and thy lord."
Forewarn'd, thought Sybil, with a bitter smile,
I shall prepare my manner and my style.
Ere yet Josiah enter'd on his task,
The father met him; "Deign to wear a mask
A few dull days, Josiah—but a few—
It is our duty, and the sex's due;
I wore it once, and every grateful wife
Repays it with obedience through her life:
Have no regard to Sybil's dress, have none
To her pert language, to her flippant tone:
Henceforward thou shalt rule unquestion'd and alone;
And she thy pleasure in thy looks shall seek—
How she shall dress, and whether she may speak."
A sober smile return'd the youth, and said,
"Can I cause fear, who am myself afraid?"
Sybil, meantime, sat thoughtful in her room,
And often wonder'd—"Will the creature come?
Nothing shall tempt, shall force me to bestow
My hand upon him, yet I wish to know."
The door unclosed, and she beheld her sire
Lead in the youth, then hasten to retire;
"Daughter, my friend: my daughter, friend,"—he cried,
And gave a meaning look, and stepp'd aside;
That look contain'd a mingled threat and prayer,
"Do take him, child,—offend him, if you dare."
The couple gazed—were silent, and the maid
Look'd in his face, to make the man afraid;
The man, unmoved, upon the maiden cast
A steady view—no salutation pass'd:
But in this instant Sybil's eye had seen
The tall fair person, and the still staid mien;

The glow that temperance o'er the cheek had spread,
Where the soft down half veil'd the purest red;
And the serene deportment that proclaim'd
A heart unspotted, and a life unblamed:
But then with these she saw attire too plain,
The pale brown coat, though worn without a stain;
The formal air, and something of the pride
That indicates the wealth it seems to hide;
And looks that were not, she conceived, exempt
From a proud pity, or a sly contempt.
Josiah's eyes had their employment too,
Engaged and soften'd by so bright a view;
A fair and meaning face, an eye of fire,
That check'd the bold, and made the free retire:
But then with these he mark'd the studied dress
And lofty air, that scorn or pride express;
With that insidious look, that seem'd to hide
In an affected smile the scorn and pride;
And if his mind the virgin's meaning caught,
He saw a foe with treacherous purpose fraught—
Captive the heart to take, and to reject it caught.
Silent they sat:—thought Sybil, that he seeks
Something, no doubt; I wonder if he speaks:
Scarcely she wonder'd, when these accents fell
Slow in her ear—"Fair maiden, art thou well?"
"Art thou physician?" she replied; "my hand,
My pulse, at least, shall be at thy command."
She said—and saw, surprised, Josiah kneel,
And gave his lips the offer'd pulse to feel;
The rosy colour rising in her cheek,
Seem'd that surprise unmix'd with wrath to speak;
Then sternness she assumed, and—"Doctor, tell,
Thy words cannot alarm me—am I well?"
"Thou art," said he; "and yet thy dress so light,
I do conceive, some danger must excite:"
"In whom?" said Sybil, with a look demure:
"In more," said he, "than I expect to cure.
I, in thy light luxuriant robe, behold
Want and excess, abounding and yet cold;
Here needed, there display'd, in many a wanton fold:
Both health and beauty, learned authors show,
From a just medium in our clothing flow."
"Proceed, good doctor; if so great my need,
What is thy fee? Good doctor! pray proceed."
"Large is my fee, fair lady, but I take
None till some progress in my cure I make:
Thou hast disease, fair maiden; thou art vain;
Within that face sit insult and disdain;
Thou art enamour'd of thyself; my art
Can see the naughty malice of thy heart:
With a strong pleasure would thy bosom move,
Were I to own thy power, and ask thy love;
And such thy beauty, damsel, that I might,
But for thy pride, feel danger in thy sight,
And lose my present peace in dreams of vain delight."
"And can thy patients,' said the nymph, "endure
Physic like this? and wil. it work a cure?"
'Such is my hope, fair damsel; thou, I find,
Hast the true tokens of a noble mind;
But the world wins thee, Sybil, and thy joys
Are placed in trifles, fashions, follies, toys;
Thou hast sought pleasure in the world around,
That in thine own pure bosom should be found:
Did all that world admire thee, praise, and love,
Could it the least of nature's pains remove?
Could it for errors, follies, sins atone,
Or give thee comfort, thoughtful and alone?
It has, believe me, maid, no power to charm
Thy soul from sorrow, or thy flesh from harm:
Turn then, fair creature, from a world of sin,
And seek the jewel happiness within."
"Speak'st thou at meeting?" said the nymph "thy speech
Is that of mortal very prone to teach;
But wouldst thou, doctor, from the patient learn
Thine own disease?—The cure is thy concern"
"Yea, with good will."—"Then know, 'tis thy complaint,
That, for a sinner, thou'rt too much a saint;
Hast too much show of the sedate and pure,
And without cause art formal and demure:
This makes a man unsocial, unpolite;
Odious when wrong, and insolent if right.
Thou mayst be good, but why should goodness be
Wrapt in a garb of such formality?
Thy person well might please a damsel's eye,
In decent habit with a scarlet dye;
But, jest apart—what virtue canst thou trace
In that broad brim that hides thy sober face?
Does that long-skirted drab, that over-nice
And formal clothing, prove a scorn of vice?
Then for thine accent—what in sound can be
So void of grace as dull monotony?
Love has a thousand varied notes to move
The human heart;—thou mayst not speak of love
Till thou hast cast thy formal ways aside,
And those becoming youth and nature tried:
Not till exterior freedom, spirit, ease,
Prove it thy study and delight to please;
Not till these follies meet thy just disdain,
While yet thy virtues and thy worth remain."
"This is severe!—O! maiden, wilt not thou
Something for habits, manners, modes, allow?"—
"Yes! but allowing much, I much require,
In my behalf, for manners, modes, attire!"
"True, lovely Sybil; and, this point agreed,
Let me to those of greater weight proceed:
Thy father!"—"Nay," she quickly interposed,
"Good doctor, here our conference is closed!"
Then left the youth, who, lost in his retreat,
Pass'd the good matron on her garden-seat;
His looks were troubled, and his air, once mild
And calm, was hurried:—"My audacious child!"
Exclaim'd the dame, "I read what she has done
In thy displeasure—Ah! the thoughtless one!
But yet, Josiah, to my stern good man
Speak of the maid as mildly as you can:
Can you not seem to woo a little while
The daughter's will, the father to beguile!
So that his wrath in time may wear away;
Will you preserve our peace, Josiah? say."
"Yes! my good neighbour," said the gentle youth,
"Rely securely on my care and truth;
And should thy comfort with my efforts cease,
And only then—perpetual is thy peace."
The dame had doubts: she well his virtues knew,
His deeds were friendly, and his words were true
"But to address this vixen is a task
He is ashamed to take, and I to ask."
Soon as the father from Josiah learn'd
What pass'd with Sybil, he the truth discern'd.

'He loves," the man exclaim'd, "he loves, 'tis plain,
The thoughtless girl, and shall he love in vain?
She may be stubborn, but she shall be tried,
Born as she is of wilfulness and pride."
With anger fraught, but willing to persuade,
The wrathful father met the smiling maid
"Sybil," said he, "I long, and yet I dread
To know thy conduct; hath Josiah fled?
And, grieved and fretted by thy scornful air
For his lost peace betaken him to prayer?
Couldst thou his pure and modest mind distress,
By vile remarks upon his speech, address,
Attire, and voice?"—"All this I must confess."—
"Unhappy child! what labour will it cost
To win him back!"—"I do not think him lost."—
"Courts he then, trifler! insult and disdain?"—
"No: but from these he courts me to refrain."
"Then hear me, Sybil; should Josiah leave
Thy father's house?"—"My father's child would grieve."—
"That is of grace, and if he come again
To speak of love?"—"I might from grief refrain."—
"Then wilt thou, daughter, our design embrace?"—
"Can I resist it, if it be of grace?"
"Dear child! in three plain words thy mind express;
Wilt thou have this good youth?"—"Dear father! yes."

TALE VII.

THE WIDOW'S TALE.

Ah me! for aught that I could ever read,
Or ever hear by tale or history,
The course of true love never did run smooth:
But either it was different in blood,
Or else misgrafted in respect of years,
Or else it stood upon the choice of friends;
Or if there were a sympathy in choice,
War, death, or sickness did lay siege to it.
Midsummer Night's Dream, act i. sc. 1.

O! thou didst then ne'er love so heartily,
If thou rememberest not the slightest folly
That ever love did make thee run into.
As You Like It, act iii. sc. 4.

Cry the man mercy; love him, take his offer.
Ibid. act iii. sc. 5.

To farmer Moss, in Langar Vale, came down
His only daughter, from her school in town;
A tender, timid maid; who knew not how
To pass a pig-sty, or to face a cow:
Smiling she came, with petty talents graced,
A fair complexion, and a slender waist.
Used to spare meals, disposed in manner pure,
Her father's kitchen she could ill endure;
Where by the steaming beef he hungry sat,
And laid at once a pound upon his plate:
Hot from the field, her eager brother seized
An equal part, and hunger's rage appeased;
The air, surcharged with moisture, flagg'd around
And the offended damsel sigh'd and frown'd;
The swelling fat in lumps conglomerate laid,
And fancy's sickness seized the loathing maid:
But when the men beside their station took,
The maidens with them, and with these the cook
When one huge wooden bowl before them stood,
Fill'd with huge balls, of farinaceous food;
With bacon, mass saline, where never lean
Beneath the brown and bristly rind was seen
When from a single horn the party drew
Their copious draughts of heavy ale and new;
When the course cloth she saw, with many a stain
Soil'd by rude hinds who cut and came again,
She could not breathe; but, with a heavy sigh,
Rein'd the fair neck, and shut th' offended eye;
She minced the sanguine flesh in frustums fine,
And wonder'd much to see the creatures dine:
When she resolved her father's heart to move,
If hearts of farmers were alive to love.
She now entreated by herself to sit
In the small parlour, if papa thought fit,
And there to dine, to read, to work alone.
"No!" said the farmer, in an angry tone;
"These are your school-taught airs; your mother's pride
Would send you there, but I am now your guide.
Arise betimes, our early meal prepare,
And this despatch'd, let business be your care;
Look to the lasses, let there not be one
Who lacks attention, till her tasks be done;
In every household work your portion take,
And what you make not, see that others make:
At leisure times attend the wheel, and see
The whitening web he sprinkled on the Lea;
When thus employ'd, should our young neighbour view
A useful lass, you may have more to do."
Dreadful were these commands; but worse than these
The parting hint, a farmer could not please:
'Tis true she had without abhorrence seen
Young Harry Carr, when he was smart and clean;
But to be married, be a farmer's wife,
A slave! a drudge! she could not, for her life.
With swimming eyes the fretful nymph withdrew,
And, deeply sighing, to her chamber flew;
There on her knees, to Heaven she grieving pray'd
For change of prospect to a tortured maid
Harry, a youth whose late departed sire
Had left him all industrious men require,
Saw the pale beauty; and her shape and air
Engaged him much, and yet he must forbear:
"For my small farm what can the damsel do?"
He said; then stopp'd to take another view:
"Pity so sweet a lass will nothing learn
Of household cares; for what can beauty earn
By those small arts which they at school attain,
That keep them useless, and yet make them vain?"
This luckless damsel look'd the village round,
To find a friend, and one was quickly found;
A pensive widow, whose mild air and dress
Pleased the sad nymph, who wish'd her soul's distress
To one so seeming kind, confiding, to confess.
"What lady that?" the anxious lass inquired,
Who then beheld the one she most admired:
"Here," said the brother, "are no ladies seen—
That is a widow dwelling on the green;
A dainty dame, who can but barely live
On her poor pittance, yet contrives to give;

She happier days has known, but seems at ease,
And you may call her lady, if you please:
But if you wish, good sister, to improve,
You shall see twenty better worth your love."
These Nancy met; but, spite of all they taught,
This useless widow was the one she sought:
The father growl'd; but said he knew no harm
In such connexion that could give alarm:
"And if we thwart the trifler in her course,
'Tis odds against us she will take a worse."
Then met the friends; the widow heard the sigh
That ask'd at once compassion and reply.
"Would you, my child, converse with one so poor,
Yours were the kindness—yonder is my door;
And, save the time that we in public pray,
From that poor cottage I but rarely stray."
There went the nymph, and made her strong complaints,
Painting her wo as injured feeling paints.
"O, dearest friend! do think how one must feel,
Shock'd all day long, and sicken'd every meal!
Could you behold our kitchen, (and to you
A scene so shocking must indeed be new,)
A mind like yours, with true refinement graced,
Would let no vulgar scenes pollute your taste;
And yet, in truth, from such a polish'd mind
All base ideas must resistance find,
And sordid pictures from the fancy pass,
As the breath startles from the polish'd glass.
"Here you enjoy a sweet romantic scene,
Without so pleasant, and within so clean;
These twining jess'mines, what delicious gloom
And soothing fragrance yield they to the room!
What lovely garden! there you oft retire,
And tales of wo and tenderness admire:
In that neat case, your books, in order placed,
Soothe the full soul, and charm the cultured taste;
And thus, while all about you wears a charm,
How must you scorn the farmer and the farm!"
The widow smiled, and "Know you not," said she,
"How much these farmers scorn or pity me;
Who see what you admire, and laugh at all they see?
True, their opinion alters not my fate,
By falsely judging of an humble state:
This garden, you with such delight behold,
Tempts not a feeble dame who dreads the cold;
These plants, which please so well your livelier sense,
To mine but little of their sweets dispense;
Books soon are painful to my failing sight,
And oftener read from duty than delight;
(Yet let me own, that I can sometimes find
Both joy and duty in the act combined;)
But view me rightly, you will see no more
Than a poor female, willing to be poor;
Happy indeed, but not in books nor flowers,
Not in fair dreams, indulged in earlier hours,
Of never-tasted joys; such visions shun,
My youthful friend, nor scorn the farmer's son."
"Nay," said the damsel, nothing pleased to see
A friend's advice could like a father's be;
'Bless'd in your cottage, you must surely smile
At those who live in our detested style:
To my Lucinda's sympathizing heart
Could I my prospects and my griefs impart,
She would console me; but I dare not show
Ills that would wound her tender soul to know:
And I confess, it shocks my pride to tell
The secrets of the prison where I dwell;
For that dear maiden would be shock'd to feel
The secrets I should shudder to reveal;
When told her friend was by a parent ask'd,
Fed you the swine? Good heaven! how I am task'd
What! can you smile! Ah! smile not at the grief
That woos your pity and demands relief."
"Trifles, my love; you take a false alarm;
Think, I beseech you, better of the farm:
Duties in every state demand your care,
And light are those that will require it there:
Fix on the youth a favouring eye, and these,
To him pertaining, or as his, will please."
"What words," the lass replied, "offend my ear
Try you my patience? Can you be sincere?
And am I told a willing hand to give
To a rude farmer, and with rustic live?
Far other fate was yours: some gentle youth
Admired your beauty, and avow'd his truth;
The power of love prevail'd, and freely both
Gave the fond heart, and pledged the binding oath
And then the rival's plot, the parent's power,
And jealous fears, drew on the happy hour:
Ah! let not memory lose the blissful view,
But fairly show what love has done for you."
"Agreed, my daughter, what my heart has known
Of love's strange power shall be with frankness shown:
But let me warn you, that experience finds
Few of the scenes that lively hope designs."
"Mysterious all," said Nancy; "you, I know,
Have suffer'd much; now deign the grief to show
I am your friend, and so prepare my heart
In all your sorrows to receive a part."
The widow answer'd, "I had once, like you,
Such thoughts of love; no dream is more untrue:
You judge it fated and decreed to dwell
In youthful hearts, which nothing can expel,
A passion doom'd to reign, and irresistible.
The struggling mind, when once subdued, in vain
Rejects the fury or defies the pain;
The strongest reason fails the flame t' allay,
And resolution droops and faints away:
Hence, when the destined lovers meet, they prove
At once the force of this all-powerful love:
Each from that period feels the mutual smart,
Nor seeks to cure it: heart is changed for heart;
Nor is there peace till they delighted stand,
And, at the altar, hand is joined to hand.
"Alas! my child, there are who, dreaming so,
Waste their fresh youth, and waking feel the wo;
There is no spirit sent the heart to move
With such prevailing and alarming love;
Passion to reason will submit; or why
Should wealthy maids the poorest swains deny?
Or how could classes and degrees create
The slightest bar to such resistless fate?
Yet high and low, you see, forbear to mix;
No beggars' eyes the heart of kings transfix;
And who but amorous peers or nobles sigh
When titled beauties pass triumphant by?
For reason wakes, proud wishes to reprove;
You cannot hope, and therefore dare not love:
All would be safe, did we at first inquire,
'Does reason sanction what our hearts desire?'
But quitting precept, let example show
What joys from love uncheck'd by prudence flow

"A youth my father in his office placed,
Of humble fortune, but with sense and taste;
But he was thin and pale, had downcast looks;
He studied much, and pored upon his books:
Confused he was when seen, and, when he saw
Me or my sisters, would in haste withdraw;
And had this youth departed with the year,
His loss had cost us neither sigh nor tear.
"But with my father still the youth remain'd
And more reward and kinder notice gain'd:
He often, reading, to the garden stray'd,
Where I by books or musing was delay'd;
This to discourse in summer evenings led,
Of these same evenings, or of what we read:
On such occasions we were much alone;
But, save the look, the manner, and the tone,
(These might have meaning,) all that we discuss'd
We could with pleasure to a parent trust.
"At length 'twas friendship; and my friend and I
Said we were happy, and began to sigh:
My sisters first, and then my father, found
That we were wandering o'er enchanted ground;
But he had troubles in his own affairs,
And would not bear addition to his cares:
With pity moved, yet angry, 'Child,' said he,
'Will you embrace contempt and beggary'
Can you endure to see each other cursed
By want, of every human wo the worst?
Warring for ever with distress, in dread
Either of begging or of wanting bread;
While poverty, with unrelenting force,
Will your own offspring from your love divorce:
They, through your folly, must be doom'd to pine,
And you deplore your passion, or resign;
For, if it die, what good will then remain?
And if it live, it doubles every pain.'"
"But you were true," exclaim'd the lass, "and fled
The tyrant's power who fill'd your soul with dread?"
"But," said the smiling friend, "he fill'd my mouth with bread:
And in what other place that bread to gain
We long consider'd, and we sought in vain
This was my twentieth year: at thirty-five
Our hope was fainter, yet our love alive;
So many years in anxious doubt had pass'd."
"Then," said the damsel, "you were bless'd at last?"
A smile again adorn'd the widow's face,
But soon a starting tear usurp'd its place.
"Slow pass'd the heavy years, and each had more
Pains and vexations than the years before
My father fail'd; his family was rent,
And to new states his grieving daughters sent;
Each to more thriving kindred found a way,
Guests without welcome—servants without pay;
Our parting hour was grievous; still I feel
The sad, sweet converse at our final meal;
Our father then reveal'd his former fears,
Cause of his sternness, and then join'd our tears;
Kindly he strove our feelings to repress,
But died, and left us heirs to his distress
The rich, as humble friends, my sisters chose,
I with a wealthy widow sought repose;
Who with a chilling frown her friend received
Bade me rejoice, and wonder'd that I grieved;
In vain my anxious lover tried his skill
To rise in life, he was dependent still;
We met in grief, nor can I paint the fears
Of these unhappy, troubled trying years:
Our dying hopes and stronger fears between,
We felt no season peaceful or serene;
Our fleeting joys, like meteors in the night,
Shone on our gloom with inauspicious light;
And then domestic sorrows, till the mind,
Worn with distresses, to despair inclined;
Add too the ill that from the passion flows,
When its contemptuous frown the world bestows,
The peevish spirit caused by long delay,
When being gloomy we contemn the gay,
When, being wretched, we incline to hate
And censure others in a happier state;
Yet loving still, and still compell'd to move
In the sad labyrinth of lingering love:
While you, exempt from want, despair, alarm,
May wed—O! take the farmer and the farm."
"Nay," said the nymph, "joy smiled on you at last?"
"Smiled for a moment," she replied, "and pass'd:
My lover still the same dull means pursued,
Assistant call'd, but kept in servitude;
His spirits wearied in the prime of life,
By fears and wishes in eternal strife;
At length he urged impatient, 'Now consent;
With thee united, fortune may relent.'
I paused, consenting; but a friend arose,
Pleased a fair view, though distant, to disclose;
From the rough ocean we beheld a gleam
Of joy, as transient as the joys we dream;
By lying hopes deceived, my friend retired
And sail'd—was wounded—reach'd us—and expired!
You shall behold his grave, and when I die,
There—but 'tis folly—I request to lie."
"Thus," said the lass, "to joy you bade adieu
But how a widow?—that cannot be true:
Or was it force, in some unhappy hour,
That placed you, grieving, in a tyrant's power?"
"Force, my young friend, when forty years are fled,
Is what a woman seldom has to dread;
She needs no brazen locks nor guarding walls,
And seldom comes a lover though she calls:
Yet moved by fancy, one approved my face,
Though time and tears had wrought it much disgrace.
"The man I married was sedate and meek,
And spoke of love as men in earnest speak:
Poor as I was, he ceaseless sought, for years,
A heart in sorrow and a face in tears;
That heart I gave not; and 'twas long before
I gave attention, and then nothing more;
But in my breast some grateful feeling rose
For one whose love so sad a subject chose;
Till long delaying, fearing to repent,
But grateful still, I gave a cold assent.
"Thus we were wed; no fault had I to find,
And he but one; my heart could not be kind:
Alas! of every early hope bereft,
There was no fondness in my bosom left;
So had I told him, but had told in vain,
He lived but to indulge me and complain:
His was this cottage, he enclosed this ground,
And planted all these blooming shrubs around,
He to my room these curious trifles brought,
And with assiduous love my pleasure sought:
He lived to please me, and I oftimes strove,
Smiling, to thank his unrequited love:

'Teach me,' he cried, 'that pensive mind to ease,
For all my pleasure is the hope to please.'
"Serene, though heavy, were the days we spent,
Yet kind each word, and generous each intent;
But his dejection lessen'd every day,
And to a placid kindness died away;
In tranquil ease we pass'd our latter years,
By griefs untroubled, unassail'd by fears.
"Let not romantic views your bosom sway,
Yield to your duties, and their call obey:
Fly not a youth, frank, honest, and sincere;
Observe his merits, and his passion hear!
'Tis true, no hero, but a farmer sues—
Slow in his speech, but worthy in his views;
With him you cannot that affliction prove
That rends the bosom of the poor in love:
Health, comfort, competence, and cheerful days,
Your friends' approval, and your father's praise,
Will crown the deed, and you escape *their* fate
Who plan so wildly, and are wise too late."
The damsel heard; at first th' advice was strange,
Yet wrought a happy, nay, a speedy change:
'I have no care," she said, when next they met,
"But one may wonder he is silent yet:
He looks around him with his usual stare,
And utters nothing—not that I shall care."
This pettish humour pleased th' experienced friend—
None need despair whose silence can offend;
"Should I," resumed the thoughtful lass, "consent
To hear the man, the man may now repent:
Think you my sighs shall call him from the plough,
Or give one hint, that 'You may woo me now?'"
"Persist, my love," replied the friend, "and gain
A parent's praise, *that* cannot be in vain."
The father saw the change, but not the cause,
And gave the alter'd maid his fond applause:
The coarser manners she in part removed,
In part endured, improving and improved
She spoke of household works, she rose betimes,
And said neglect and indolence were crimes;
The various duties of their life she weigh'd,
And strict attention to her dairy paid;
The names of servants now familiar grew
And fair Lucindas from her mind withdrew:
As prudent travellers for their ease assume
Their modes and language to whose lands they come:
So to the farmer this fair lass inclined,
Gave to the business of the farm her mind;
To useful arts she turn'd her hand and eye;
And by her manners told him—"You may try."
Th' observing lover more attention paid,
With growing pleasure, to the alter'd maid;
He fear'd to lose her, and began to see
That a slim beauty might a helpmate be:
'Twixt hope and fear he now the lass address'd,
And in his Sunday robe his love express'd:
She felt no chilling dread, no thrilling joy,
Nor was too quickly kind, too slowly coy;
But still she lent an unreluctant ear
To all the rural business of the year;
Till love's strong hopes endured no more delay,
And Harry ask'd, and Nancy named the day.
"A happy change! my boy," the father cried:
"How lost your sister all her school-day pride?"
The youth replied, "It is the widow's deed:
The cure is perfect, and was wrought with speed."—
"And comes there, boy, this benefit of books,
Of that smart dress, and of those dainty looks?
We must be kind; some offerings from the farm
To the white cot will speak our feelings warm;
Will show that people, when they know the fact
Where they have judged severely, can retract.
Oft have I smiled, when I beheld her pass
With cautious step, as if she hurt the grass,
Where if a snail's retreat she chanced to storm,
She look'd as begging pardon of the worm;
And what, said I, still laughing at the view,
Have these weak creatures in the world to do?
But some are made for action, some to speak;
And, while she looks so pitiful and meek,
Her words are weighty, though her nerves are weak."
Soon told the village bells the rite was done,
That join'd the school-bred miss and farmer's son;
Her former habits some slight scandal raised,
But real worth was soon perceived and praised;
She, her neat taste imparted to the farm,
And he, th' improving skill and vigorous arm.

TALE VIII.

THE MOTHER.

What though you have beauty,
Must you be therefore proud and pitiless?
As You Like It, act iii. sc. 5.

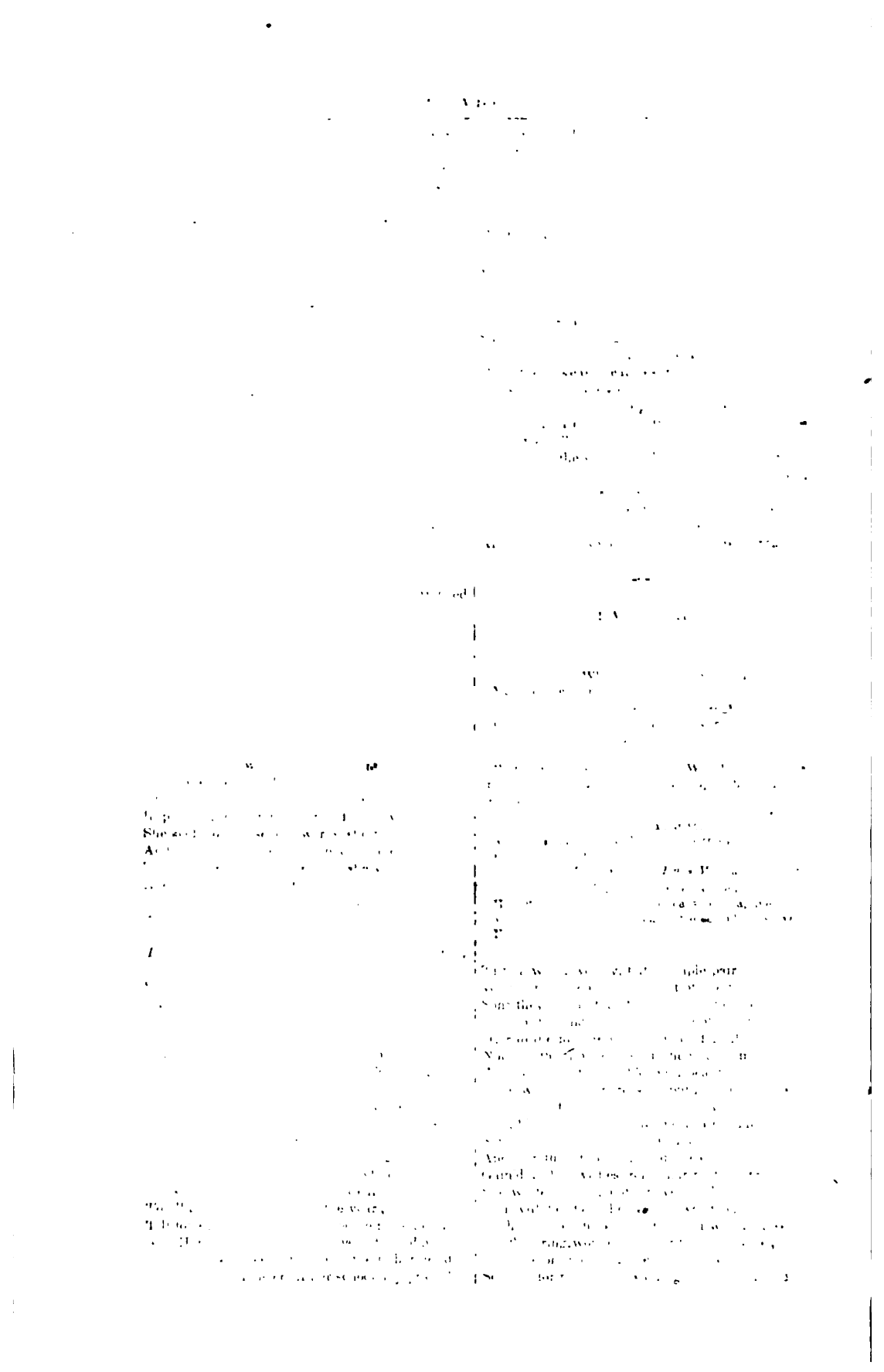
I would not marry her, though she were endow'd with all that Adam had left him before he transgress'd.
Ibid.

Wilt thou love such a woman? What! to make thee an instrument, and play false strains upon thee!—Not to be endured
Ibid.

Your son,
As mad in folly, lack'd the sense to know
Her estimation hence.
All's Well that Ends Well, act v. sc. 3.

Be this sweet Helen's knell:
He left a wife whose words all ears took captive,
Whose dear perfection, hearts that scorn'd to serve
Humbly call'd mistress.
Ibid.

THERE was a worthy, but a simple pair,
Who nursed a daughter fairest of the fair:
Sons they had lost, and she alone remain'd,
Heir to the kindness they had all obtain'd;
Heir to the fortune they design'd for all,
Nor had th' allotted portion then been small;
But now, by fate enrich'd with beauty rare,
They watch'd their treasure with peculiar care
The fairest features they could early trace,
And, blind with love, saw merit in her face—
Saw virtue, wisdom, dignity, and grace:
And Dorothea, from her infant years,
Gain'd all her wishes from their pride or fears:
She wrote a billet, and a novel read,
And with her fame her vanity was fed;
Each word, each look, each action was a cause
For flattering wonder, and for fond applause;
She rode or danced, and ever glanced around,
Seeking for praise, and smiling when she found



THE MOTHER.

UNIV OF
CALIFORNIA

The yielding pair to her petitions gave
An humble friend to be a civil slave;
Who for a poor support herself resign'd,
To the base toil of a dependent mind:
By nature cold, our heiress stoop'd to art,
To gain the credit of a tender heart.
Hence at her door must suppliant paupers stand,
To bless the bounty of her beauteous hand:
And now her education all complete,
She talk'd of virtuous love and union sweet;
She was indeed by no soft passion moved,
But wish'd, with all her soul, to be beloved.
Here on the favour'd beauty fortune smiled;
Her chosen husband was a man so mild,
So humbly temper'd, so intent to please,
It quite distress'd her to remain at ease,
Without a cause to sigh, without pretence to tease:
She tried his patience in a thousand modes,
And tired it not upon the roughest roads.
Pleasures she sought, and, disappointed, sigh'd
For joys, she said, "to her alone denied;
And she was "sure her parents, if alive,
Would many comforts for their child contrive."
The gentle husband bade her name him one;
"No—that," she answer'd, "should for her be done;
How could she say what pleasures were around?
But she was certain many might be found."—
"Would she some sea-port, Weymouth, Scarborough, grace?"—
"He knew she hated every watering place."—
"The town?"—"What! now 'twas empty, joyless, dull?"
—"In winter?"—"No; she liked it worse when full."
She talk'd of building—"Would she plan a room?"
"No! she could live, as he desired, in gloom."
"Call then our friends and neighbours."—"He might call,
And they might come and fill his ugly hall;
A noisy vulgar set, he knew she scorn'd them all."
"Then might their two dear girls their time employ,
And their improvement yield a solid joy."—
'Solid indeed! and heavy—O! the bliss
Of teaching letters to a lisping miss!"—
"My dear, my gentle Dorothea, say,
Can I oblige you?"—"You may go away.'
Twelve heavy years this patient soul sustain'd
This wasp's attacks, and then her praise obtain'd,
Graved on a marble tomb, where he at peace remain'd.

Two daughters wept their loss; the one a child
With a plain face, strong sense, and temper mild,
Who keenly felt the mother's angry taunt,
'Thou art the image of thy pious aunt."
Long time had Lucy wept her slighted face,
And then began to smile at her disgrace.
Her father's sister who the world had seen
Near sixty years when Lucy saw sixteen,
Begg'd the plain girl: the gracious mother smiled,
And freely gave her grieved but passive child;
nd with her elder born, the beauty bless'd,
is parent rested, if such minds can rest:
No miss her waxen babe could so admire,
Nurse with such care, or with such pride attire;
They were companions meet, with equal mind,
Bless'd with one love, and to one point inclined;
Beauty to keep, adorn, increase, and guard,
Was their sole care, and had its full reward:
In rising splendour with the one it reign'd,
And in the other was by care sustain'd,
The daughter's charms increased, the parent's yet remain'd.
Leave we these ladies to their daily care,
To see how meekness and discretion fare:—
A village maid, unvex'd by want or love,
Could not with more delight than Lucy move;
The village lark, high mounted in the spring,
Could not with purer joy than Lucy sing;
Her cares all light, her pleasures all sincere,
Her duty joy, and her companion dear;
In tender friendship and in true respect
Lived aunt and niece, no flattery, no neglect—
They read, walk'd, visited—together pray'd,
Together slept the matron and the maid:
There was such goodness, such pure nature seen
In Lucy's looks, a manner so serene;
Such harmony in motion, speech, and air,
That without fairness she was more than fair:
Had more than beauty in each speaking grace
That lent their cloudless glory to the face;
Where mild good sense in placid looks were shown,
And felt in every bosom but her own.
The one presiding feature in her mind,
Was the pure meekness of a will resign'd;
A tender spirit, freed from all pretence
Of wit, and pleased in mild benevolence;
Bless'd in protecting fondness she reposed,
With every wish indulged though undisclosed;
But love, like zephyr on the limpid lake,
Was now the bosom of the maid to shake,
And in that gentle mind a gentle strife to make.

Among their chosen friends, a favour'd few,
The aunt and niece a youthful rector knew;
Who, though a younger brother, might address
A younger sister, fearless of success:
His friends a lofty race, their native pride
At first display'd, and their assent denied;
But, pleased such virtues and such love to trace,
They own'd she would adorn the loftiest race.
The aunt, a mother's caution to supply,
Had watch'd the youthful priest with jealous eye
And, anxious for her charge, had view'd unseen
The cautious life that keeps the conscience clean.
In all she found him all she wish'd to find,
With slight exception of a lofty mind;
A certain manner that express'd desire
To be received as brother to the 'squire.
Lucy's meek eye had beam'd with many a tear,
Lucy's soft heart had beat with many a fear,
Before he told (although his looks, she thought,
Had oft confess'd) that he her favour sought:
But when he kneel'd, (she wish'd him not to kneel,)
And spoke the fears and hopes that lovers feel;
When too the prudent aunt herself confess'd,
Her wishes on the gentle youth would rest;
The maiden's eye with tender passion beam'd,
She dwelt with fondness on the life she schemed
The household cares, the soft and lasting ties
Of love, with all his binding charities;
Their village taught, consoled, assisted, fed,
Till the young zealot tears of pleasure shed.

But would her mother? Ah! she fear'd it wrong
To have indulged these forward hopes so long;

Her mother loved, but was not used to grant
Favours so freely as her gentle aunt.—
Her gentle aunt, with smiles that angels wear,
Dispell'd her Lucy's apprehensive tear:
Her prudent foresight the request had made
To one whom none could govern, few persuade;
She doubted much if one in earnest wooed
A girl with not a single charm endued;
The sister's nobler views she then declared,
And what small sum for Lucy could be spared;
"If more than this the foolish priest requires,
Tell him," she wrote, "to check his vain desires."
At length, with many a cold expression mix'd,
With many a sneer on girls so fondly fix'd,
There came a promise—should they not repent,
But take with grateful minds the portion meant,
And wait the sister's day—the mother might consent.

And here, might pitying hope o'er truth prevail,
Or love o'er fortune, we would end our tale:
For who more bless'd than youthful pair removed
From fear of want—by mutual friends approved—
Short time to wait, and in that time to live
With all the pleasures hope and fancy give;
Their equal passion raised on just esteem,
When reason sanctions all that love can dream?

Yes! reason sanctions what stern fate denies:
The early prospect in the glory dies,
As the soft smiles on dying infants play
In their mild features, and then pass away.

The beauty died, ere she could yield her hand
In the high marriage by the mother plann'd:
Who grieved indeed, but found a vast relief
In a cold heart, that ever warr'd with grief.

Lucy was present when her sister died,
Heiress to duties that she ill supplied:
There were no mutual feelings, sister arts,
No kindred taste, nor intercourse of hearts;
When in the mirror play'd the matron's smile,
The maiden's thoughts were travelling all the while;
And when desired to speak, she sigh'd to find
Her pause offended; "Envy made her blind:
Tasteless she was, nor had a claim in life
Above the station of a rector's wife;
Yet as an heiress, she must shun disgrace,
Although no heiress to her mother's face:
It is your duty," said th' imperious dame,
("Advanced your fortune,) to advance your name,
And with superior rank, superior offers claim:
Your sister's lover, when his sorrows die,
May look upon you, and for favour sigh
Nor can you offer a reluctant hand;
His birth is noble, and his seat is grand."

Alarm'd was Lucy, was in tears; "A fool!
Was she a child in love? a miss at school?
Doubts any mortal, if a change of state
Dissolves all claims and ties of earlier date?"

The rector doubted, for he came to mourn
A sister dead, and with a wife return:
Lucy with heart unchanged received the youth,
True in herself, confiding in his truth;
But own'd her mother's change: the haughty dame
Pour'd strong contempt upon the youthful flame;
She firmly vow'd her purpose to pursue,
Judged her own cause, and bade the youth adieu!
The lover begg'd, insisted, urged his pain,
His brother wrote to threaten and complain,
Her sister, reasoning, proved the promise made,
Lucy appealing to a parent pray'd;
But all opposed th' event that she design'd,
And all in vain; she never changed her mind,
But coldly answer'd in her wonted way,
That she "would rule, and Lucy must obey."

With peevish fear, she saw her health decline,
And cried, "O! monstrous, for a man to pine;
But if your foolish heart must yield to love,
Let him possess it whom I now approve;
This is my pleasure."—Still the rector came
With larger offers and with bolder claim;
But the stern lady would attend no more,
She frown'd, and rudely pointed to the door,
Whate'er he wrote, he saw unread return'd,
And he, indignant, the dishonour spurn'd;
Nay, fix'd suspicion where he might confide,
And sacrificed his passion to his pride.

Lucy, meantime, though threaten'd and distress'd
Against her marriage made a strong protest:
All was domestic war: the aunt rebell'd
Against the sovereign will, and was expell'd,
And every power was tried, and every art,
To bend to falsehood one determined heart,
Assail'd, in patience it received the shock,
Soft as the wave, unshaken as the rock:
But while th' unconquer'd soul endures the storm
Of angry fate, it preys upon the form;
With conscious virtue she resisted still,
And conscious love gave vigour to her will
But Lucy's trial was at hand; with joy
The mother cried, "Behold your constant boy—
Thursday—was married: take the paper, sweet,
And read the conduct of your reverend cheat;
See with what pomp of coaches, in what crowd
The creature married—of his falsehood proud!
False, did I say?—at least no whining fool;
And thus will hopeless passions ever cool:
But shall his bride your single state reproach?
No! give him crowd for crowd, and coach for coach.
O! you retire; reflect then, gentle miss,
And gain some spirit in a cause like this."

Some spirit Lucy gain'd; a steady soul,
Defying all persuasion, all control:
In vain reproach, derision, threats were tried;
The constant mind all outward force defied,
By vengeance vainly urged, in vain assail'd by pride;
Fix'd in her purpose, perfect in her part,
She felt the courage of a wounded heart;
The world receded from her rising view,
When Heaven approach'd as earthly things withdrew;
Not strange before, for in the days of love,
Joy, hope, and pleasure, she had thoughts above;
Pious when most of worldly prospects fond,
When they best pleased her she could look beyond
Had the young priest a faithful lover died
Something had been her bosom to divide;
Now Heaven had all, for in her holiest views
She saw the matron whom she fear'd to lose;
While from her parent, the dejected maid
Forced the unpleasant thought, or thinking pray'd

Surprised, the mother saw the languid frame,
And felt indignant, yet forbore to blame:
Once with a frown she cried, "And do you mean
To die of love—the folly of fifteen?"

But as her anger met with no reply,
She let the gentle girl in quiet die;
And to her sister wrote impell'd by pain,
"Come quickly, Martha, or you come in vain."
Lucy meantime profess'd, with joy sincere,
That nothing held, employ'd, engaged her here.
"I am an humble actor, doom'd to play
A part obscure, and then to glide away;
Incurious how the great or happy shine,
Or who have parts obscure and sad as mine;
In its best prospect I but wish'd, for life,
To be th' assiduous, gentle, useful wife;
That lost, with wearied mind, and spirit poor,
I drop my efforts, and can act no more;
With growing joy I feel my spirits tend
To that last scene where all my duties end."
Hope, ease, delight, the thoughts of dying gave,
Till Lucy spoke with fondness of the grave;
She smiled with wasted form, but spirit firm,
And said, "She left but little for the worm."
As toll'd the bell, "There's one," she said, "hath press'd
A while before me to the bed of rest;"
And she beside her with attention spread
The decorations of the maiden dead.
While quickly thus the mortal part declined,
The happiest visions fill'd the active mind;
A soft, religious melancholy gain'd
Entire possession, and for ever reign'd,
On holy writ her mind reposing dwelt,
She saw the wonders, she the mercies felt;
Till in a bless'd and glorious revery,
She seem'd the Saviour as on earth to see,
And, fill'd with love divine, th' attending friend to be;
Or she who trembling, yet confiding, stole
Near to the garment, touch'd it, and was whole;
When, such th' intenseness of the working thought,
On her it seem'd the very deed was wrought;
She the glad patient's fear and rapture found,
The holy transport, and the healing wound;
This was so fix'd, so grafted in the heart,
That she adopted, nay became the part:
But one chief scene was present to her sight,
Her Saviour resting in the tomb by night;
Her fever rose, and still her wedded mind
Was to that scene, that hallow'd cave, confined;
Where in the shade of death the body laid,
There watched the spirit of the wandering maid;
Her looks were fix'd, entranced, illumed, serene,
In the still glory of the midnight scene.
There at her Saviour's feet, in visions bless'd,
Th' enraptured maid a sacred joy possess'd;
In patience waiting for the first-born ray
Of that all-glorious and triumphant day.
To this idea all her soul she gave,
Her mind reposing by the sacred grave;
Then sleep would seal the eye, the vision close,
And steep the solemn thoughts in brief repose.
Then grew the soul serene, and all its powers
Again restored illumed the dying hours;
But reason dwelt where fancy stray'd before,
And the mind wander'd from its views no more;
Till death approach'd, when every look express'd
A sense of bliss till every sense had rest.

The mother lives, and has enough to buy
Th' attentive ear and the submissive eye
Of abject natures—these are daily told,
How triumph'd beauty in the days of old;
How, by her window seated, crowds have cast
Admiring glances, wondering as they pass'd;
How from her carriage as she stepp'd to pray,
Divided ranks would humbly make her way;
And how each voice in the astonish'd throng
Pronounced her peerless as she moved along.
Her picture then the greedy dame displays,
Touch'd by no shame, she now demands its praise
In her tall mirror then she shows a face,
Still coldly fair with unaffecting grace;
These she compares, "It has the form," she cries
"But wants the air, the spirit, and the eyes;
This, as a likeness, is correct and true,
But there alone the living grace we view."
This said, th' applauding voice the dame required,
And, gazing, slowly from the glass retired.

TALE IX.

ARABELLA.

Thrice blessed they that master so their blood—
But earthly happier is the rose distill'd,
Than that, which, withering on the virgin thorn
Grows, lives, and dies in single blessedness.
Midsummer Night's Dream, act i. sc. 1.

I sometimes do excuse the thing I hate,
For his advantage whom I dearly love.
Measure for Measure, act ii. sc. 4.

Contempt, farewell! and maiden pride, adieu!
Ibid.

Or a fair town where Doctor Rack was guide,
His only daughter was the boast and pride;
Wise Arabella, yet not wise alone,
She like a bright and polish'd brilliant shone;
Her father own'd her for his prop and stay,
Able to guide, yet willing to obey;
Pleased with her learning while discourse could please,
And with her love in languor and disease:
To every mother were her virtues known,
And to their daughters as a pattern shown;
Who in her youth had all that age requires,
And with her prudence, all that youth admires.
These odious praises made the damsels try
Not to obtain such merits, but deny;
For, whatsoever wise mammas might say,
To guide a daughter this was not the way;
From such applause disdain and anger rise,
And envy lives where emulation dies.
In all his strength contends the noble horse,
With one who just precedes him on the course;
But when the rival flies too far before,
His spirit fails, and he attempts no more.
This reasoning maid, above her sex's dread!
Had dared to read, and dared to say she read;
Not the last novel, not the new-born play;
Not the mere trash and scandal of the day;
But, (though her young companions felt the shock,
She studied Berkeley, Bacon, Hobbes, and Locke

Her mind within the maze of history dwelt,
And of the moral muse the beauty felt!
The merits of the Roman page she knew,
And could converse with Moore and Montagu:
Thus she became the wonder of the town,
From that she reap'd, to that she gave renown,
And strangers coming, all were taught t' admire
The learned lady, and the lofty spire.

Thus fame in public fix'd the maid, where all
Might throw their darts, and see the idol fall;
A hundred arrows came with vengeance keen,
From tongues envenom'd, and from arms unseen;
A thousand eyes were fix'd upon the place,
That, if she fell, she might not fly disgrace:
But malice vainly throws the poison'd dart,
Unless our frai'ty shows the peccant part;
And Arabella still preserved her name
Untouch'd, and shone with undisputed fame;
Her very notice some respect would cause,
And her esteem was honour and applause.

Men she avoided; not in childish fear,
As if she thought some savage foe was near;
Not as a prude, who hides that man should seek,
Or who by silence hints that they should speak;
But with discretion all the sex she view'd,
Ere yet engaged, pursuing, or pursued;
Ere love had made her to his vices blind
Or hid the favourite's failings from her mind.

Thus was the picture of the man portray'd,
By merit destined for so rare a maid:
At whose request she might exchange her state,
Or still be happy in a virgin's fate.

He must be one with manners like her own,
His life unquestion'd, his opinions known;
His stainless virtue must all tests endure,
His honour spotless, and his bosom pure;
She no allowance made for sex or times,
Of lax opinion—crimes were ever crimes;
No wretch forsaken must his frailty curse,
No spurious offspring drain his private purse:
He at all times his passions must command,
And yet possess, or be refused her hand.

All this without reserve the maiden told,
And some began to weigh the rector's gold;
To ask what sum a prudent man might gain,
Who had such store of virtues to maintain.

A Doctor Campbell, north of Tweed, came forth,
Declared his passion, and proclaim'd his worth;
Not unapproved, for he had much to say
On every cause, and in a pleasant way;
Not all his trust was in a pliant tongue,
His form was good, and ruddy he, and young:
But though the doctor was a man of parts,
He read not deeply male or female hearts;
But judged that all whom he esteem'd as wise,
Must think alike, though some assumed disguise;
That every reasoning Brahmin, Christian, Jew,
Of all religions took their liberal view;
And of her own, no doubt, this learned maid
Denied the substance, and the forms obey'd;
And thus persuaded, he his thoughts express'd
Of her opinions, and his own profess'd
"All states demand this aid, the vulgar need
Their priests and prayers, their sermons and their creed;
And those of stronger minds should never speak
(In his opinion) what might hurt the weak:
A man may smile, but still he should attend
His hour at church, and be the church's friend,
What there he thinks conceal, and what he hears commend."

Frank was the speech, but heard with high disdain,
Nor had the doctor leave to speak again;
A man who own'd, nay, gloried in deceit,
"He might despise her, but he should not cheat."

Then Vicar Holmes appear'd; he heard it said,
That ancient men best pleased the prudent maid;
And true it was her ancient friends she loved,
Servants when old she favour'd and approved;
Age in her pious parents she revered,
And neighbours were by length of days endear'd,
But, if her husband too must ancient be,
The good old vicar found it was not he.

On Captain Bligh her mind in balance hung—
Though valiant, modest; and reserved, though young;
Against these merits must defects be set—
Though poor, imprudent; and though proud, in debt.
In vain the captain close attention paid;
She found him wanting, whom she fairly weigh'd

Then came a youth, and all their friends agreed,
That Edward Huntly was the man indeed;
Respectful duty he had paid a while,
Then ask'd her hand, and had a gracious smile:
A lover now declared, he led the fair
To woods and fields, to visits and to prayer;
Then whisper'd softly, "Will you name the day?"
She softly whisper'd, "If you love me, stay."
"O! try me not beyond my strength," he cried.
"O! be not weak," the prudent maid replied:
"But by some trial your affection prove—
Respect and not impatience argues love:
And love no more is by impatience known,
Than ocean's depth is by its tempests shown:
He whom a weak and fond impatience sways,
But for himself with all his fervour prays,
And not the maid he woos, but his own will obeys;
And will she love the being who prefers,
With so much ardour, his desire to hers?"

Young Edward grieved, but let not grief be seen;
He knew obedience pleased his fancy's queen.
A while he waited, and then cried, "Behold!
The year advancing, be no longer cold!"
For she had promised—"Let the flowers appear,
And I will pass with thee the smiling year."
Then pressing grew the youth; the more he press'd,
The less inclined the maid to his request:
"Let June arrive."—Alas! when April came,
It brought a stranger, and the stranger, shame;
Nor could the lover from his house persuade
A stubborn lass whom he had mournful made:
Angry and weak, by thoughtless vengeance moved
She told her story to the fair beloved,
In strongest words th' unwelcome truth was shown
To blight his prospects, careless of her own.

Our heroine grieved, but had too firm a heart
For him to soften, when she swore to part;
In vain his seeming penitence and prayer,
His vows, his tears; she left him in despair:

His mother fondly laid her grief aside,
And to the reason of the nymph applied—
"It well becomes thee, lady, to appear,
But not to be, in very truth, severe;
Although the crime be odious in thy sight,
That daring sex is taught such things to slight,
His heart is thine, although it once was frail;
Think of his grief, and let his love prevail!"
"Plead thou no more," the lofty lass return'd;
"Forgiving woman is deceived and spurn'd:
Say that the crime is common; shall I take
A common man my wedded lord to make?
See! a weak woman by his arts betray'd,
An infant born his father to upbraid;
Shall I forgive his vileness, take his name,
Sanction his error, and partake his shame?
No! this assent would kindred frailty prove,
A love for him would be a vicious love:
Can a chaste maiden secret counsel hold
With one whose crime by every mouth is told?
Forbid it spirit, prudence, virtuous pride;
He must despise me, were he not denied:
The way from vice the erring mind to win,
Is with presuming sinners to begin,
And show, by scorning them, a just contempt for sin."

The youth, repulsed, to one more mild convey'd
His heart, and smiled on the remorseless maid;
The maid, remorseless in her pride, the while
Despised the insult, and return'd the smile.

First to admire, to praise her, and defend,
Was (now in years advanced) a virgin friend:
Much she preferr'd, she cried, a single state,
"It was her choice,"—it surely was her fate;
And much it pleased her in the train to view
A maiden vot'ress, wise, and lovely too.

Time to the yielding mind his change imparts,
He varies notions, and he alters hearts;
'Tis right, 'tis just to feel contempt for vice,
But he that shows it may be over-nice:
There are who feel, when young, the false sublime,
And proudly love to show disdain for crime,
To whom the future will new thoughts supply,
The pride will soften, and the scorn will die;
Nay, where they still the vice itself condemn,
They bear the vicious, and consort with them:
Young Captain Grove, when one had changed his side,
Despised the venal turn-coat, and defied;
Old Colonel Grove now shakes him by the hand,
Though he who bribes may still his vote command:
Why would not Ellen to Belinda speak,
When she had flown to London for a week;
And then return'd, to every friend's surprise
With twice the spirit, and with half the size?
She spoke not then; but after years had flown,
A better friend had Ellen never known:
Was it the lady her mistake had seen?
Or had she also such a journey been?
No: 'twas the gradual change in human hearts,
That time, in commerce with the world, imparts;
That on the roughest temper throws disguise,
And steals from virtue her asperities.
The young and ardent, who with glowing zeal
Felt wrath for trifles, and were proud to feel
Now find those trifles all the mind engage,
To soothe dull hours, and cheat the cares of age;
As young Zelinda, in her quaker dress,
Disdain'd each varying fashion's vile excess;
And now her friends on old Zelinda gaze,
Pleased in rich silks and orient gems to blaze:
Changes like these 'tis folly to condemn,
So virtue yields not, nor is changed by them.

Let us proceed: twelve brilliant years were past,
Yet each with less of glory than the last;
Whether these years to this fair virgin gave
A softer mind—effect they often have;
Whether the virgin state was not so bless'd
As that good maiden in her zeal profess'd;
Or whether lovers falling from her train,
Gave greater price to those she could retain,
Is all unknown;—but Arabella now
Was kindly listening to a merchant's vow;
Who offer'd terms so fair, against his love
To strive was folly, so she never strove;
Men in their earlier days we often find
With a too easy and unguarded mind;
But by increasing years and prudence taught,
He grows reserved, and locks up every thought:
Not thus the maiden, for in blooming youth
She hides her thought, and guards the tender truth:
This, when no longer young, no more she hides,
But frankly in the favour'd swain confides:
Man, stubborn man, is like the growing tree,
That longer standing, still will harder be;
And like its fruit the virgin, first austere,
Then kindly softening with the ripening year.

Now was the lover urgent, and the kind
And yielding lady to his suit inclined:
"A little time, my friend, is just, is right;
We must be decent in our neighbours' sight:"
Still she allow'd him of his hopes to speak,
And in compassion took off week by week;
Till few remain'd, when, wearied with delay,
She kindly meant to take off day by day.

That female friend who gave our virgin praise
For flying man and all his treacherous ways,
Now heard with mingled anger, shame, and fear,
Of one accepted, and a wedding near;
But she resolved again, with friendly zeal,
To make the maid her scorn of wedlock feel;
For she was grieved to find her work undone,
And like a sister mourn'd the failing nun.

Why are these gentle maidens prone to make
Their sister doves the tempting world forsake?
Why all their triumph when a maid disdains
The tyrant sex, and scorns to wear its chains?
Is it pure joy to see a sister flown
From the false pleasures they themselves have known?
Or do they, as the call-birds in the cage,
Try, in pure envy, others to engage;
And therefore paint their native woods and groves,
As scenes of dangerous joys and naughty loves?

Strong was the maiden's hope: her friend was proud,
And had her notions to the world avow'd;
And, could she find the merchant weak and frail
With power to prove it, then she must prevail
For she aloud would publish his disgrace,
And save his victim from a man so base.

When all inquiries had been duly made,
Came the kind friend her burden to unlade.

"Alas! my dear! not all our care and art
Can tread the maze of man's deceitful heart:
Look not surprise, nor let resentment swell
Those lovely features, all will yet be well;
And thou, from love's and man's deceptions free,
Wilt dwell in virgin state, and walk to heaven
with me."
The maiden frown'd, and then conceived "that
wives
Could walk as well, and lead as holy lives
As angry prudes who scorn'd the marriage-chain,
Or luckless maids who sought it still in vain."
The friend was vex'd; she paused, at length she
cried,
"Know your own danger, then your lot decide;
That traitor, Beswell, while he seeks your hand,
Has, I affirm, a wanton at command;
A slave, a creature from a foreign place,
The nurse and mother of a spurious race,
Brown, ugly bastards—(Heaven the word forgive,
And the deed punish!)—in his cottage live;
To town if business calls him, there he stays,
In sinful pleasures wasting countless days;
Nor doubt the facts, for I can witness call
For every crime, and prove them one and all."
Here ceased th' informer; Arabella's look
Was like a schoolboy's puzzled by his book;
Intent she cast her eyes upon the floor,
Paused—then replied—
"I wish to know no more:
I question not your motive, zeal, or love,
But must decline such dubious points to prove:
All is not true, I judge, for who can guess
Those deeds of darkness men with care suppress?
He brought a slave, perhaps, to England's coast,
And made her free; it is our country's boast!
And she perchance too grateful—good and ill
Were sown at first, and grow together, still;
The colour'd infants on the village green,
What are they more than we have often seen?
Children half-clothed who round their village stray,
In sun or rain, now starved, now beaten, they
Will the dark colour of their fate betray:
Let us in Christian love for all account,
And then behold to what such tales amount."
"His heart is evil," said th' impatient friend
"My duty bids me try that heart to mend,"
Replied the virgin: "we may be too nice,
And lose a soul in our contempt of vice;
If false the charge, I then shall show regard
For a good man, and be his just reward:
And what for virtue can I better do
Than to reclaim him, if the charge be true?"
She spoke, nor more her holy work delay'd;
'Twas time to lend an erring mortal aid:
"The noblest way," she judged, "a soul to win,
Was with an act of kindness to begin,
To make the sinner sure, and then t' attack the sin."*

* As the author's purpose in this tale may be mistaken, he wishes to observe, that conduct like that of the lady's here described, must be meritorious or censurable, just as the motives to it are pure or selfish; that these motives may in a great measure be concealed from the mind of the agent; and that we often take credit to our virtue for actions which spring originally from our tempers, inclinations, or our indifference. It cannot therefore be improper, much less immoral, to give an instance of such self-deception.

TALE X.

THE LOVER'S JOURNEY.

The sun is in the heavens, and the proud day,
Attended with the pleasures of the world,
Is all too wanton.
King John, act iii. sc. 3.

The lunatic, the lover, and the poet,
Are of imagination all compact.
Midsummer Night's Dream.

O! how the spring of love resembleth
Th' uncertain glory of an April day,
Which now shows all her beauty to the sun,
And by-and-by a cloud bears all away.
And happily I have arrived at last
Unto the wished haven of my bliss.
Taming of the Shrew, act v. sc. 1.

It is the soul that sees; the outward eyes
Present the object, but the mind descries;
And thence delight, disgust, or cool indifference rise
When minds are joyful, then we look around,
And what is seen is all on fairy ground;
Again they sicken, and on every view
Cast their own dull and melancholy hue;
Or, if absorb'd by their peculiar cares,
The vacant eye on viewless matter glares,
Our feelings still upon our views attend,
And their own natures to the objects lend;
Sorrow and joy are in their influence sure,
Long as the passion reigns th' effects endure;
But love in minds his various changes makes,
And clothes each object with the change he takes
His light and shade on every view he throws,
And on each object, what he feels, bestows.
Fair was the morning, and the month was June
When rose a lover; love awakens soon;
Brief his repose, yet much he dreamt the while
Of that day's meeting, and his Laura's smile;
Fancy and love that name assign'd to her,
Call'd Susan in the parish register;
And he no more was John; his Laura gave
The name Orlando to her faithful slave.
Bright shone the glory of the rising day,
When the fond traveller took his favourite way;
He mounted gayly, felt his bosom light,
And all he saw was pleasing in his sight.
"Ye hours of expectation, quickly fly,
And bring on hours of blest reality;
When I shall Laura see, beside her stand,
Hear her sweet voice, and press her yielded hand
First o'er a barren heath beside the coast
Orlando rode, and joy began to boast.
"This neat low gorge," said he, "with golden
bloom,
Delights each sense, is beauty, is perfume;
And this gay ling, with all its purple flowers,
A man at leisure might admire for hours;
This green-fringed cup-moss has a scarlet tip,
That yields to nothing but my Laura's lip;
And then how fine this herbage! men may say
A heath is barren; nothing is so gay:
Barren or bare to call such charming scene
Argues a mind possess'd by care and spleen."
Onward he went, and fiercer grew the heat,
Dust rose in clouds before the horse's feet;
For now he pass'd through lanes of burning sand
Bounds to thin crops, or yet uncultured land:

Where the dark poppy flourish'd on the dry
And sterile soil, and mock'd the thin-set rye.
"How lovely this!" the rapt Orlando said;
"With what delight is labouring man repaid!
The very lane has sweets that all admire,
The rambling suckling and the vigorous brier;
See! wholesome wormwood grows beside the way,
Where dew-press'd yet the dog-rose bends the spray;
Fresh herbs the fields, fair shrubs the banks adorn,
And snow-white bloom falls flaky from the thorn;
No fostering hand they need, no sheltering wall,
They spring uncultured, and they bloom for all."
The lover rode as hasty lovers ride,
And reach'd a common pasture wild and wide;
Small black-legg'd sheep devour with hunger keen
The meagre herbage, fleshless, lank, and lean;
Such o'er thy level turf, Newmarket! stray,
And there, with other *black-legs* find their prey:
He saw some scatter'd hovels, turf was piled
In square brown stacks; a prospect bleak and wild!
A mill, indeed, was in the centre found,
With short sear herbage withering all around;
A smith's black shed opposed a wright's long shop,
And join'd an inn where humble travellers stop.
"Ay, this is nature," said the gentle squire;
"This ease, peace, pleasure, who would not admire?
With what delight these sturdy children play,
And joyful rustics at the close of day;
Sport follows labour, on this even space
Will soon commence the wrestling and the race;
Then will the village maidens leave their home,
And to the dance with buoyant spirits come;
No affectation in their looks is seen,
Nor know they what disguise or flattery mean;
Nor aught to move an envious pang they see,
Easy their service, and their love is free;
Hence early springs that love, it long endures,
And life's first comfort, while they live, ensures;
They the low roof and rustic comforts prize,
Nor cast on prouder mansions envying eyes:
Sometimes the news at yonder town they hear,
And learn what busier mortals feel and fear;
Secure themselves, although by tales amazed,
Of towns bombarded, and of cities razed;
As if they doubted, in their still retreat,
The very news that makes their quiet sweet,
And their days happy; happier only knows
He on whom Laura her regard bestows."
On rode Orlando, counting all the while
The miles he pass'd, and every coming mile;
Like all attracted things, he quicker flies,
The place approaching where th' attraction lies;
When next appear'd a *dam*—so call the place—
Where lies a road confined in narrow space;
A work of labour, for on either side
Is level fen, a prospect wild and wide,
With dikes on either hand by ocean's self supplied:
Far on the right the distant sea is seen,
And salt the springs that feed the marsh between;
Beneath an ancient bridge, the straiten'd flood
Rolls through its sloping banks of slimy mud;
Near it a sunken boat resists the tide,
That frets and hurries to th' opposing side;
The rushes sharp, that on the borders grow,
Bend their brown flow'rets to the stream below,
Impure in all its course, in all its progress slow:
Here a grave Flora* scarcely deigns to bloom,
Nor wears a rosy blush, nor sheds perfume;
The few dull flowers that o'er the place are spread,
Partake the nature of their fenny bed;
Here on its wiry stem, in rigid bloom,
Grows the salt lavender that lacks perfume;
Here the dwarf sallows creep, the septfoil harsh,
And the soft slimy mallow of the marsh;
Low on the ear the distant billows sound,
And just in view appears their stony bound;
No hedge nor tree conceals the glowing sun,
Birds, save a watery tribe, the district shun,
Nor chirp among the reeds where bitter waters run
"Various as beauteous, Nature, is thy face,"
Exclaim'd Orlando: "all that grows has grace
All are appropriate; bog, and marsh, and fen,
Are only poor to undiscerning men;
Here may the nice and curious eye explore
How Nature's hand adorns the rushy moor;
Here the rare moss in secret shade is found,
Here the sweet myrtle of the shaking ground;
Beauties are these that from the view retire,
But well repay th' attention they require;
For these my Laura will her home forsake,
And all the pleasures they afford partake."
Again the country was enclosed, a wide
And sandy road has banks on either side;
Where, lo! a hollow on the left appear'd,
And there a gipsy tribe their tent had rear'd;
'Twas open spread, to catch the morning sun,
And they had now their early meal begun,
When two brown boys just left their grassy seat,
The early traveller with their prayers to greet:
While yet Orlando held his pence in hand,
He saw their sister on her duty stand;
Some twelve years old, demure, affected, sly,
Prepared the force of early powers to try;
Sudden a look of languor he descries,
And well-feign'd apprehension in her eyes;
Train'd, but yet savage, in her speaking face
He mark'd the features of her vagrant race;
When a light laugh and roguish leer express'd
The vice implanted in her youthful breast:
Forth from the tent her elder brother came,
Who seem'd offended, yet forbore to blame

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* The ditches of a fen so near the ocean are lined with irregular patches of a coarse and stained lava; a muddy sediment rests on the horse-tail and other perennial herbs, which in part conceal the shallowness of the stream; a fat-leaved, pale-flowering scurvy grass, appears early in the year, and the razor-edged bulrush, in the summer and autumn. The fen itself has a dark and saline herbage; there are rushes and *arrow-head*, and in a few patches the flakes of the cotton grass are seen, but more commonly the *sea-aster*, the dullest of that numerous and hardy genus; a *thrift*, blue in flower, but withering and remaining withered, till the winter scatters it; the *saltwort*, both simple and shrubby; a few kinds of grass changed by their soil and atmosphere, and low plants of two or three denominations undistinguished in a general view of the scenery: such is the vegetation of the fen when it is at a small distance from the ocean; and in this case there arise from it effluvia strong and peculiar, half-saline, half-putrid, which would be considered by most people as offensive, and by some as dangerous; but there are others to whom singularity of taste, or association of ideas, has rendered it agreeable and pleasant

The young designer, but could only trace
The looks of pity in the traveller's face:
Within, the father, who from fences nigh
Had brought the fuel for the fire's supply,
Watch'd now the feeble blaze, and stood dejected by:
On ragged rug, just borrow'd from the bed,
And by the hand of coarse indulgence fed,
In dirty patchwork negligently dress'd,
Reclined the wife, an infant at her breast;
In her wild face some touch of grace remain'd,
Of vigour palsied and of beauty stain'd;
Her blood-shot eyes on her unheeding mate
Were wrathful turn'd, and seem'd her wants to state,
Pursing his tardy aid—her mother there
With gipsy state engross'd the only chair;
Solemn and dull her look; with such she stands,
And reads the milk-maid's fortune in her hands,
Tracing the lines of life; assumed through years,
Each feature now the steady falsehood wears;
With hard and savage eye she views the food,
And grudging pinches their intruding brood;
Last in the group, the worn-out grandsire sits
Neglected, lost, and living but by fits;
Useless, despised, his worthless labours done,
And half protected by the vicious son,
Who half supports him; he with heavy glance
Views the young ruffians who around him dance;
And, by the sadness in his face, appears
To trace the progress of their future years:
Through what strange course of misery, vice, deceit,
Must wildly wander each unpractised cheat.
What shame and grief, what punishment and pain,
Sport of fierce passions, must each child sustain—
Ere they like him approach their latter end,
Without a hope, a comfort, or a friend!

But this Orlando felt not; "Rogues," said he,
"Doubtless they are, but merry rogues they be;
They wander round the land, and be it true,
They break the laws—then let the laws pursue
The wanton idlers; for the life they live
Acquit I cannot, but I can forgive."
This said, a portion from his purse was thrown,
And every heart seem'd happy like his own.

He hurried forth, for now the town was nigh—
"The happiest man of mortal men am I."
Thou art! but change in every state is near,
(So while the wretched hope, the blest may fear;)
"Say, where is Laura?"—"That her words must show,"
A lass replied; "read this, and thou shalt know!"
"What, gone!"—her friend insisted—forced to go:
"Is vex'd, was teased, could not refuse her!—No!"
"But you can follow." "Yes!" "The miles are few,
The way is pleasant; will you come? Adieu!
Thy Laura!"—"No! I feel I must resign
The pleasing hope, thou hadst been here, if mine:
A lady was it? Was no brother there?
But why should I afflict me if there were?"
"The way is pleasant."—"What to me the way?
I cannot reach her till the close of day.
My dumb companion! is it thus we speed?
Not I from grief nor thou from toil art freed;
Still art thou doom'd to travel and to pine,
For my vexation—What a fate is mine!

"Gone to a friend, she tells me; I commend
Her purpose; means she to a female friend?
By Heaven, I wish she suffer'd half the pain
Of hope protracted through the day in vain:
Shall I persist to see th' ungrateful maid?
Yes, I will see her, slight her, and upbraid:
What! in the very hour? She knew the time,
And doubtless chose it to increase her crime."

Forth rode Orlando by a river's side,
Inland and winding, smooth, and full, and wide,
That roll'd majestic on, in one soft flowing tide;
The bottom gravel, flowery were the banks,
Tall willows, waving in their broken ranks;
The road, now near, now distant, winding led
By lovely meadows which the waters fed;
He pass'd the way-side inn, the village spire,
Nor stopp'd to gaze, to question, or admire;
On either side the rural mansions stood,
With hedge-row trees, and hills high-crown'd with wood,
And many a devious stream that reach'd the nobler flood.

"I hate these scenes," Orlando angry cried,
"And these proud farmers! yes, I hate their pride:
See! that sleek fellow, how he strides along,
Strong as an ox, and ignorant as strong;
Can yon close crops a single eye detain
But his who counts the profits of the grain?
And these vile beans with deleterious smell,
Where is their beauty? can a mortal tell?
These deep fat meadows I detest; it shocks
One's feelings there to see the grazing ox;—
For slaughter fatted, as a lady's smile
Rejoices man, and means his death the while.
Lo! now the sons of labour! every day
Employ'd in toil, and vex'd in every way;
Theirs is but mirth assumed, and they conceal,
In their affected joys, the ills they feel:
I hate these long green lanes; there's nothing seen
In this vile country but eternal green;
Woods! waters! meadows! Will they never end?
'Tis a vile prospect. Gone to see a friend!"

Still on he rode! a mansion fair and tall
Rose on his view—the pride of Loddon Hall.
Spread o'er the park he saw the grazing steer,
The full-fed steed, the herds of bounding deer:
On a clear stream the vivid sunbeams play'd,
Through noble elms, and on the surface made
That moving picture, checker'd light and shade;
Th' attended children, there indulged to stray,
Enjoy'd and gave new beauty to the day;
Whose happy parents from their room were seen
Pleased with the sportive idlers on the green.

"Well!" said Orlando, "and for one so bless'd,
A thousand reasoning wretches are distress'd;
Nay, these so seeming glad, are grieving like the rest:
Man is a cheat—and all but strive to hide
Their inward misery by their outward pride.
What do yon lofty gates and walls contain,
But fruitless means to soothe unconquer'd pain?
The parents read each infant daughter's smile,
Form'd to seduce, encouraged to beguile;
They view the boys unconscious of their fate,
Sure to be tempted, sure to take the bait;
These will be Lauras, sad Orlandos these—
There's guilt and grief in all one hears and sees

Our traveller, labouring up a hill, look'd down
Upon a lively, busy, pleasant town;
All he beheld were there alert, alive,
The busiest bees that ever stock'd a hive:
A pair were married, and the bells aloud
Proclaim'd their joy, and joyful seem'd the crowd;
And now proceeding on his way, he spied,
Bound by strong ties, the bridegroom and the bride:
Each by some friends attended, near they drew,
And spleen beheld them with prophetic view.
"Married! nay, mad!" Orlando cried in scorn;
"Another wretch on this unlucky morn:
What are this foolish mirth, these idle joys?
Attempts to stifle doubt and fear by noise:
To me these robes, expressive of delight,
Foreshow distress, and only grief excite;
And for these cheerful friends, will they behold
Their wailing brood in sickness, want, and cold;
And his proud look, and her soft languid air
Will—but I spare you—go, unhappy pair!"
And now approaching to the journey's end,
His anger fails, his thoughts to kindness tend,
He less offended feels, and rather fears t' offend:
Now gently rising, hope contends with doubt,
And casts a sunshine on the views without;
And still reviving joy and lingering gloom
Alternate empire o'er his soul assume;
'Till, long perplex'd, he now began to find
The softer thoughts engross the settling mind:
He saw the mansion, and should quickly see
His Laura's self—and angry could he be?
No! the resentment melted all away.
"For this my grief a single smile will pay,"
Our traveller cried; "and why should it offend,
That one so good should have a pressing friend?
Grieve not, my heart! to find a favourite guest
Thy pride and boast—ye selfish sorrows, rest;
She will be kind, and I again be blest."
While gentler passions thus his bosom sway'd,
He reach'd the mansion, and he saw the maid;
"My Laura!"—"My Orlando! this is kind;
In truth I came persuaded, not inclined:
Our friends' amusement let us now pursue,
And I to-morrow will return with you."
Like man entranced, the happy lover stood—
"As Laura wills, for she is kind and good:
Ever the truest, gentlest, fairest, best—
As Laura wills, I see her and am blest."
Home went the lovers through that busy place,
By Loddon Hall, the country's pride and grace;
By the rich meadows where the oxen fed,
Through the green vale that form'd the river's bed;
And by unnumber'd cottages and farms,
That have for musing minds unnumber'd charms;
And how affected by the view of these
Was then Orlando—did they pain or please?
Nor pain nor pleasure could they yield—and why?
The mind was fill'd, was happy, and the eye
Roved o'er the fleeting views, that but appear'd to die.
Alone Orlando on the morrow paced
The well-known road; the gipsy tent he traced;
The dam high-raised, the reedy dikes between,
The scatter'd hovels on the barren green,
The burning sand, the fields of thin-set rye,
Mock'd by the useless Flora, blooming by;
And last the heath with all its various bloom,
And the close lanes that led the traveller home.
Then could these scenes the former joys renew
Or was there now dejection in the view?
Nor one or other would they yield—and why?
The mind was absent, and the vacant eye
Wander'd o'er viewless scenes, that but appear'd to die.

TALE XI.

EDWARD SHORE.

Seem they grave or learned?
Why, so didst thou—Seem they religious?
Why, so didst thou; or are they spare in diet,
Free from gross passion, or of mirth or anger,
Constant in spirit, not swerving with the blood,
Garnish'd and deck'd in modest compliment,
Not working with the eye without the ear,
And but with purged judgment trusting neither?
Such and so finely bolted didst thou seem.
Henry V. act ii. sc. 2.

Better I were distract,
So should my thoughts be sever'd from my griefs,
And woes by strong imagination lose
The knowledge of themselves.
Lear, act iv. sc. 6.

Genius! thou gift of Heaven! thou light divine!
Amid what dangers art thou doom'd to shine!
Oft will the body's weakness check thy force,
Oft damp thy vigour, and impede thy course;
And trembling nerves compel thee to restrain
Thy nobler efforts, to contend with pain;
Or Want (sad guest!) will in thy presence come
And breathe around a melancholy gloom;
To life's low cares will thy proud thought confine,
And make her sufferings, her impatience, thine.
Evil and strong, seducing passions prey
On soaring minds, and win them from their way;
Who then to vice the subject spirits give,
And in the service of the conqueror live;
Like captive Samson making sport for all
Who fear'd their strength, and glory in their fall.
Genius, with virtue, still may lack the aid
Implored by humble minds and hearts afraid;
May leave to timid souls the shield and sword
Of the tried faith, and the resistless word;
Amid a world of dangers venturing forth,
Frail, but yet fearless, proud in conscious worth,
Till strong temptation, in some fatal time,
Assails the heart, and wins the soul to crime;
When left by honour, and by sorrow spent,
Unused to pray, unable to repent,
The nobler powers that once exalted high
Th' aspiring man, shall then degraded lie:
Reason, through anguish, shall her throne forsake,
And strength of mind but stronger madness make
When Edward Shore had reach'd his twentieth year,
He felt his bosom light, his conscience clear;
Applause at school the youthful hero gain'd,
And trials there with manly strength sustain'd:
With prospects bright upon the world he came,
Pure love of virtue, strong desire of fame:
Men watch'd the way his lofty mind would take,
And all foretold the progress he would make.

Boast of these friends, to older men a guide,
Proud of his parts, but gracious in his pride,
He bore a gay good nature in his face,
And in his air were dignity and grace;
Dress that became his state and years he wore,
And sense and spirit shone in Edward Shore.

Thus while admiring friends the youth beheld,
His own disgust their forward hopes repell'd;
For he unfix'd, unfixing, look'd around,
And no employment but in seeking found;
He gave his restless thoughts to views refined,
And shrank from worldly cares with wounded mind.

Rejecting trade, a while he dwelt on laws,
"But who could plead, if unapproved the cause?"
A doubting, dismal tribe physicians seem'd;
Divines o'er texts and disputations dream'd;
War and its glory he perhaps could love,
But there again he must the cause approve.

Our hero thought no deed should gain applause,
Where timid virtue found support in laws;
He to all good would soar, would fly all sin,
By the pure prompting of the will within;
"Who needs a law that binds him not to steal,"
Ask'd the young teacher, "can he rightly feel?
To curb the will, or arm in honour's cause,
Or aid the weak, are these enforced by laws?
Should we a foul, ungenerous action dread,
Because a law condemns th' adulterous bed?
Or fly pollution, not for fear of stain,
But that some statute tells us to refrain?
The grosser herd in ties like these we bind,
In virtue's freedom moves th' enlighten'd mind."
"Man's heart deceives him," said a friend. "Of course,"
Replied the youth, "but, has it power to force?
Unless it forces, call it as you will,
It is but wish and proneness to the ill."
"Art thou not tempted?"—"Do I fall?" said Shore.
"The pure have fallen."—"Then are pure no more:
While reason guides me, I shall walk aright,
Nor need a steadier hand, or stronger light;
Nor this in dread of awful threats, design'd
For the weak spirit and the grovelling mind;
But that, engaged by thoughts and views sublime,
I wage free war with grossness and with crime."
Thus look'd he proudly on the vulgar crew,
Whom statutes govern, and whom fears subdue.

Faith, with his virtue, he indeed profess'd,
But doubts deprived his ardent mind of rest;
Reason, his sovereign mistress, fail'd to show
Light through the mazes of the world below;
Questions arose, and they surpass'd the skill
Of his sole aid, and would be dubious still;
These to discuss he sought no common guide,
But to the doubters in his doubts applied;
When all together might in freedom speak,
And their loved truth with mutual ardour seek.
Alas! though men who feel their eyes decay,
Take more than common pains to find their way,
Yet, when for this they ask each other's aid,
Their mutual purpose is the more delay'd:
Of all their doubts, their reasoning clear'd not one,
Still the same spots were present in the sun;
Still the same scruples haunted Edward's mind,
Who found no rest, nor took the means to find.

But though with shaken faith, and slave to fame,
Vain and aspiring on the world he came;
Yet was he studious, serious, moral, grave,
No passion's victim, and no system's slave;
Vice he opposed, indulgence he disdain'd,
And o'er each sense in conscious triumph reign'd

Who often reads will sometimes wish to write,
And Shore would yield instruction and delight:
A serious drama he design'd, but found
'Twas tedious travelling in that gloomy ground;
A deep and solemn story he would try,
But grew ashamed of ghosts, and laid it by;
Sermons he wrote, but they who knew his creed
Or knew it not, were ill disposed to read;
And he would lastly be the nation's guide,
But, studying, fail'd to fix upon a side;
Fame he desired, and talents he possess'd,
But loved not labour, though he could not rest,
Nor firmly fix the vacillating mind,
That, ever working, could no centre find.

'Tis thus a sanguine reader loves to trace
The Nile forth rushing on his glorious race;
Calm and secure the fancied traveller goes,
Through sterile deserts and by threatening foes;
He thinks not then of Afric's scorching sands,
Th' Arabian sea, the Abyssinian bands;
Fasils* and Michaels, and the robbers all,
Whom we politely chiefs and heroes call:
He of success alone delights to think,
He views that fount, he stands upon the brink,
And drinks a fancied draught, exulting so to drink

In his own room, and with his books around,
His lively mind its chief employment found;
Then idly busy, quietly employ'd,
And, lost to life, his visions were enjoy'd;
Yet still he took a keen, inquiring view
Of all that crowds neglect, desire, pursue;
And thus abstracted, curious, still serene,
He, unemploy'd, beheld life's shifting scene;
Still more averse from vulgar joys and cares,
Still more unfitted for the world's affairs.

There was a house where Edward ofttimes went
And social hours in pleasant trifling spent;
He read, conversed and reason'd, sang and play'd,
And all were happy while the idler stay'd;
Too happy one, for thence arose the pain,
Till this engaging trifler came again.

But did he love? We answer, day by day,
The loving feet would take th' accustom'd way,
The amorous eye would rove as if in quest
Of something rare, and on the mansion rest;
The same soft passion touch'd the gentle tongue,
And Anna's charms in tender notes were sung;
The ear, too, seem'd to feel the common flame,
Soothed and delighted with the fair one's name:
And thus as love each other part possess'd,
The heart, no doubt, its sovereign power confess'd.

Pleased in her sight, the youth required no more;
Nor rich himself, he saw the damsel poor;
And he too wisely, nay, too kindly loved,
To pain the being whom his soul approved.

* Fasil was a rebel chief, and Michael the general of the royal army in Abyssinia, when Mr. Bruce visited that country. In all other respects their characters were nearly similar. They are both represented as cruel and treacherous; and even the apparently strong distinction of loyal and rebellious is in a great measure set aside when we are informed that Fasil was an open enemy, and Michael an insolent and ambitious controller of the royal person and family.

A serious friend our cautious youth possess'd,
And at his table sat a welcome guest;
Both unemploy'd, it was their chief delight
To read what free and daring authors write;
Authors who loved from common views to soar,
And seek the fountains never traced before;
Truth they profess'd, yet often left the true
And beaten prospect, for the wild and new.
His chosen friend his fiftieth year had seen,
His fortune easy, and his air serene;
Deist and atheist call'd; for few agreed
What were his notions, principles, or creed;
His mind reposed not, for he hated rest,
But all things made a query or a jest;
Perplex'd himself, he ever sought to prove
That man is doom'd in endless doubt to rove;
Himself in darkness he profess'd to be,
And would maintain that not a man could see.

The youthful friend, dissentient, reason'd still
Of the soul's prowess, and the subject will;
Of virtue's beauty, and of honour's force,
And a warm zeal gave life to his discourse:
Since from his feelings all his fire arose,
And he had interest in the themes he chose.

The friend, indulging a sarcastic smile,
Said, "Dear enthusiast! thou wilt change thy style,
When man's delusions, errors, crimes, deceit,
No more distress thee, and no longer cheat."

Yet lo! this cautious man, so coolly wise,
On a young beauty fix'd unguarded eyes;
And her he married: Edward at the view
Bade to his cheerful visits long adieu;
But haply err'd, for this engaging bride
No mirth suppress'd, but rather cause supplied:
And when she saw the friends, by reasoning long,
Confused if right, and positive if wrong,
With playful speech and smile, that spoke delight,
She made them careless both of wrong or right.

This gentle damsel gave consent to wed,
With school, and school-day dinners in her head:
She now was promised choice of daintiest food,
And costly dress, that made her sovereign good;
With walks on hilly heath to banish spleen,
And summer visits when the roads were clean.
All these she loved, to these she gave consent,
And she was married to her heart's content.

Their manner this; the friends together read,
Till books a cause for disputation bred;
Debate then follow'd, and the vapour'd child
Declared they argued till her head was wild;
And strange to her it was that mortal brain
Could seek the trial, or endure the pain.

Then as the friend reposed, the younger pair
Sat down to cards, and play'd beside his chair;
Till he, awaking, to his books applied,
Or heard the music of th' obedient bride;
If mild the evening, in the fields they stray'd,
And their own flock with partial eye survey'd;
But oft the husband, to indulgence prone,
Resumed his book, and bade them walk alone.

"Do, my kind Edward! I must take mine ease,
Name the dear girl the planets and the trees;
Tell her what warblers pour their evening song,
What insects flutter, as you walk along;
Teach her to fix the roving thoughts, to bind
The wandering sense, and methodize the mind."

This was obey'd; and oft when this was done,
They calmly gazed on the declining sun;
In silence saw the glowing landscape fade,
Or, sitting, sang beneath the arbour's shade:
Till rose the moon, and on each youthful face
Shed a soft beauty, and a dangerous grace.

When the young wife beheld in long debate
The friends, all careless as she seeming sate;
It soon appear'd, there was in one combined
The nobler person and the richer mind;
He wore no wig, no grizzly beard was seen,
And none beheld him careless or unclean;
Or watch'd him sleeping: we indeed have heard
Of sleeping beauty, and it has appear'd;
'Tis seen in infants; there indeed we find
The features soften'd by the slumbering mind;
But other beauties, when disposed to sleep,
Should from the eye of keen inspector keep;
The lovely nymph who would her swain surprise
May close her mouth, but not conceal her eyes;
Sleep from the fairest face some beauty takes,
And all the homely features homelier makes;
So thought our wife, beholding with a sigh
Her sleeping sponse, and Edward smiling by.

A sick relation for the husband sent,
Without delay the friendly skeptic went;
Nor fear'd the youthful pair, for he had seen
The wife untroubled, and the friend serene;
No selfish purpose in his roving eyes,
No vile deception in her fond replies:
So judged the husband, and with judgment true,
For neither yet the guilt or danger knew.

What now remain'd? but they again should play
Th' accustom'd game, and walk th' accustom'd way;
With careless freedom should converse or read,
And the friend's absence neither fear nor heed;
But rather now they seem'd confused, constrain'd
Within their room still restless they remain'd,
And painfully they felt, and knew each other pain'd.—
Ah! foolish men! how could ye thus depend,
One on himself, the other on his friend?

The youth with troubled eye the lady saw,
Yet felt too brave, too daring to withdraw;
While she, with tuneless hand the jarring keys
Touching, was not one moment at her ease:
Now would she walk, and call her friendly guide
Now speak of rain, and cast her cloak aside;
Seize on a book, unconscious what she read,
And, restless still, to new resources fled;
Then laugh'd aloud, then tried to look serene,
And ever changed, and every change was seen.

Painful it is to dwell on deeds of shame;
The trying day was past, another came;
The third was all remorse, confusion, dread,
And, (all too late!) the fallen hero fled.

Then felt the youth, in that seducing time,
How feebly honour guards the heart from crime:
Small is his native strength; man needs the stay,
The strength imparted in the trying day;
For all that honour brings against the force
Of headlong passion, aids its rapid course;
Its slight resistance but provokes the fire,
As wood-work stops the flame, and then conveys it higher.

The husband came; a wife by guilt made bold
Had, meeting, soothed him, as in days of old;
But soon this fact transpired; her strong distress,
And his friend's absence, left him naught to guess.

Still cool, though grieved, thus prudence bade him write—
"I cannot pardon, and I will not fight;
Thou art too poor a culprit for the laws,
And I too faulty to support my cause;
All must be punish'd; I must sigh alone,
At home thy victim for her guilt atone;
And thou, unhappy! virtuous now no more,
Must loss of fame, peace, purity deplore;
Sinners with praise will pierce thee to the heart,
And saints, deriding, tell thee what thou art."
Such was his fall; and Edward, from that time,
Felt in full force the censure and the crime;
Despised, ashamed; his noble views before,
And his proud thoughts, degraded him the more;
Should he repent—would that conceal his shame?
Could peace be his? It perish'd with his fame:
Himself he scorn'd, nor could his crime forgive;
He fear'd to die, yet felt ashamed to live:
Grieved, but not contrite, was his heart; oppress'd,
Not broken; not converted, but distress'd;
He wanted will to bend the stubborn knee,
He wanted light the cause of ill to see, [be:
To learn how frail is man, how humble then should
For faith he had not, or a faith too weak
To gain the help that humbled sinners seek;
Else had he pray'd—to an offended God
His tears had flown a penitential flood;
Though far astray, he would have heard the call
Of mercy—"Come! return, thou prodigal;"
Then, though confused, distress'd, ashamed, afraid,
Still had the trembling penitent obey'd;
Though faith have fainted, when assail'd by fear,
Hope to the soul had whisper'd, "Persevere!"
Till in his Father's house an humbled guest,
He would have found forgiveness, comfort, rest.
But all this joy was to our youth denied
By his fierce passions and his daring pride,
And shame and doubt impell'd him in a course,
Once so abhorr'd, with unresisted force.
Proud minds and guilty, whom their crimes oppress,
Fly to new crimes for comfort and redress;
So found our fallen youth a short relief
In wine, the opiate guilt applies to grief;—
From fleeting mirth that o'er the bottle lives,
From the false joy its inspiration gives;
And from associates pleased to find a friend,
With powers to lead them, gladden, and defend,
In all those scenes where transient ease is found,
For minds whom sins oppress, and sorrows wound.
Wine is like anger; for it makes us strong,
Blind, and impatient, and it leads us wrong;
The strength is quickly lost, we feel the error long:
Thus led, thus strengthen'd in an evil cause,
For folly pleading, sought the youth applause;
Sad for a time, then eloquently wild,
He gayly spoke as his companions smiled;
Lightly he rose, and with his former grace
Proposed some doubt, and argued on the case;
Fate and foreknowledge were his favourite themes,
How vain man's purpose, how absurd his schemes;
"Whatever is, was ere our birth decreed;
We think our actions from ourselves proceed,
And idly we lament th' inevitable deed;
It seems our own, but there's a power above
Directs the motion, nay, that makes us move;
Nor good nor evil can you beings name,
Who are but rooks and castles in the game;
Superior natures with their puppets play,
Till, bagg'd or buried, all are swept away."
Such were the notions of a mind to ill
Now prone, but ardent and determined still.
Of joy now eager, as before of fame,
And screen'd by folly when assail'd by shame,
Deeply he sank; obey'd each passion's call,
And used his reason to defend them all.
Shall I proceed, and step by step relate
The odious progress of a sinner's fate?
No—let me rather hasten to the time
(Sure to arrive) when misery waits on crime.
With virtue, prudence fled; what Shore possess'd
Was sold, was spent, and he was now distress'd:
And Want, unwelcome stranger, pale and wan,
Met with her haggard looks the hurried man;
His pride felt keenly what he must expect
From useless pity and from cold neglect.
Struck by new terrors, from his friends he fled,
And wept his woes upon a restless bed;
Retiring late, at early hour to rise,
With shrunken features, and with bloodshot eyes:
If sleep one moment closed the dismal view,
Fancy her terrors built upon the true;
And night and day had their alternate woes
That baffled pleasure, and that mock'd repose;
Till to despair and anguish was consign'd
The wreck and ruin of a noble mind.
Now seized for debt, and lodged within a jail,
He tried his friendships, and he found them fail,
Then fail'd his spirits, and his thoughts were all
Fix'd on his sins, his sufferings, and his fall:
His ruffled mind was pictured in his face,
Once the fair seat of dignity and grace:
Great was the danger of a man so prone
To think of madness, and to think alone;
Yet pride still lived, and struggled to sustain
The drooping spirit and the roving brain;
But this too fail'd: a friend his freedom gave,
And sent him help the threatening world to brave,
Gave solid counsel what to seek or flee,
But still would stranger to his person be:
In vain! the truth determined to explore,
He traced the friend whom he had wrong'd before.
This was too much; both aided and advised
By one who shunn'd him, pitied, and despised:
He bore it not; 'twas a deciding stroke,
And on his reason like a torrent broke:
In dreadful stillness he appear'd a while,
With vacant horror and a ghastly smile;
Then rose at once into the frantic rage,
That force controll'd not, nor could love assuage.
Friends now appear'd, but in the man was seen
The angry maniac, with vindictive mien;
Too late their pity gave to care and skill
The hurried mind and ever-wandering will;
Unnoticed pass'd all time, and not a ray
Of reason broke on his benighted way;
But now he spurn'd the straw in pure disdain,
And now laugh'd loudly at the clinking chain.
Then as its wrath subsided, by degrees
The mind sank slowly to infantine ease;
To playful folly, and to causeless joy,
Speech without aim, and without end, employ,
He drew fantastic figures on the wall,
And gave some wild relation of them all;
With brutal shape he join'd the human face
And idiot smiles approved the motley race

Harmless at length th' unhappy man was found,
The spirit settled, but the reason drown'd;
And all the dreadful tempest died away,
To the dull stillness of the misty day.

And now his freedom he attain'd—if free,
The lost to reason, truth, and hope, can be;
His friends or wearied with the charge, or sure
The harmless wretch was now beyond a cure,
Gave him to wander where he pleased, and find
His own resources for the eager mind;
The playful children of the place he meets,
Playful with them he rambles through the streets;
In all they need, his stronger arm he lends,
And his lost mind to these approving friends.

That gentle maid, whom once the youth had loved,
Is now with mild religious pity moved;
Kindly she chides his boyish flights, while he
Will for a moment fix'd and pensive be;
And as she trembling speaks, his lively eyes
Explore her looks, he listens to her sighs;
Charm'd by her voice, th' harmonious sounds invade
His clouded mind, and for a time persuade:
Like a pleased infant, who has newly caught
From the maternal glance a gleam of thought;
He stands enrapt, the half-known voice to hear,
And starts, half-conscious, at the falling tear.

Rarely from town, nor then unwatch'd, he goes,
In darker mood, as if to hide his woes;
Returning soon, he with impatience seeks
His youthful friends, and shouts, and sings, and speaks;
Speaks a wild speech with action all as wild—
The children's leader, and himself a child;
He spins their top, or, at their bidding, bends
His back, while o'er it leap his laughing friends;
Simple and weak, he acts the boy once more,
And heedless children call him Silly Shore.

TALE XII.

SQUIRE THOMAS; OR, THE PRECIPITATE CHOICE.

Such smiling rogues as these,
Like rats, oft bite the holy cords in twain,
Too intrinsicate t' unloose——
Lear, act i. sc. 2.

My other self, my counsel's consistory,
My oracle, my prophet,——
I as a child will go by thy direction.
Richard III. act ii. sc. 2.

If I do not have pity upon her, I'm a villain; if I do not love her, I am a Jew.
Much Ado about Nothing, act ii. sc. 3.

Women are soft, mild, pitiable, flexible;
But thou art obdurate, flinty, rough, remorseless.
Henry VI. part 3, act ii. sc. 4.

He must be told of it, and he shall; the office
Becomes a woman best; I'll take it upon me;
If I prove honey-mouth'd, let my tongue blister.
Winter's Tale, act ii. sc. 2.

Disguise—I see thou art a wickedness.
Twelfth Night, act ii. sc. 2.

'SQUIRE THOMAS flatter'd long a wealthy aunt,
Who left him all that she could give or grant:
Ten years he tried, with all his craft and skill,
To fix the sovereign lady's varying will;
Ten years enduring at her board to sit,
He meekly listen'd to her tales and wit;
He took the meanest office man can take,
And his aunt's vices for her money's sake:
By many a threatening hint she waked his fear,
And he was pain'd to see a rival near;
Yet all the taunts of her contemptuous pride
He bore, nor found his grovelling spirit tried:
Nay, when she wish'd his parents to traduce,
Fawning he smiled, and justice call'd th' abuse;
"They taught you nothing; are you not, at best,"
Said the proud dame, "a trifler, and a jest?
Confess you are a fool!"—he bow'd and he confess'd.

This vex'd him much, but could not always last:
The dame is buried, and the trial past.

There was a female, who had courted long
Her cousin's gifts, and deeply felt the wrong;
By a vain boy forbidden to attend
The private councils of her wealthy friend,
She vow'd revenge, nor should that crafty boy
In triumph undisturb'd his spoils enjoy;
He heard, he smiled, and when the will was read,
Kindly dismiss'd the kindred of the dead;
"The dear deceased," he call'd her, and the crowd
Moved off with curses deep and threatenings loud

The youth retired, and, with a mind at ease,
Found he was rich, and fancied he must please:
He might have pleased, and to his comfort found
The wife he wish'd, if he had sought around;
For there were lasses of his own degree,
With no more hatred to the state than he:
But he had courted spleen and age so long,
His heart refused to woo the fair and young;
So long attended on caprice and whim
He thought attention now was due to him,
And as his flattery pleased the wealthy dame,
Heir to the wealth he might the flattery claim;
But this the fair, with one accord, denied,
Nor waved for man's caprice the sex's pride:
There is a season when to them is due
Worship and awe, and they will claim it too.
"Fathers," they cry, "long hold us in their chain,
Nay, tyrant brothers claim a right to reign;
Uncles and guardians we in turn obey,
And husbands rule with ever-during sway;
Short is the time when lovers at the feet
Of beauty kneel, and own the slavery sweet;
And shall we this our triumph, this the aim
And boast of female power, forbear to claim?
No! we demand that homage, that respect,
Or the proud rebel punish and reject."

Our hero, still too indolent, too nice
To pay for beauty the accustom'd price,
No less forbore t' address the humbler maid,
Who might have yielded with the price unpaid;
But lived, himself to humour and to please,
To count his money, and enjoy his ease.

It pleased a neighbouring 'squire to recommend
A faithful youth, as servant to his friend;
Nay, more than servant, whom he praised for parts
Ductile yet strong, and for the best of hearts
One who might ease him in his small affairs,
With tenants, tradesmen, taxes, and repairs;
Answer his letters, look to all his dues,
And entertain him with discourse and news.

The 'squire believed, and found the trusted youth
A very pattern for his care and truth;

Not for his virtues to be praised alone,
But for a modest mien and humble tone;
Assenting always, but as if he meant
Only to strength of reasons to assent:
For was he stubborn, and retain'd his doubt,
Till the more subtle 'squire had forced it out;
"Nay, still was right, but he perceived, that strong
And powerful minds could make the right the wrong."

When the 'squire's thoughts on some fair damsel dwelt,
The faithful friend his apprehensions felt;
It would rejoice his faithful heart to find
A lady suited to his master's mind;
But who deserved that master? who would prove
That hers was pure, uninterested love?
Although a servant, he would scorn to take
A countess, till she suffer'd for his sake;
Some tender spirit, humble, faithful, true,
Such, my dear master! must be sought for you.

Six months had pass'd, and not a lady seen
With just this love, 'twixt fifty and fifteen;
All seem'd his doctrine or his pride to shun,
All would be wooed, before they would be won;
When the chance naming of a race and fair,
Our 'squire disposed to take his pleasure there:
The friend profess'd, "Although he first began
To hint the thing, it seem'd a thoughtless plan:
The roads, he fear'd, were foul, the days were short,
The village far, and yet there might be sport."

"What! you of roads and starless nights afraid?
You think to govern! you to be obey'd!"
Smiling he spoke, the humble friend declared
His soul's obedience, and to go prepared.

The place was distant, but with great delight
They saw a race, and hail'd the glorious sight:
The 'squire exulted, and declared the ride
Had amply paid, and he was satisfied.
They gazed, they feasted, and, in happy mood,
Homeward return'd, and hastening as they rode;
For short the day, and sudden was the change
From light to darkness, and the way was strange;
Our hero soon grew peevish, then distress'd;
He dreaded darkness, and he sigh'd for rest:
Going, they pass'd a village, but, alas!
Returning, saw no village to repass;
The 'squire remember'd too a noble hall,
Large as a church, and whiter than its wall:
This he had noticed as they rode along,
And justly reason'd that their road was wrong.
George, full of awe, was modest in reply,
"The fault was his, 'twas folly to deny;
And of his master's safety were he sure,
There was no grievance he would not endure."
This made his peace with the relenting 'squire,
Whose thoughts yet dwelt on supper and a fire;
When, as they reach'd a long and pleasant green,
Dwellings of men, and next a man were seen.

"My friend," said George, "to travellers astray
Point out an inn, and guide us on the way."

The man look'd up; "Surprising! can it be
My master's son? as I'm alive, 'tis he."

"How! Robin," George replied, "and are we near
My father's house? how strangely things appear!
Dear sir, though wanderers, we at last are right:
Let us proceed, and glad my father's sight;
We shall at least be fairly lodged and fed,
I can ensure a supper and a bed;
Let us this night, as one of pleasure date,
And of surprise: it is an act of fate."
"Go on," the 'squire in happy temper cried;
"I like such blunder! I approve such guide."

They ride, they halt, the farmer comes in haste,
Then tells his wife how much their house is graced.
They bless the chance, they praise the lucky son
That caused the error—Nay! it was not one;
But their good fortune—Cheerful grew the 'squire
Who found dependants, flattery, wine, and fire;
He heard the jack turn round, the busy dame
Produced her damask; and with supper came
The daughter, dress'd with care, and full of maiden shame.

Surprised, our hero saw the air and dress,
And strove his admiration to express;
Nay! felt it too—for Harriet was, in truth,
A tall fair beauty in the bloom of youth;
And from the pleasure and surprise, a grace
Adorn'd the blooming damsel's form and face;
Then too, such high respect and duty paid
By all—such silent reverence in the maid;
Venturing with caution, yet with haste, a glance,
Loath to retire, yet trembling to advance,
Appear'd the nymph, and in her gentle guest
Stirr'd soft emotions till the hour of rest:
Sweet was his sleep, and in the morn again
He felt a mixture of delight and pain.
"How fair, how gentle," said the 'squire, "how meek,
And yet how sprightly, when disposed to speak!
Nature has bless'd her form, and Heaven her mind
But in her favours Fortune is unkind;
Poor is the maid—nay, poor she cannot prove
Who is enrich'd with beauty, worth, and love."

The 'squire arose, with no precise intent
To go or stay, uncertain what he meant:
He moved to part; they begg'd him first to dine;
And who could then escape from love and wine?
As came the night, more charming grew the fair
And seem'd to watch him with a two-fold care:
On the third morn, resolving not to stay,
Though urged by love, he bravely rode away.

Arrived at home, three pensive days he gave
To feelings fond and meditations grave;
Lovely she was, and, if he did not err,
As fond of him as his fond heart of her;
Still he delay'd, unable to decide
Which was the master passion, love or pride:
He sometimes wonder'd how his friend could make
And then exulted in, the night's mistake;
Had she but fortune, "Doubtless then," he cried,
"Some happier man had won the wealthy bride."

While thus he hung in balance, now inclined
To change his state, and then to change his mind
That careless George dropp'd idly on the ground
A letter, which his crafty master found;
The stupid youth confess'd his fault, and pray'd
The generous 'squire to spare a gentle maid;
Of whom her tender mother, full of fears,
Had written much; "She caught her oft in tears,
For ever thinking on a youth above
Her humble fortune: still she own'd not love;
Nor can define, dear girl! the cherish'd pain,
But would rejoice to see the cause again:
That neighbouring youth, whom she endured before,
She now rejects, and will behold no more:

Raised by her passion, she no longer stoops
To her own equals, but she pines and droops,
Like to a lily, on whose sweets the sun
Has withering gazed—she saw and was undone:
His wealth allured her not, nor was she moved
By his superior state, himself she loved;
So mild, so good, so gracious, so genteel,—
But spare your sister, and her love conceal;
We must the fault forgive, since she the pain must feel."

"Fault!" said the 'squire, "there's coarseness in the mind
That thus conceives of feelings so refined;
Here end my doubts, nor blame yourself, my friend,
Fate made you careless;—here my doubts have end."

The way is plain before us—there is now
The lover's visit first, and then the vow
Mutual and fond, the marriage rite, the bride
Brought to her home with all a husband's pride;
The 'squire receives the prize his merits won,
And the glad parents leave the patron son.

But in short time he saw with much surprise,
First gloom, then grief, and then resentment rise,
From proud, commanding frowns, and anger-darting eyes:
'Is there in Harriet's humble mind this fire,
This fierce impatience?" ask'd the puzzled 'squire:
"Has marriage changed her? or the mask she wore
Has she thrown by, and is herself once more?"

Hour after hour, when clouds on clouds appear,
Dark and more dark, we know the tempest near;
And thus the frowning brow, the restless form,
And threatening glance, forerun domestic storm:
So read the husband, and, with troubled mind,
Reveal'd his fears;—"My love, I hope you find
All here is pleasant; but I must confess
You seem offended, or in some distress:
Explain the grief you feel, and leave me to redress."

"Leave it to you?" replied the nymph, "indeed!
What! to the cause from whence the ills proceed?
Good heaven! to take me from a place, where I
Had every comfort underneath the sky;
And then immure me in a gloomy place,
With the grim monsters of your ugly race,
That from their canvass staring, make me dread
Through the dark chambers where they hang to tread!
No friend nor neighbour comes to give that joy,
Which all things here must banish or destroy:
Where is the promised coach? the pleasant ride?
O! what a fortune has a farmer's bride!
Your sordid pride has placed me just above
Your hired domestics; and what pays me? love!
A selfish fondness I endure each hour,
And share unwitness'd pomp, unenvied power;
I hear your folly, smile at your parade,
And see your favourite dishes duly made;
Then am I richly dress'd for you t' admire,
Such is my duty and my lord's desire;
Is this a life for youth, for health, for joy?
Are these my duties, this my base employ?
No! to my father's house will I repair,
And make your idle wealth support me there;
Was it your wish to have an humble bride
For bondage thankful? Curse upon your pride!
Was it a slave you wanted? You shall see,
That if not happy, I at least am free;
Well, sir, your answer." Silent stood the 'squire,
As looks a miser at his house on fire;
Where all he deems is vanish'd in that flame,
Swept from the earth his substance and his name
So, lost to every promised joy of life,
Our 'squire stood gaping at his angry wife;—
His fate, his ruin, where he saw it vain
To hope for peace, pray, threaten, or complain;
And thus, betwixt his wonder at the ill
And his despair, there stood he gaping still.

"Your answer, sir;—shall I depart a spot
I thus detest?"—"O, miserable lot!"
Exclaim'd the man. "Go, serpent! nor remain
To sharpen wo by insult and disdain:
A nest of harpies was I doom'd to meet;
What plots, what combinations of deceit!
I see it now; all plann'd, design'd, contrived;
Served by that villain—by this fury wived—
What fate is mine! What wisdom, virtue, truth,
Can stand, if demons set their traps for youth?
He lose his way! vile dog! he cannot lose
The way a villain through his life pursues;
And thou, deceiver! thou afraid to move,
And hiding close the serpent in the dove!
I saw—but, fated to endure disgrace—
Unheeding saw the fury in thy face;
And call'd it spirit;—O! I might have found
Fraud and imposture—all the kindred round!
A nest of vipers"—

—"Sir, I'll not admit
These wild effusions of your angry wit:
Have you that value, that we all should use
Such mighty arts for such important views?
Are you such prize, and is my state so fair
That they should sell their souls to get me there?
Think you that we alone our thoughts disguise?
When in pursuit of some contended prize,
Mask we alone the heart, and soothe whom we despise!
Speak you of craft and subtle schemes, who know
That all your wealth you to deception owe;
Who play'd for ten dull years a scoundrel part,
To worm yourself into a widow's heart?
Now, when you guarded, with superior skill,
That lady's closet, and preserved her will,
Blind in your craft, you saw not one of those
Opposed by you might you in turn oppose;
Or watch your motions, and by art obtain
Share of that wealth you gave your peace to gain?
Did conscience never"—

—"Cease, tormentor, cease—
Or reach me poison——let me rest in peace!"

"Agreed—but hear me—let the truth appear."
"Then state your purpose; I'll be calm and hear."
"Know then, this wealth, sole object of your care,
I had some right, without your hand, to share;
My mother's claim was just; but soon she saw
Your power, compell'd, insulted, to withdraw:
'Twas then my father, in his anger, swore
You should divide the fortune, or restore;
Long we debated;—and you find me now
Heroic victim to a father's vow;
Like Jephthah's daughter, but in different state,
And both decreed to mourn our early fate;
Hence was my brother servant to your pride,
Vengeance made him your slave, and me your bride,
Now all is known: a dreadful price I pay
For our revenge;—but still we have our day;

All that you love you must with others share,
Or all you dread from their resentment dare!
Yet terms I offer—let contention cease:
Divide the spoil, and let us part in peace."
Our hero trembling heard—he sat—he rose—
Nor could his motions nor his mind compose;
He paced the room—and, stalking to her side,
Gazed on the face of his undaunted bride;
And nothing there but scorn and calm aversion spied.
He would have vengeance, yet he fear'd the law:
Her friends would threaten, and their power he saw;
"Then let her go:"—but O! a mighty sum
Would that demand, since he had let her come:
Nor from his sorrows could he find redress,
Save that which led him to a like distress,
And all his ease was in his wife to see
A wretch as anxious and distress'd as he:
Her strongest wish, the fortune to divide
And part in peace, his avarice denied;
And thus it happen'd, as in all deceit,
The cheater found the evil of the cheat;
The husband grieved—nor was the wife at rest;
Him she could vex, and he could her molest;
She could his passion into frenzy raise,
But when the fire was kindled, fear'd the blaze:
As much they studied, so in time they found
The easiest way to give the deepest wound;
But then, like fencers, they were equal still,
Both lost in danger what they gain'd in skill;
Each heart a keener kind of rancour gain'd,
And paining more, was more severely pain'd;
And thus by both were equal vengeance dealt,
And both the anguish they inflicted felt.

TALE XIII.

JESSY AND COLIN.

Then she plots, then she ruminates, then she devises; and what they think in their hearts they may effect, they will break their hearts but they will effect.
Merry Wives of Windsor, act ii. sc. 2.

She hath spoken that she should not, I am sure of that; Heaven knows what she hath known.
Macbeth, act v. sc. 1.

Our house is hell, and thou a merry devil.
Merchant of Venice, act ii. sc. 8.

And yet, for aught I see, they are as sick that surfeit of too much, as they that starve with nothing; it is no mean happiness, therefore, to be seated in the mean.
Id. act i. sc. 2.

A VICAR died, and left his daughter poor—
It hurt her not, she was not rich before:
Her humble share of worldly goods she sold,
Paid every debt, and then her fortune told;
And found, with youth and beauty, hope and health,
Two hundred guineas was her worldly wealth;
It then remain'd to choose her path in life,
And first, said Jessy, "Shall I be a wife?—
Colin is mild and civil, kind and just,
I know his love, his temper I can trust;
But small his farm, it asks perpetual care,
And we must toil as well as trouble share:
True, he was taught in all the gentle arts
That raise the soul, and soften human hearts;
And boasts a parent, who deserves to shine
In higher class, and I could wish her mine;
Nor wants he will his station to improve,
A just ambition waked by faithful love;—
Still is he poor—and here my father's friend
Deigns for his daughter, as her own, to send;
A worthy lady, who it seems has known
A world of griefs and troubles of her own:
I was an infant, when she came, a guest
Beneath my father's humble roof to rest;
Her kindred all unfeeling, vast her woes,
Such her complaint, and there she found repose.
Enrich'd by fortune, now she nobly lives,
And nobly, from the blest abundance, gives;
The grief, the want of human life, she knows,
And comfort there and here relief bestows;
But are they not dependants?—Foolish pride
Am I not honour'd by such friend and guide?
Have I a home," (here Jessy dropp'd a tear,)
"Or friend beside?"—A faithful friend was near.
Now Colin came, at length resolved to lay
His heart before her and to urge her stay;
True, his own plough the gentle Colin drove,
An humble farmer with aspiring love;
Who, urged by passion, never dared till now,
Thus urged by fears, his trembling hopes avow:
Her father's glebe he managed; every year
The grateful vicar held the youth more dear;
He saw indeed the prize in Colin's view,
And wish'd his Jessy with a man so true;
Timid as true, he urged with anxious air
His tender hope, and made the trembling prayer;
When Jessy saw, nor could with coldness see,
Such fond respect, such tried sincerity:
Grateful for favours to her father dealt,
She more than grateful for his passion felt;
Nor could she frown on one so good and kind,
Yet fear'd to smile, and was unfix'd in mind;
But prudence placed the female friend in view—
What might not one so rich and grateful do?
So lately, too, the good old vicar died,
His faithful daughter must not cast aside
The signs of filial grief, and be a ready bride:
Thus, led by prudence, to the lady's seat
The village beauty purposed to retreat;
But as in hard-fought fields the victor knows
What to the vanquish'd he in honour owes,
So in this conquest over powerful love,
Prudence resolved a generous foe to prove;
And Jessy felt a mingled fear and pain
In her dismission of a faithful swain,
Gave her kind thanks, and when she saw his wo,
Kindly betray'd that she was loath to go;
"But would she promise, if abroad she met
A frowning world, she would remember yet
Where dwelt a friend?"—"That could she not forget."
And thus they parted; but each faithful heart
Felt the compulsion and refused to part.
Now by the morning mail the timid maid
Was to that kind and wealthy dame convey'd;
Whose invitation, when her father died,
Jessy as comfort to her heart applied;
She knew the days her generous friend had seen
As wife and widow, evil days had been;
She married early, and for half her life
Was an insulted and forsaken wife;

Widow'd and poor, her angry father gave,
Mix'd with reproach, the pittance of a slave;
Forgetful brothers pass'd her, but she knew
Her humbler friends, and to their home withdrew;
The good old vicar to her sire applied
For help, and help'd her when her sire denied;
When in few years death stalk'd through bower and hall,
Sires, sons, and sons of sons, were buried all:
She then abounded, and had wealth to spare
For softening grief she once was doom'd to share:
Thus train'd in misery's school, and taught to feel,
She would rejoice an orphan's woes to heal:
So Jessy thought, who look'd within her breast,
And thence conceived how bounteous minds are blest'd.

From her vast mansion look'd the lady down
On humbler buildings of a busy town;
Thence came her friends of either sex, and all
With whom she lived on terms reciprocal:
They pass'd the hours with their accustom'd ease,
As guests inclined, but not compell'd to please;
But there were others in the mansion found,
For office chosen, and by duties bound;
Three female rivals, each of power possess'd,
Th' attendant maid, poor friend, and kindred guest.

To these came Jessy, as a seaman thrown
By the rude storm upon a coast unknown
The view was flattering, civil seem'd the race,
But all unknown the dangers of the place. [freed,

Few hours had pass'd, when, from attendants
The lady utter'd—"This is kind indeed;
Believe me, love! that I for one like you
Have daily pray'd, a friend discreet and true;
O! wonder not that I on you depend,
You are mine own hereditary friend:
Hearken, my Jessy, never can I trust
Beings ungrateful, selfish, and unjust;
But you are present, and my load of care
Your love will serve to lighten and to share:
Come near me, Jessy; let not those below
Of my reliance on your friendship know;
Look as they look, be in their freedoms free—
But all they say do you convey to me."

Here Jessy's thoughts to Colin's cottage flew,
And with such speed she scarce their absence knew.

"Jane loves her mistress, and should she depart,
I lose her service, and she breaks her heart;
My ways and wishes, looks and thoughts she knows,
And duteous care by close attention shows:
But is she faithful? in temptation strong?
Will she not wrong me? ah! I fear the wrong:
Your father loved me; now, in time of need,
Watch for my good, and to his place succeed.

"Blood doesn't bind—that girl, who every day
Eats of my bread, would wish my life away;
I am her *dear relation*, and she thinks
To make her fortune, an ambitious minx!
She only courts me for the prospect's sake,
Because she knows I have a will to make;
Yes, love! my will delay'd, I know not how—
But you are here, and I will make it now.

"That idle creature, keep her in your view,
See what she does, what she desires to do;
On her young mind may artful villains prey,
And to my plate and jewels find a way;
A pleasant humour has the girl: her smile
And cheerful manner tedious hours beguile:
But well observe her, ever near her be,
Close in your thoughts, in your professions free.

"Again, my Jessy, hear what I advise,
And watch a woman ever in disguise;
Æsop, that widow, serious, subtle, sly—
But what of this—I must have company:
She markets for me, and although she makes
Profit, no doubt, of all she undertakes,
Yet she is one I can to all produce,
And all her talents are in daily use;
Deprived of her, I may another find
As sly and selfish, with a weaker mind:
But never trust her, she is full of art,
And worms herself into the closet heart;
Seem then, I pray you, careless in her sight,
Nor let her know, my love, how we unite.

"Do, my good Jessy, cast a view around,
And let no wrong within my house be found;
That girl associates with———I know not who
Are her companions, nor what ill they do;
'Tis then the widow plans, 'tis then she tries
Her various arts and schemes for fresh supplies;
'Tis then, if ever, Jane her duty quits,
And, whom I know not, favours and admits:
O! watch their movements all; for me 'tis hard,
Indeed is vain, but you may keep a guard;
And I, when none your watchful glance deceive,
May make my will, and think what I shall leave."

Jessy, with fear, disgust, alarm, surprise,
Heard of these duties for her ears and eyes;
Heard by what service she must gain her bread,
And went with scorn and sorrow to her bed.

Jane was a servant fitted for her place,
Experienced, cunning, fraudful, selfish, base;
Skill'd in those mean humiliating arts
That make their way to proud and selfish hearts;
By instinct taught, she felt an awe, a fear,
For Jessy's upright, simple character;
Whom with gross flattery she a while assail'd,
And then beheld with hatred when it fail'd;
Yet trying still upon her mind for hold,
She all the secrets of the mansion told;
And to invite an equal trust, she drew
Of every mind a bold and rapid view;
But on the widow'd friend with deep disdain,
And rancorous envy, dwelt the treacherous Jane:—
In vain such arts; without deceit or pride,
With a just taste and feeling for her guide,
From all contagion Jessy kept apart,
Free in her manners, guarded in her heart.

Jessy one morn was thoughtful, and her sigh
The widow heard as she was passing by;
And—"Well!" she said, "is that some distant swain,
Or aught with us, that gives your bosom pain?
Come, we are fellow sufferers, slaves in thrall,
And tasks and griefs are common to us all;
Think not my frankness strange: they love to paint
Their state with freedom, who endure restraint;
And there is something in that speaking eye
And sober mien, that prove I may rely:
You came a stranger; to my words attend,
Accept my offer, and you find a friend;
It is a labyrinth in which you stray,
Come, hold my clue, and I will lead the way.

"Good Heaven! that one so jealous, envious, base,
Should be the mistress of so sweet a place;
She, who so long herself was low and poor,
Now broods suspicious on her useless store;
She loves to see us abject, loves to deal
Her insult round, and then pretends to feel:
Prepare to cast all dignity aside,
For know your talents will be quickly tried;
Nor think, from favours past, a friend to gain,
'Tis but by duties we our posts maintain:
I read her novels, gossip through the town,
And daily go, for idle stories, down;
I cheapen all she buys, and bear the curse
Of honest tradesmen for my niggard purse;
And, when for her this meanness I display,
She cries, 'I heed not what I throw away;'
Of secret bargains I endure the shame,
And stake my credit for our fish and game;
Oft has she smiled to hear 'her generous soul
Would gladly give, but stoops to my control.'
Nay! I have heard her, when she chanced to come
Where I contended for a petty sum,
Affirm 'twas painful to behold such care,
'But Issop's nature is to pinch and spare.'
Thus all the meanness of the house is mine,
And my reward, to scorn her, and to dine.

"See next that giddy thing, with neither pride
To keep her safe, nor principle to guide;
Poor, idle, simple flirt! as sure as fate
Her maiden fame will have an early date:
Of her beware; for all who live below
Have faults they wish not all the world to know;
And she is fond of listening, full of doubt,
And stoops to guilt to find an error out.

"And now once more observe the artful maid,
A lying, prying, jilting, thievish jade;
I think, my love, you would not condescend
To call a low, illiterate girl your friend:
But in our troubles we are apt, you know,
To lean on all who some compassion show,
And she has flexile features, acting eyes,
And seems with every look to sympathize;
No mirror can a mortal's grief express
With more precision, or can feel it less;
That proud, mean spirit, she by fawning courts,
By vulgar flattery, and by vile reports;
And, by that proof she every instant gives,
To one so mean, that yet a meaner lives.

"Come, I have drawn the curtain, and you see
Your fellow actors, all our company;
Should you incline to throw reserve aside,
And in my judgment and my love confide,
I could some prospects open to your view,
That ask attention; and, till then, adieu."

"Farewell!" said Jessy, hastening to her room,
Where all she saw within, without, was gloom:
Confused, perplex'd, she pass'd a dreary hour,
Before her reason could exert its power;
To her all seem'd mysterious, all allied
To avarice, meanness, folly, craft, and pride;
Wearied with thought, she breathed the garden's air,
Then came the laughing lass, and join'd her there.

"My sweetest friend has dwelt with us a week,
And does she love us? be sincere and speak;
My aunt you cannot—Lord! how I should hate
To be like her, all misery and state;
Proud, and yet envious, she disgusted sees
All who are happy, and who look at ease.
Let friendship bind us, I will quickly show
Some favourites near us, you'll be bless'd to know
My aunt forbids it, but can she expect,
To soothe her spleen, we shall ourselves neglect
Jane and the widow were to watch and stay
My free-born feet; I watch'd as well as they;
Lo! what is this? this simple key explores
The dark recess that holds the spinster's stores;
And, led by her ill star, I chanced to see
Where Issop keeps her stock of ratafie;
Used in the hours of anger and alarm,
It makes her civil, and it keeps her warm;
Thus bless'd with secrets both would choose to hide,
Their fears now grant me what their scorn denied.

"My freedom thus by their assent secured,
Bad as it is, the place may be endured;
And bad it is; but her estates, you know,
And her beloved hoards she must bestow;
So we can slyly our amusements take,
And friends of demons, if they help us, make."

"Strange creatures these," thought Jessy, half inclined
To smile at one malicious and yet kind;
Frank and yet cunning, with a heart to love
And malice prompt—the serpent and the dove.
Here could she dwell? or could she yet depart?
Could she be artful? could she bear with art?
This splendid mansion gave the cottage grace,
She thought a dungeon was a happier place;
And Colin pleading, when he pleaded best,
Wrought not such sudden change in Jessy's breast

The wondering maiden, who had only read
Of such vile beings, saw them now with dread;
Safe in themselves, for nature has design'd
The creature's poison harmless to the kind;
But all beside who in the haunts are found
Must dread the poison, and must feel the wound.

Days full of care, slow weary weeks pass'd on,
Eager to go, still Jessy was not gone;
Her time in trifling or in tears she spent,
She never gave, she never felt content:
The lady wonder'd that her humble guest
Strove not to please, would neither lie nor jest;
She sought no news, no scandal would convey,
But walk'd for health, and was at church to pray
All this displeased, and soon the widow cried,
"Let me be frank; I am not satisfied;
You know my wishes, I your judgment trust;
You can be useful, Jessy, and you must.
Let me be plainer, child; I want an ear
When I am deaf, instead of mine to hear,
When mine is sleeping, let your eye awake;
When I observe not, observation take;
Alas! I rest not on my pillow laid,
Then threatening whispers make my soul afraid;
The tread of strangers to my ear ascends,
Fed at my cost, the minions of my friends;
While you, without a care, a wish to please,
Eat the vile bread of idleness and ease."

Th' indignant girl, astonish'd, answer'd, "Nay
This instant, madam, let me haste away;
Thus speaks my father's, thus an orphan's friend?
This instant, lady, let your bounty end."

The lady frown'd indignant: "What!" she cried,
"A vicar's daughter with a princess' pride!

And pauper's lot! but pitying, I forgive;
How, simple Jessy, do you think to live?
Have I not power to help you, foolish maid?
To my concerns be your attention paid;
With cheerful mind th' allotted duties take,
And recollect I have a will to make."
Jessy, who felt as liberal natures feel,
When thus the baser their designs reveal,
Replied, "Those duties were to her unfit,
Nor would her spirit to her tasks submit."
In silent scorn the lady sat a while,
And then replied with stern contemptuous smile,—
"Think you, fair madam, that you came to share
Fortunes like mine without a thought or care?
A guest, indeed! from every trouble free,
Dress'd by my help, with not a care for me;
When I a visit to your father made,
I for the poor assistance largely paid;
To his domestics I their tasks assign'd,
I fix'd the portion for his hungry hind;
And had your father (simple man!) obey'd
My good advice, and watch'd as well as pray'd,
He might have left you something with his prayers,
And lent some colour for these lofty airs.
"In tears, my love! O, then, my soften'd heart
Cannot resist; we never more will part;
I need your friendship, I will be your friend,
And thus determined, to my will attend."
Jessy went forth, but with determined soul
To fly such love, to break from such control;
'I hear enough," the trembling damsel cried;
"Flight be my care, and Providence my guide:
Ere yet a prisoner, I escape will make;
Will, thus display'd, th' insidious arts forsake,
And, as the rattle sounds, will fly the fatal snake."
Jessy her thanks upon the morrow paid,
Prepared to go, determined, though afraid.
"Ungrateful creature," said the lady, "this
Could I imagine?—are you frantic, miss?
What! leave your friend, your prospects—is it true?"
This Jessy answer'd by a mild "Adieu!"
The dame replied, "Then houseless may you rove,
The starving victim to a guilty love;
Branded with shame, in sickness doom'd to nurse
An ill-form'd cub, your scandal and your curse;
Spurn'd by its scoundrel father, and ill fed
By surly rustics with the parish bread!—
Relent you not?—speak—yet I can forgive;
Still live with me."—"With you," said Jessy, "live?
No! I would first endure what you describe,
Rather than breathe with your detested tribe,
Who long have feign'd, till now their very hearts
Are firmly fix'd in their accursed parts;
Who all profess esteem, and feel disdain,
And all, with justice, of deceit complain;
Whom I could pity, but that, while I stay,
My terror drives all kinder thoughts away;
Grateful for this, that when I think of you,
I little fear what poverty can do."
The angry matron her attendant Jane
Summon'd in haste to soothe the fierce disdain.
"A vile, detested wretch!" the lady cried,
"Yet shall she be, by many an effort, tried,
And, clogg'd with debt and fear, against her will
abide;
And, once secured, she never shall depart
Till I have proved the firmness of her heart;
Then when she dares not, would not, cannot go,
I'll make her feel what 'tis to use me so."
The pensive Colin in his garden stray'd,
But felt not then the beauties it display'd;
There many a pleasant objec[illegible] his view,
A rising wood of oaks behind it grew;
A stream ran by it, and the village green
And public road were from the gardens seen;
Save where the pine and larch the boundary
made,
And on the rose-beds threw a softening shade.
The mother sat beside the garden door,
Dress'd as in times ere she and hers were poor;
The broad-laced cap was known in ancient
days,
When madam's dress compell'd the village
praise;
And still she look'd as in the times of old,
Ere his last farm the erring husband sold;
While yet the mansion stood in decent state,
And paupers waited at the well-known gate
"Alas! my son!" the mother cried, "and why
That silent grief and oft-repeated sigh?
True, we are poor, but thou hast never felt
Pangs to thy father for his error dealt;
Pangs from strong hopes of visionary gain,
For ever raised, and ever found in vain.
He rose unhappy! from his fruitless schemes,
As guilty wretches from their blissful dreams;
But thou wert then, my son, a playful child,
Wondering at grief, gay, innocent, and wild,
Listening at times to thy poor mother's sighs,
With curious looks and innocent surprise;
Thy father dying, thou, my virtuous boy,
My comfort always, waked my soul to joy;
With the poor remnant of our fortune left,
Thou hast our station of its gloom bereft:
Thy lively temper, and thy cheerful air,
Have cast a smile on sadness and despair:
Thy active hand has dealt to this poor space
The bliss of plenty and the charm of grace;
And all around us wonder when they find
Such taste and strength, such skill and power
combined;
There is no mother, Colin, no, not one
But envies me so kind, so good a son;
By thee supported on this failing side,
Weakness itself awakes a parent's pride:
I bless the stroke that was my grief before,
And feel such joy that 'tis disease no more;
Shielded by thee, my want becomes my wealth,
And soothed by Colin, sickness smiles at health;
The old men love thee, they repeat thy praise,
And say, like thee were youth in earlier days;
While every village maiden cries, 'How gay,
How smart, how brave, how good is Colin
Grey!"

"Yet art thou sad; alas! my son, I know
Thy heart is wounded, and the cure is slow;
Fain would I think that Jessy still may come
To share the comforts of our rustic home:
She surely loved thee; I have seen the maid,
When thou hast kindly brought the vicar aid—
When thou hast eased his bosom of its pain,
O! I have seen her—she will come again.'
The matron ceased; and Colin stood the while
Silent, but striving for a grateful smile;
He then replied, "Ah! sure, had Jessy stay'd,
And shared the comforts of our sylvan shade,
The tenderest duty and the fondest love
Would not have fail'd that generous heart to move;
A grateful pity would have ruled her breast,
And my distresses would have made me blest.
"But she is gone, and ever has in view
Grandeur and taste; and what will then ensue?
Surprise, and then delight, in scenes so fair and new:
For many a day, perhaps for many a week,
Home will have charms, and to her bosom speak;
But thoughtless ease, and affluence, and pride,
Seen day by day, will draw the heart aside:
And she at length, though gentle and sincere,
Will think no more of our enjoyment here."
Sighing he spake—but hark! he hears the approach
Of rattling wheels! and lo! the evening coach;
Once more the movement of the horses' feet
Makes the fond heart with strong emotion beat;
Faint were his hopes, but ever had the sight
Drawn him to gaze beside his gate at night;
And when with rapid wheels it hurried by,
He grieved his parent with a hopeless sigh;
And could the blessing have been bought, what sum
Had he not offer'd, to have Jessy come!
She came—he saw her bending from the door,
Her face, her smile, and he beheld no more;
Lost in his joy—the mother lent her aid
T' assist and to detain the willing maid;
Who thought her late, her present home to make,
Sure of a welcome for the vicar's sake:
But the good parent was so pleased, so kind,
So pressing Colin, she so much inclined,
That night advanced; and then so long detain'd,
No wishes to depart she felt, or feign'd;
Yet long in doubt she stood, and then perforce remain'd.
Here was a lover fond, a friend sincere;
Here was content and joy, for she was here:
In the mild evening, in the scene around,
The maid, now free, peculiar beauties found;
Blended with village tones, the evening gale
Gave the sweet night-bird's warblings to the vale;
The youth imbolden'd, yet abash'd, now told
His fondest wish, nor found the maiden cold;
The mother smiling whisper'd—"Let him go
And seek the license!" Jessy answer'd, "No:"
But Colin went. I know not if they live
With all the comforts wealth and plenty give:
But with pure joy to envious souls denied,
To suppliant meanness and suspicious pride;
And village maids of happy couples say,
"They live like Jessy Bourn and Colin Grey."

TALE XIV.

THE STRUGGLES OF CONSCIENCE.

I am a villain; yet I lie, I am not;
Fool! of thyself speak well:—Fool! do not flatter
My Conscience hath a thousand several tongues,
And every tongue brings in a several tale.
Richard III. act v. sc. 3

My Conscience is but a kind of hard Conscience....
The fiend gives the more friendly counsel.
Merchant of Venice, act ii. sc. 2

Thou hast it now—and I fear
Thou play'dst most foully for it.
Macbeth, act iii. sc. 1.

Canst thou not minister to a mind diseased,
Pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow,
Rase out the written troubles of the brain,
And with some sweet oblivious antidote
Cleanse the foul bosom of that perilous stuff
Which weighs upon the heart?
Ib. act v. sc. 3.

Soft! I did but dream—
O! coward Conscience, how dost thou afflict me!
Richard III. act v. sc. 3.

A SERIOUS toyman in the city dwelt,
Who much concern for his religion felt;
Reading, he changed his tenets, read again,
And various questions could with skill maintain;
Papist and quaker if we set aside,
He had the road of every traveller tried;
There walk'd a while, and on a sudden turn'd
Into some by-way he had just discern'd:
He had a nephew, Fulham—Fulham went
His uncle's way, with every turn content;
He saw his pious kinsman's watchful care,
And thought such anxious pains his own might spare,
And he, the truth obtain'd, without the toil, might share.
In fact, young Fulham, though he little read,
Perceived his uncle was by fancy led;
And smiled to see the constant care he took,
Collating creed with creed, and book with book.
At length the senior fix'd; I pass the sect
He call'd a church, 'twas precious and elect;
Yet the seed fell not in the richest soil,
For few disciples paid the preacher's toil;
All in an attic room were wont to meet,
These few disciples at their pastor's feet;
With these went Fulham, who, discreet and grave,
Follow'd the light his worthy uncle gave;
Till a warm preacher found a way t' impart
Awakening feelings to his torpid heart:
Some weighty truths, and of unpleasant kind,
Sank, though resisted, in his struggling mind;
He wish'd to fly them, but compell'd to stay,
Truth to the waking Conscience found her way;
For though the youth was call'd a prudent lad,
And prudent was, yet serious faults he had;
Who now reflected—"Much am I surprised,
I find these notions cannot be despised;
No! there is something I perceive at last,
Although my uncle cannot hold it fast;
Though I the strictness of these men reject,
Yet I determine to be circumspect;
This man alarms me, and I must begin
To look more closely to the things within;

These sons of zeal have I derided long,
But now begin to think the laughers wrong;
Nay, my good uncle, by all teachers moved,
Will be preferr'd to him who none approved;
Better to love amiss than nothing to have loved."
Such were his thoughts, when Conscience first began
To hold close converse with th' awaken'd man:
He from that time reserved and cautious grew,
And for his duties felt obedience due;
Pious he was not, but he fear'd the pain
Of sins committed, nor would sin again.
Whene'er he stray'd, he found his Conscience rose,
Like one determined what was ill t' oppose,
What wrong t' accuse, what secret to disclose:
To drag forth every latent act to light,
And fix them fully in the actor's sight:
This gave him trouble, but he still confess'd
The labour useful, for it brought him rest.
The uncle died, and when the nephew read
The will, and saw the substance of the dead—
Five hundred guineas, with a stock in trade—
He much rejoiced, and thought his fortune made;
Yet felt aspiring pleasure at the sight,
And for increase, increasing appetite:
Desire of profit, idle habits check'd,
(For Fulham's virtue was to be correct;)
He and his Conscience had their compact made—
"Urge me with truth, and you will soon persuade;
But not," he cried, "for mere ideal things
Give me to feel those terror-breeding stings."
"Let not such thoughts," she said, "your mind confound;
Trifles may wake me, but they never wound;
In them indeed there is a wrong and right,
But you will find me pliant and polite;
Not like a Conscience of the dotard kind,
Awake to dreams, to dire offences blind:
Let all within be pure, in all beside
Be your own master, governor, and guide;
Alive to danger, in temptation strong,
And I shall sleep our whole existence long."
"Sweet be thy sleep," said Fulham; "strong must be
The tempting ill that gains access to me:
Never will I to evil deed consent,
Or, if surprised, O! how will I repent!
Should gain be doubtful, soon would I restore
The dangerous good, or give it to the poor,
Repose for them my growing wealth shall buy—
Or build—who knows?—an hospital like Guy?—
Yet why each means to soothe the smart within,
While firmly purposed to renounce the sin?"
Thus our young Trader and his Conscience dwelt
In mutual love, and great the joy they felt;
But yet in small concerns, in trivial things,
'She was," he said, "too ready with the stings;"
And he too apt, in search of growing gains,
To lose the fear of penalties and pains:
Yet these were trifling bickerings, petty jars,
Domestic strifes, preliminary wars;
He ventured little, little she express'd
Of indignation, and they both had rest.
Thus was he fix'd to walk the worthy way,
When profit urged him to a bold essay:—
A time was that when all at pleasure gamed
In lottery chances, yet of law unblamed;
This Fulham tried: who would to him advance
A pound or crown, he gave in turn a chance
For weighty prize; and should they nothing share,
They had their crown or pound in Fulham's ware;
Thus the old stores within the shop were sold
For that which none refuses, new or old.
Was this unjust? yet Conscience could not rest,
But made a mighty struggle in the breast:
And gave th' aspiring man an early proof,
That should they war he would have work enough
"Suppose," said she, "your vended numbers rise
The same with those which gain each real prize,
(Such your proposal,) can you ruin shun?"—
"A hundred thousand," he replied, "to one."—
"Still it may happen."—"I the sum must pay."—
"You know you cannot."—"I can run away."
"That is dishonest."—"Nay, but you must wink
At a chance hit; it cannot be, I think.
Upon my conduct as a whole decide,
Such trifling errors let my virtues hide;
Fail I at meeting? am I sleepy there?
My purse refuse I with the priest to share?
Do I deny the poor a helping hand?
Or stop the wicked women in the Strand?
Or drink at club beyond a certain pitch?
Which are your charges? Conscience, tell me which?"
"'Tis well," said she, "but—" "Nay, I pray, have done:
Trust me, I will not into danger run."
The lottery drawn, not one demand was made;
Fulham gain'd profit and increase of trade.
"See now," said he—for Conscience yet arose—
"How foolish 'tis such measures to oppose:
Have I not blameless thus my state advanced?"—
"Still," mutter'd Conscience, still it might have chanced."—
"Might!" said our hero, "who is so exact
As to inquire what might have been a fact?"
Now Fulham's shop contain'd a curious view
Of costly trifles elegant and new:
The papers told where kind mammas might buy
The gayest toys to charm an infant's eye;
Where generous beaux might gentle damsels please.
And travellers call who cross the land or seas,
And find the curious art, the neat device
Of precious value and of trifling price.
Here Conscience rested, she was find pleased to find,
No less an active than an honest mind;
But when he named his price, and when he swore,
His conscience check'd him, that he ask'd no more
When half he sought had been a large increase
On fair demand, she could not rest in peace
(Beside th' affront to call th' adviser in,
Who would prevent, to justify the sin?)
She therefore told him, that "he vainly tried
To soothe her anger, conscious that he lied;
If thus he grasp'd at such usurious gains,
He must deserve, and should expect her pains."
The charge was strong; he would in part confess
Offence there was: but who offended less?
"What! is a mere assertion call'd a lie?
And if it be, are men compell'd to buy?
'Twas strange that Conscience on such points should dwell,
While he was acting (he would call it) well:
He bought as others buy, he sold as others sell

There was no fraud, and he demanded cause
Why he was troubled, when he kept the laws?"
"My laws?" said Conscience: "What," said he, are thine?
'Oral or written, human or divine?
Show me the chapter, let me see the text;
By laws uncertain subjects are perplex'd:
Let me my finger on the statute lay,
And I shall feel it duty to obey."
"Reflect," said Conscience, "'twas your own desire
That I should warn you—does the compact tire?
Repent you this? then bid me not advise,
And rather hear your passions as they rise;
So you may counsel and romonstrance shun,
But then remember it is war begun;
And you may judge from some attacks, my friend,
What serious conflicts will on war attend."
"Nay, but," at length the thoughtful man replied,
'I say not that; I wish you for my guide;
Wish for your checks and your reproofs—but then
Be like a Conscience of my fellow-men;
Worthy I mean, and men of good report,
And not the wretches who with Conscience sport:
There's Bice, my friend, who passes off his grease
Of pigs for bears', in pots a crown apiece;
His Conscience never checks him when he swears
That fat he sells is honest fat of bears;
And so it is, for he contrives to give
A drachm to each—'tis thus that tradesmen live:
Now why should you and I be overnice?
What man is held in more repute than Bice?"
Here ended the dispute; but yet 'twas plain
The parties both expected strife again:
Their friendship cool'd, he look'd about and saw
Numbers who seem'd unshackled by his awe;
While like a schoolboy he was threaten'd still,
Now for the deed, now only for the will;
Here Conscience answer'd, "To thy neighbour's guide
Thy neighbour leave, and in thine own confide."
Such were each day the charges and replies,
When a new object caught the trader's eyes;
A vestry patriot, could he gain the name,
Would famous make him, and would pay the fame:
He knew full well the sums bequeath'd in charge
For schools, for alms-men, for the poor, were large;
Report had told, and he could feel it true,
That most unfairly dealt the trusted few;
No partners would they in their office take,
Nor clear accounts at annual meetings make;
Aloud our hero in the vestry spoke
Of hidden deeds, and vow'd to draw the cloak;
It was the poor man's cause, and he, for one,
Was quite determined to see justice done:
His foes affected laughter, then disdain,
They too were loud and threatening, but in vain;
The pauper's friend, their foe, arose and spoke again:
Fiercely he cried, "Your garbled statements show
That you determine we shall nothing know;
But we shall bring your hidden crimes to light,
Give you to shame, and to the poor their right."
Virtue like this might some approval ask,
But Conscience sternly said, "You wear a mask!"
At least," said Fulham, "if I have a view
To serve myself, I serve the public too."
Fulham, though check'd, retain'd his former zeal,
And this the cautious rogues began to feel;
"Thus will he ever bark," in peevish tone,
An elder cried; "the cur must have a bone"
They then began to hint, and to begin
Was all they needed—it was felt within;
In terms less veil'd an offer then was made,
Though distant still, it fail'd not to persuade;
More plainly then was every point proposed,
Approved, accepted, and the bargain closed
"Th' exulting paupers hail'd their friend's success,
And bade adieu to murmurs and distress."
Alas! their friend had now superior light,
And, view'd by that, he found that all was right;
"There were no errors, the disbursements small,
This was the truth, and truth was due to all."
And rested Conscience? No! she would not rest,
Yet was content with making a protest:
Some acts she now with less resistance bore,
Nor took alarm so quickly as before:
Like those in towns besieged, who every ball
At first with terror view, and dread them all;
But, grown familiar with the scenes, they fear
The danger less, as it approaches near;
So Conscience, more familiar with the view
Of growing evils, less attentive grew:
Yet he who felt some pain, and dreaded more,
Gave a peace-offering to the angry poor.
Thus had he quiet; but the time was brief,
From his new triumph sprang a cause of grief,
In office join'd, and acting with the rest,
He must admit the sacramental test:
Now, as a sectary, who had all his life,
As he supposed, been with the church at strife,
(No rules of hers, no laws had he perused,
Nor knew the tenets he by rote abused;)
Yet Conscience here arose more fierce and strong
Than when she told of robbery and wrong;
"Change his religion! No! he must be sure
That was a blow no Conscience could endure."
Though friend to virtue, yet she oft abides
In early notions, fix'd by erring guides;
And is more startled by a call from those,
Than when the foulest crimes her rest oppose;
By error taught, by prejudice misled,
She yields her rights, and fancy rules instead;
When Conscience all her stings and terror deals,
Not as truth dictates, but as fancy feels:
And thus within our hero's troubled breast,
Crime was less torture than the odious test.
New forms, new measures, he must now embrace,
With sad conviction that they warr'd with grace;
To his new church no former friend would come,
They scarce preferr'd her to the church of Rome:
But thinking much, and weighing guilt and gain,
Conscience and he commuted for her pain;
Then promised Fulham to retain his creed,
And their peculiar paupers still to feed;
Their attic room (in secret) to attend,
And not forget he was the preacher's friend;
Thus he proposed, and Conscience, troubled, tried,
And wanting peace, reluctantly complied.
Now care subdued, and apprehensions gone,
In peace our hero went aspiring on;
But short the period;—soon a quarrel rose,
Fierce in the birth, and fatal in the close;
With times of truce between, which rather proved
That both were weary, than that either loved

Fulham e'en now disliked the heavy thrall,
And for her death would in his anguish call,
As Rome's mistaken friend exclaim'd, *Let Carthage fall!*
So felt our hero, so his wish express'd,
Against this powerful sprite—*delenda est;*
Rome in her conquest saw not danger near,
Freed from her rival, and without a fear;
So, Conscience conquer'd, men perceive how free,
But not how fatal such a state must be.
Fatal, not free our hero's; foe or friend
Conscience on him was destined to attend:
She dozed indeed, grew dull, nor seem'd to spy
Crime following crime, and each of deeper dye;
But all were noticed, and the reckoning time
With her account came on; crime following crime.
This, once a foe, now brother in the trust,
Whom Fulham late described as fair and just,
Was the sole guardian of a wealthy maid,
Placed in his power, and of his frown afraid:
Not quite an idiot, for her busy brain
Sought, by poor cunning, trifling points to gain;
Success in childish projects her delight,
She took no heed of each important right.
The friendly parties met: the guardian cried,
"I am too old; my sons have each a bride:
Martha, my ward, would make an easy wife;
On easy terms I'll make her yours for life;
And then the creature is so weak and mild,
She may be soothed and threaten'd as a child."—
"Yet not obey," said Fulham, "for your fools,
Female and male, are obstinate as mules."
Some points adjusted, these new friends agreed,
Proposed the day, and hurried on the deed.
"'Tis a vile act," said Conscience. "It will prove,"
Replied the bolder man, "an act of love;
Her wicked guardian might the girl have sold
To endless misery for a tyrant's gold;
Now may her life be happy, for I mean
To keep my temper even and serene."
"I cannot thus compound," the spirit cried,
"Nor have my laws thus broken and defied:
This is a fraud, a bargain for a wife;
Expect my vengeance, or amend your life."
The wife was pretty, trifling, childish, weak;
She could not think, but would not cease to speak:
This he forbade; she took the caution ill,
And boldly rose against his sovereign will;
With idiot cunning she would watch the hour,
When friends were present, to dispute his power:
With tyrant craft, he then was still and calm,
But raised in private terror and alarm:
By many trials, she perceived how far
To vex and tease, without an open war;
And he discover'd that so weak a mind
No art could lead, and no compulsion bind;
The rudest force would fail such mind to tame,
And she was callous to rebuke and shame:
Proud of her wealth, the power of law she knew,
And would assist him in the spending too:
His threatening words with insult she defied,
To all his reasoning with a stare replied;
And when he begg'd her to attend, would say,
"Attend I will, but let me have my way."
Nor rest had Conscience: "While you merit pain,
From me," she cried, "you seek redress in vain."
His thoughts were grievous: "All that I possess
From this vile bargain adds to my distress;
To pass a life with one who will not mend,
Who cannot love, nor save, nor wisely spend,
Is a vile prospect, and I see no end;
For if we part, I must of course restore
Much of her money, and must wed no more.
"Is there no way?"—here Conscience rose in power,
"O! fly the danger of this fatal hour;
I am thy Conscience, faithful, fond, and true,
Ah, fly this thought, or evil must ensue;
Fall on thy knees, and pray with all thy soul,
Thy purpose banish, thy design control;
Let every hope of such advantage cease,
Or never more expect a moment's peace."
Th' affrighten'd man a due attention paid,
Felt the rebuke, and the command obey'd.
Again the wife rebell'd, again express'd
A love for pleasure, a contempt of rest;
"She, whom she pleased, would visit, would receive
Those who pleased her, nor deign to ask for leave."
"One way there is," said he, "I might contrive
Into a trap this foolish thing to drive:
Who pleased her, said she?—I'll be certain who—"
"Take heed," said Conscience, "what thou mean'st to do:
Insnare thy wife?"—"Why, yes," he must confess,
"It might be wrong, but there was no redress;
Besides, to think," said he, "is not to sin."
"Mistaken man!" replied the power within.
No guest unnoticed to the lady came,
He judged th' event with mingled joy and shame;
Oft he withdrew, and seem'd to leave her free,
But still as watchful as a lynx was he;
Meanwhile the wife was thoughtless, cool, and gay
And, without virtue, had no wish to stray.
Though thus opposed, his plans were not resign'd;
"Revenge," said he, "will prompt that daring mind;
Refused supplies, insulted and distress'd,
Enraged with me, and near a favourite guest—
Then will her vengeance prompt the daring deed,
And I shall watch, detect her, and be freed."
There was a youth—but let me hide the name,
With all the progress of this deed of shame,
He had his views—on him the husband cast
His net, and saw him in his trammels fast.
"Pause but a moment, think what you intend,"
Said the roused sleeper, "I am yet a friend:
Must all our days in enmity be spent?"
"No!" and he paused;—"I surely shall repent."
Then hurried on—the evil plan was laid,
The wife was guilty, and her friend betray'd,
And Fulham gain'd his wish, and for his will was paid.
Had crimes less weighty on the spirit press'd,
This troubled Conscience might have sunk to rest;
And, like a foolish guard, been bribed to peace,
By a false promise, that offence should cease;
Past faults had seem'd familiar to the view
Confused if many, and obscure though true;
And Conscience, troubled with the dull account,
Had dropp'd her tale, and slumber'd o'er th' amount:
But, struck by daring guilt, alert she rose,
Disturb'd, alarm'd, and could no more repose;
All hopes of friendship and of peace were past,
And every view with gloom was overcast.

Hence, from that day, that day of shame and sin,
Arose the restless enmity within;
On no resource could Fulham now rely,
Doom'd all expedients, and in vain, to try;
For Conscience, roused, sat boldly on her throne,
Watch'd every thought, attack'd the foe alone,
And with envenom'd sting drew forth the inward groan:
Expedients fail'd that brought relief before,
In vain his alms gave comfort to the poor,
Give what he would, to him the comfort came no more:
Not prayer avail'd, and when (his crimes confess'd)
He felt some ease, she said, "Are they redress'd?
You still retain the profit, and be sure,
Long as it lasts, this anguish shall endure."
Fulham still tried to soothe her, cheat, mislead;
But Conscience laid her finger on the deed,
And read the crime with power, and all that must succeed:
He tried t' expel her, but was sure to find
Her strength increased by all that he design'd;
Nor ever was his groan more loud and deep,
Than when refresh'd she rose from momentary sleep.
Now desperate grown, weak, harass'd, and afraid,
From new allies he sought for doubtful aid;
To thought itself he strove to bid adieu,
And from devotions to diversions flew;
He took a poor domestic for a slave,
(Though Avarice grieved to see the price he gave;)
Upon his board, once frugal, press'd a load
Of viands rich, the appetite to goad;
The long-protracted meal, the sparkling cup,
Fought with his gloom, and kept his courage up:
Soon as the morning came, there met his eyes
Accounts of wealth, that he might reading rise;
To profit then he gave some active hours,
Till food and wine again should renovate his powers:
Yet, spite of all defence, of every aid,
The watchful foe her close attention paid;
In every thoughtful moment on she press'd,
And gave at once her dagger to his breast;
He waked at midnight, and the fears of sin,
As waters, through a bursten dam, broke in;
Nay, in the banquet, with his friends around,
When all their cares and half their crimes were drown'd,
Would some chance act awake the slumbering fear,
And care and crime in all their strength appear:
The news is read, a guilty victim swings,
And troubled looks proclaim the bosom-stings;
Some pair are wed; this brings the wife in view,
And some divorced; this shows the parting too;
Nor can he hear of evil word or deed,
But they to thought, and thought to sufferings lead.
Such was his life: no other changes came,
The hurrying day, the conscious night the same;
The night of horror, when he starting cried,
To the poor startled sinner at his side,
'Is it in law? am I condemn'd to die?
Let me escape!——I'll give—O! let me fly—
How! but a dream—no judges! dungeon! chain!
Or these grim men!—I will not sleep again.
Wilt thou, dread being! thus thy promise keep?
Day is thy time—and wilt thou murder sleep?
Sorrow and want repose, and wilt thou come,
Nor give one hour of pure, untroubled gloom?

"O! Conscience! Conscience! man's most faithful friend,
Him canst thou comfort, ease, relieve, defend;
But if he will thy friendly checks forego,
Thou art, O! wo for me, his deadliest foe!"

TALE XV.

ADVICE; OR, THE 'SQUIRE AND THE PRIEST.

His hours fill'd up with riots, banquets, sports—
And never noted him in any study,
Any retirement, any sequestration.
Henry V. act i. sc. 1.

I will converse with iron-witted fools,
With unrespective boys; none are for me,
Who look into me with considerate eyes.
Richard III. act iv. sc. 2.

You cram these words into mine ears, against
The stomach of my sense.
Tempest, act ii. sc. 1.

A WEALTHY lord of far-extended land,
Had all that pleased him placed at his command;
Widow'd of late, but finding much relief
In the world's comforts, he dismiss'd his grief;
He was by marriage of his daughters eased,
And knew his sons could marry if they pleased:
Meantime in travel he indulged the boys,
And kept no spy nor partner of his joys.
These joys, indeed, were of the grosser kind,
That fed the cravings of an earthly mind;
A mind that, conscious of its own excess,
Felt the reproach his neighbours would express.
Long at th' indulgent board he loved to sit,
Where joy was laughter, and profaneness wit;
And such the guest and manners of the hall,
No wedded lady on the 'squire would call:
Here reign'd a favourite, and her triumph gain'd
O'er other favourites who before had reign'd;
Reserved and modest seem'd the nymph to be,
Knowing her lord was charm'd with modesty;
For he, a sportsman keen, the more enjoy'd,
The greater value had the thing destroy'd.
Our 'squire declared, that, from a wife released
He would no more give trouble to a priest;
Seem'd it not then ungrateful and unkind,
That he should trouble from the priesthood find?
The church he honour'd, and he gave the due
And full respect to every son he knew:
But envied those who had the luck to meet
A gentle pastor, civil and discreet;
Who never bold and hostile sermon penn'd,
To wound a sinner, or to shame a friend;
One whom no being either shunn'd or fear'd,
Such must be loved wherever they appear'd
Not such the stern old rector of the time,
Who soothed no culprit, and who spared no crime;
Who would his fears and his contempt express
For irreligion and licentiousness;
Of him our village lord, his guests among,
By speech vindictive proved his feelings stung.
"Were he a bigot," said the 'squire, "whose zea
Condemn'd us all, I should disdain to feel;
But when a man of parts, in college train'd,
Prates of our conduct, who would not be pain'd

While he declaims (where no one dares reply)
On men abandon'd, grovelling in the sty
(Like beasts in human shape) of shameless luxury.
Yet with a patriot's zeal I stand the shock
Of vile rebuke, example to his flock:
But let this rector, thus severe and proud,
Change his wide surplice for a narrow shroud,
And I will place within his seat a youth,
Train'd by the Graces, to explain the truth;
Then shall the flock with gentle hand be led,
By wisdom won, and by compassion fed."

This purposed teacher was a sister's son,
Who of her children gave the priesthood one;
And she had early train'd for this employ
The pliant talents of her college boy:
At various times her letters painted all
Her brother's views, the manners of the hall;
The rector's harshness, and the mischief made
By chiding those whom preachers should persuade:
This led the youth to views of easy life,
A friendly patron, an obliging wife;
His tithe, his glebe, the garden and the steed,
With books as many as he wish'd to read.

All this accorded with the uncle's will,
He loved a priest compliant, easy, still;
Sums he had often to his favourite sent,
"To be," he wrote, "in manly freedom spent;
For well it pleased his spirit to assist
An honest lad, who scorn'd a Methodist."
His mother, too, in her maternal care,
Bade him of canting hypocrites beware;
Who from his duties would his heart seduce,
And make his talents of no earthly use.

Soon must a trial of his worth be made,—
The ancient priest is to the tomb convey'd;
And the youth summon'd from a serious friend,
His guide and host, new duties to attend.

Three months before, the nephew and the 'squire
Saw mutual worth to praise and to admire;
And though the one too early left his wine,
The other still exclaim'd—"My boy will shine;
Yes, I perceive that he will soon improve,
And I shall form the very guide I love;
Decent abroad, he will my name defend,
And, when at home, be social, and unbend."

The plan was specious, for the mind of James
Accorded duly with his uncle's schemes:
He then aspired not to a higher name
Than sober clerks of moderate talents claim;
Gravely to pray, and reverently to preach,
Was all he saw, good youth! within his reach.
Thus may a mass of sulphur long abide
Cold and inert, but to the flame applied,
Kindling it blazes, and consuming turns
To smoke and poison, as it boils and burns.

James, leaving college, to a preacher stray'd;
What call'd, he knew not, but the call obey'd:
Mild, idle, pensive, ever led by those
Who could some specious novelty propose;
Humbly he listen'd, while the preacher dwelt
On touching themes, and strong emotions felt;
And in this night was fix'd that pliant will
To one sole point, and he retains it still.

At first his care was to himself confined;
Himself assured, he gave it to mankind:
His zeal grew active; honest, earnest zeal,
And comfort dealt to him, he long'd to deal;
He to his favourite preacher now withdrew,
Was taught to teach, instructed to subdue;
And train'd for ghostly warfare, when the call
Of his new duties reach'd him from the hall.

Now to the 'squire, although alert and stout,
Came unexpected an attack of gout;
And the grieved patron felt such serious pain,
He never thought to see a church again:
Thrice had the youthful rector taught the crowd,
Whose growing numbers spoke his powers aloud,
Before the patron could himself rejoice
(His pain still lingering) in the general voice;
For he imputed all this early fame
To graceful manner, and the well-known name;
And to himself assumed a share of praise,
For worth and talents he was pleased to raise.

A month had flown, and with it fled disease;
What pleased before, began again to please;
Emerging daily from his chamber's gloom,
He found his old sensations hurrying home;
Then call'd his nephew, and exclaim'd, "My boy,
Let us again the balm of life enjoy;
The foe has left me, and I deem it right,
Should he return, to arm me for the fight.'

Thus spoke the 'squire, the favourite nymph stood by,
And view'd the priest with insult in her eye:
She thrice had heard him when he boldly spoke
On dangerous points, and fear'd he would revoke:
For James she loved not—and her manner told
"This warm affection will be quickly cold."
And still she fear'd impression might be made
Upon a subject nervous and decay'd;
She knew her danger, and had no desire
Of reformation in the gallant 'squire;
And felt an envious pleasure in her breast
To see the rector daunted and distress'd.

Again the uncle to the youth applied;
"Cast, my dear lad, that cursed gloom aside:
There are for all things time and place; appear
Grave in your pulpit, and be merry here:
Now take your wine;—for woes a sure resource,
And the best prelude to a long discourse."

James half obey'd, but cast an angry eye
On the fair lass, who still stood watchful by;
Resolving thus, "I have my fears; but still
I must perform my duties, and I will:
No love, no interest, shall my mind control,
Better to lose my comforts than my soul;
Better my uncle's favour to abjure,
Than the upbraidings of my heart endure."

He took his glass, and then address'd the 'squire
"I feel not well, permit me to retire."
The 'squire conceived that the ensuing day
Gave him these terrors for the grand essay,
When he himself should this young preacher try,
And stand before him with observant eye;
This raised compassion in his manly breast,
And he would send the rector to his rest:
Yet first, in soothing voice—'A moment stay,
And these suggestions of a friend obey:
Treasure these hints, if fame or peace you prize,
The bottle emptied, I shall close my eyes.

"On every priest a twofold care attends,
To prove his talents, and ensure his friends,
First, of the first—your stores at once produce,
And bring your reading to its proper use:

On doctrines dwell, and every point enforce
By quoting much, the scholar's sure resource:
For he alone can show us on each head
What ancient schoolmen and sage fathers said:
No worth has knowledge, if you fail to show
How well you studied, and how much you know:
Is faith your subject, and you judge it right
On theme so dark to cast a ray of light?
Be it that faith the orthodox maintain,
Found in the rubric, what the creeds explain;
Fail not to show us on this ancient faith
(And quote the passage) what some martyr saith:
Dwell not one moment on a faith that shocks
The minds of men sincere and orthodox;
That gloomy faith, that robs the wounded mind
Of all the comfort it was wont to find
From virtuous acts, and to the soul denies
Its proper due for alms and charities;
That partial faith, that, weighing sins alone,
Lets not a virtue for a fault atone;
That starving faith, that would our tables clear,
And make one dreadful Lent of all the year;
And cruel too, for this is faith that rends
Confiding beauties from protecting friends;
A faith that all embracing, what a gloom
Deep and terrific o'er the land would come!
What scenes of horror would that time disclose!
No sight but misery, and no sound but woes;
Your nobler faith, in loftier style convey'd,
Shall be with praise and admiration paid:
On points like these your hearers all admire
A preacher's depth, and nothing more require;
Shall we a studious youth to college send,
That every clown his words may comprehend?
'Tis for your glory, when your hearers own
Your learning matchless, but the sense unknown.

"Thus honour gain'd, learn now to gain a friend,
And the sure way is—never to offend;
For, James, consider—what your neighbours do
Is their own business, and concerns not you:
Shun all resemblance to that forward race
Who preach of sins before a sinner's face;
And seem as if they overlook'd a pew,
Only to drag a failing man in view:
Much should I feel, when groaning in disease,
If a rough hand upon my limb should seize;
But great my anger, if this hand were found
The very doctor's, who should make it sound:
So feel our minds, young priest, so doubly feel,
When hurt by those whose office is to heal.

"Yet of our duties you must something tell,
And must at times on sin and frailty dwell;
Here you may preach in easy, flowing style,
How errors cloud us, and how sins defile:
Here bring persuasive tropes and figures forth,
To show the poor that wealth is nothing worth;
That they, in fact, possess an ample share
Of the world's good, and feel not half its care;
Give them this comfort, and, indeed, my gout
In its full vigour causes me some doubt;
And let it always, for your zeal, suffice,
That vice you combat, in the abstract—vice:
The very captious will be quiet then;
We all confess we are offending men:
In lashing sin, of every stroke beware,
For sinners feel, and sinners you must spare;
In general satire, every man perceives
A slight attack, yet neither fears nor grieves;
But name th' offence, and you absolve the rest,
And point the dagger at a single breast.

"Yet are there sinners of a class so low,
That you with safety may the lash bestow;
Poachers, and drunkards, idle rogues, who feed
At others' cost, a mark'd correction need:
And all the better sort, who see your zeal,
Will love and reverence for their pastor feel;
Reverence for one who can inflict the smart,
And love, because he deals them not a part.

"Remember well what love and age advise;
A quiet rector is a parish prize,
Who in his learning has a decent pride;
Who to his people is a gentle guide;
Who only hints at failings that he sees;
Who loves his glebe, his patron, and his ease,
And finds the way to fame and profit is to please."

The nephew answer'd not, except a sigh
And look of sorrow might be term'd reply;
He saw the fearful hazard of his state,
And held with truth and safety strong debate;
Nor long he reason'd, for the zealous youth
Resolved, though timid, to profess the truth;
And though his friend should like a lion roar,
Truth would he preach, and neither less nor more

The bells had toll'd—arrived the time of prayer
The flock assembled, and the 'squire was there:
And now can poet sing, or proseman say,
The disappointment of that trying day?
As he who long had train'd a favourite steed,
(Whose blood and bone gave promise of his speed,)
Sanguine with hope, he runs with partial eye
O'er every feature, and his bets are high;
Of triumph sure, he sees the rivals start,
And waits their coming with exulting heart;
Forestalling glory, with impatient glance,
And sure to see his conquering steed advance;
The conquering steed advances—luckless day!
A rival's Herod bears the prize away.
Nor second his, nor third, but lagging last,
With hanging head he comes, by all surpass'd;
Surprise and wrath the owner's mind inflame,
Love turns to scorn, and glory ends in shame;—
Thus waited, high in hope, the partial 'squire,
Eager to hear, impatient to admire:
When the young preacher in the tones that find
A certain passage to the kindling mind,
With air and accent strange, impressive, sad,
Alarm'd the judge—he trembled for the lad;
But when the text announced the power of grace,
Amazement scowl'd upon his clouded face,
At this degenerate son of his illustrious race
Staring he stood, till hope again arose,
That James might well define the words he chose
For this he listen'd; but, alas! he found
The preacher always on forbidden ground.

And now the uncle left the hated pew,
With James, and James's conduct in his view:
A long farewell to all his favourite schemes!
For now no crazed fanatic's frantic dreams
Seem'd vile as James's conduct, or as James:
All he had long derided, hated, fear'd,
This from the chosen youth the uncle heard;—
The needless pause, the fierce disorder'd air,
The groan for sin, the vehemence of prayer,
Gave birth to wrath, that, in a long discourse
Of grace, triumphant rose to fourfold force.

He found his thoughts despised, his rules transgress'd,
And while the anger kindled in his breast, [press'd:
The pain must be endured that could not be ex-
Each new idea more inflamed his ire,
As fuel thrown upon a rising fire:
A hearer yet, he sought by threatening sign
To ease his heart, and awe the young divine;
But James refused those angry looks to meet,
Till he dismiss'd his flock, and left his seat:
Exhausted then he felt his trembling frame,
But fix'd his soul—his sentiments the same;
And therefore wise it seem'd to fly from rage,
And seek for shelter in his parsonage:
There, if forsaken, yet consoled to find
Some comforts left, though not a few resign'd;
There, if he lost an erring parent's love,
An honest conscience must the cause approve;
If the nice palate were no longer fed,
The mind enjoy'd delicious thoughts instead;
And if some part of earthly good was flown,
Still was the tithe of ten good farms his own.

Fear now, and discord, in the village reign,
The cool remonstrate, and the meek complain;
But there is war within, and wisdom pleads in vain:
Now dreads the uncle, and proclaims his dread,
Lest the boy-priest should turn each rustic head;
The certain converts cost him certain wo,
The doubtful fear lest they should join the foe:
Matrons of old, with whom he used to joke,
Now pass his honour with a pious look;
Lasses, who met him once with lively airs,
Now cross his way, and gravely walk to prayers:
An old companion, whom he long has loved,
By coward fears confess'd his conscience moved;
As the third bottle gave its spirit forth,
And they bore witness to departed worth,
The friend arose, and he too would depart:—
"Man," said the 'squire, "thou wert not wont to start;
Hast thou attended to that foolish boy,
Who would abridge all comforts, or destroy?"

Yes, he had listen'd, who had slumber'd long,
And was convinced that something must be wrong:
But, though affected, still his yielding heart,
And craving palate, took the uncle's part;
Wine now oppress'd him, who, when free from wine,
Could seldom clearly utter his design;
But though by nature and indulgence weak,
Yet, half converted, he resolved to speak;
And, speaking, own'd, "that in his mind the youth
Had gifts and learning, and that truth was truth:
The 'squire he honour'd, and, for his poor part,
He hated nothing like a hollow heart:
But 'twas a maxim he had often tried,
That right was right, and there he would abide;
He honour'd learning, and he would confess
The preacher had his talents—more or less:
Why not agree? he thought the young divine
Had no such strictness—they might drink and dine;
For them sufficient—but he said before,—
That truth was truth, and he would drink no more."

This heard the 'squire with mix'd contempt and pain;
He fear'd the priest this recreant sot would gain.
The favourite nymph, though not a convert made,
Conceived the man she scorn'd her cause would aid;
And when the spirits of her lord were low,
The lass presumed the wicked cause to show:
"It was the wretched life his honour led,
And would draw vengeance on his guilty head:
Their loves (Heaven knew how dreadfully distress'd
The thought had made her!) were as yet unbless'd:
And till the church had sanction'd"—Here she saw
The wrath that forced her trembling to withdraw.

Add to these outward ills, some inward light,
That show'd him all was not correct and right:
Though now he less indulged—and to the poor,
From day to day, sent alms from door to door;
Though he some ease from easy virtues found,
Yet conscience told him he could not compound;
But must himself the darling sin deny,
Change the whole heart; but here a heavy sigh
Proclaim'd, "How vast the toil! and ah! how weak am I!"

James too has trouble—he divided sees
A parish, once harmonious and at ease:
With him united are the simply meek,
The warm, the sad, the nervous, and the weak;
The rest his uncle's, save the few beside
Who own no doctrine, and obey no guide;
With stragglers of each adverse camp, who lend
Their aid to both, but each in turn offend.

Though zealous still, yet he begins to feel
The heat too fierce, that glows in vulgar zeal;
With pain he hears his simple friends relate
Their week's experience, and their woful state:
With small temptation struggling every hour,
And bravely battling with the tempting power;
His native sense is hurt by strange complaints
Of inward motions in these warring saints;
Who never cast on sinful bait a look
But they perceive the devil at the hook:
Grieved, yet compell'd to smile, he finds it hard
Against the blunders of conceit to guard;
He sighs to hear the jests his converts cause,
He cannot give their erring zeal applause;
But finds it inconsistent to condemn
The flights and follies he has nursed in them:
These, in opposing minds, contempt produce,
Or mirth occasion, or provoke abuse:
On each momentous theme disgrace they bring,
And give to Scorn her poison and her sting.

TALE XVI.

THE CONFIDANT.

Think'st thou I'd make a life of jealousy,
To follow still the changes of the moon,
With fresh suspicion?

Othello, act iii. sc. 3.

Why hast thou lost the fresh blood in thy cheeks,
And given my treasure and my rights in thee
To thick-eyed musing and cursed melancholy

Henry IV. Part I. act ii. sc. 3

It is excellent
To have a giant's strength, but tyrannous
To use it as a giant.

Measure for Measure, act ii. sc. 2.

Anna was young and lovely—in her eye
The glance of beauty, in her cheek the dye;

Her shape was slender, and her features small,
But graceful, easy, unaffected all:
The liveliest tints her youthful face disclosed;
There beauty sparkled, and there health reposed;
For the pure blood that flush'd that rosy cheek
Spoke what the heart forbade the tongue to speak;
And told the feelings of that heart as well,
Nay, with more candour than the tongue could tell:
Though this fair lass had with the wealthy dwelt,
Yet like the damsel of the cot she felt;
And, at the distant hint or dark surmise,
The blood into the mantling cheek would rise.
Now Anna's station frequent terrors wrought
In one whose looks were with such meaning fraught;
For on a lady, as an humble friend,
It was her painful office to attend.
Her duties here were of the usual kind,
And some the body harass'd, some the mind:
Billets she wrote, and tender stories read,
To make the lady sleepy in her bed;
She play'd at whist, but with inferior skill,
And heard the summons as a call to drill;
Music was ever pleasant till she play'd
At a request that no request convey'd;
The lady's tales with anxious looks she heard,
For she must witness what her friend averr'd:
The lady's taste she must in all approve,
Hate whom she hated, whom she loved must love;
These, with the various duties of her place,
With care she studied, and perform'd with grace;
She veil'd her troubles in a mask of ease,
And show'd her pleasure was a power to please.
Such were the damsel's duties; she was poor—
Above a servant, but with service more:
Men on her face with careless freedom gazed,
Nor thought how painful was the glow they raised;
A wealthy few to gain her favour tried,
But not the favour of a grateful bride:
They spoke their purpose with an easy air,
That shamed and frighten'd the dependent fair;
Past time she view'd, the passing time to cheat,
But nothing found to make the present sweet,
With pensive soul she read life's future page,
And saw dependent, poor, repining age.
But who shall dare t' assert what *years* may bring,
When wonders from the passing *hour* may spring?—
There dwelt a yeoman in the place, whose mind
Was gentle, generous, cultivated, kind;
For thirty years he labour'd; fortune then
Placed the mild rustic with superior men
A richer Stafford who had lived to save,
What he had treasured to the poorer gave;
Who with a sober mind that treasure view'd,
And the slight studies of his youth renew'd:
He not profoundly, but discreetly read,
And a fair mind with useful culture fed,
Then thought of marriage; "But the great," said he,
"I shall not suit, nor will the meaner me."
Anna he saw, admired her modest air,
He thought her virtuous, and he knew her fair;
Love raised his pity for her humble state,
And prompted wishes for her happier fate;
No pride in money would his feelings wound,
Nor vulgar manners hurt him and confound:
He then the lady at the hall address'd,
Sought her consent, and his regard express'd;
Yet if some cause his earnest wish denied,
He begg'd to know it, and he bow'd and sigh'd.
The lady own'd that she was loath to part,
But praised the damsel for her gentle heart,
Her pleasing person, and her blooming health,
But ended thus, "Her virtue is her wealth."
"Then is she rich!" he cried, with lively air;
"But whence, so please you, came a lass so fair?
"A placeman's child was Anna, one who died
And left a widow by afflictions tried;
She to support her infant daughter strove,
But early left the object of her love;
Her youth, her beauty, and her orphan state,
Gave a kind countess interest in her fate;
With her she dwelt, and still might dwelling be,
When the earl's folly caused the lass to flee;
A second friend was she compell'd to shun,
By the rude offers of an uncheck'd son;
I found her then, and with a mother's love
Regard the gentle girl whom you approve:
Yet, e'en with me protection is not peace,
Nor man's designs, nor beauty's trial, cease;
Like sordid boys by costly fruit they feel,
They will not purchase, but they try to steal."
Now this good lady, like a witness true,
Told but the truth, and all the truth she knew;
And 'tis our duty and our pain to show
Truth this good lady had not means to know.
Yes, there was lock'd within the damsel's breast
A fact important to be now confess'd;
Gently, my muse, th' afflicting tale relate,
And have some feeling for a sister's fate.
Where Anna dwelt, a conquering hero came,—
An Irish captain, Sedley was his name;
And he too had that same prevailing art,
That gave soft wishes to the virgin's heart:
In years they differ'd; he had thirty seen
When this young beauty counted just fifteen
But still they were a lovely, lively pair,
And trod on earth as if they trod on air.
On love, delightful theme! the captain dwelt,
With force still growing with the hopes he felt;
But with some caution and reluctance told,
He had a father, crafty, harsh, and old;
Who, as possessing much, would much expect,
Or both, for ever, from his love reject:
Why then offence to one so powerful give,
Who (for their comfort) had not long to live?
With this poor prospect the deluded maid,
In words confiding, was indeed betray'd;
And, soon as terrors in her bosom rose,
The hero fled; they hinder'd his repose.
Deprived of him, she to a parent's breast
Her secrets trusted, and her pains express'd;
Let her to town (so prudence urged) repair,
To shun disgrace, at least to hide it there;
But ere she went, the luckless damsel pray'd
A chosen friend might lend her timely aid:
"Yes; my soul's sister, my Eliza, come,
Hear her last sigh, and ease thy Anna's doom."
"'Tis a fool's wish," the angry father cried,
But, lost in troubles of his own, complied:
And dear Eliza to her friend was sent,
T' indulge that wish, and be her punishment:
The time arrived, and brought a tenfold dread;
The time was past, and all the terror fled;
The infant died; the face resumed each charm,
And reason now brought trouble and alarm:

'Should her Eliza—no! she was too just,
Too good and kind—but ah! too young to trust."
Anna return'd, her former place resumed,
And faded beauty with new grace rebloom'd;
And if some whispers of the past were heard,
They died innoxious, as no cause appear'd;
But other cares on Anna's bosom press'd,
She saw her father gloomy and distress'd;
He died o'erwhelm'd with debt, and soon was shed
The filial sorrow o'er a mother dead:
She sought Eliza's arms, that faithful friend was wed;
Then was compassion by the countess shown,
And all th' adventures of her life are known.
And now beyond her hopes—no longer tried
By slavish awe—she lived a yeoman's bride;
Then bless'd her lot, and with a grateful mind
Was careful, cheerful, vigilant, and kind;
The gentle husband felt supreme delight,
Bless'd by her joy, and happy in her sight;
He saw with pride in every friend and guest
High admiration and regard express'd:
With greater pride, and with superior joy,
He look'd exulting on his first-born boy;
To her fond breast the wife her infant strain'd,
Some feelings utter'd, some were not explain'd;
And she enraptured with her treasure grew,
The sight familiar, but the pleasure new.
Yet there appear'd within that tranquil state
Some threatening prospect of uncertain fate;
Between the married when a secret lies,
It wakes suspicion from enforced disguise:
Still thought the wife upon her absent friend,
With all that must upon her truth depend;
'There is no being in the world beside,
Who can discover what that friend will hide;
Who knew the fact, knew not my name or state,
Who these can tell cannot the fact relate;
But thou, Eliza, canst the whole impart,
And all my safety is thy generous heart."
Mix'd with these fears—but light and transient these—
Fled years of peace, prosperity, and ease:
So tranquil all, that scarce a gloomy day
For days of gloom unmix'd prepared the way;
One eve, the wife, still happy in her state,
Sang gayly, thoughtless of approaching fate:
Then came a letter, that (received in dread,
Not unobserved) she in confusion read;
The substance this; "Her friend rejoiced to find
That she had riches with a grateful mind;
While poor Eliza had from place to place
Been lured by hope to labour for disgrace;
That every scheme her wandering husband tried,
Pain'd while he lived, and perish'd when he died."
She then of want in angry style complain'd,
Her child a burden to her life remain'd,
Her kindred shunn'd her prayers, no friend her soul sustain'd.
"Yet why neglected? Dearest Anna knew
Her worth once tried, her friendship ever true;
She hoped, she trusted, though by wants oppress'd,
To lock the treasured secret in her breast;
Yet, vex'd by trouble, must apply to one,
For kindness due to her for kindness done."
In Anna's mind was tumult, in her face
Flushings of dread had momentary place:
"I must," she judged, "these cruel lines expose,
Or fears, or worse than fears, my crime disclose."
The letter shown, he said, with sober smile,
"Anna, your friend has not a friendly style:
Say, where could you with this fair lady dwell,
Who boasts of secrets that she scorns to tell?"
"At school," she answer'd: he "At school!" replied
"Nay, then I know the secrets you would hide:
Some longings these, without dispute,
Some youthful gaspings for forbidden fruit:
Why so disorder'd, love? are such the crimes
That give us sorrow in our graver times?
Come, take a present for your friend, and rest
In perfect peace—you find you are confess'd."
This cloud, though past, alarm'd the conscious wife,
Presaging gloom and sorrow for her life;
Who to her answer join'd a fervent prayer,
That her Eliza would a sister spare:
If she again—but was there cause?—should send,
Let her direct—and then she named a friend:
A sad expedient untried friends to trust,
And still to fear the tried may be unjust:
Such is his pain, who, by his debt oppress'd,
Seeks by new bonds a temporary rest.
Few were her peaceful days till Anna read
The words she dreaded, and had cause to dread:—
"Did she believe, did she, unkind, suppose
That thus Eliza's friendship was to close?
No! though she tried, and her desire was plain,
To break the friendly bond, she strove in vain:
Ask'd she for silence? why so loud the call,
And yet the token of her love so small?
By means like these will you attempt to bind
And check the movements of an injured mind?
Poor as I am, I shall be proud to show
What dangerous secrets I may safely know:
Secrets to men of jealous minds convey'd,
Have many a noble house in ruins laid:
Anna, I trust, although with wrongs beset,
And urged by want, I shall be faithful yet;
But what temptation may from these arise,
To take a slighted woman by surprise,
Becomes a subject for your serious care—
For who offends, must for offence prepare."
Perplex'd, dismay'd, the wife foresaw her doom;
A day deferr'd was yet a day to come;
But still, though painful her suspended state,
She dreaded more the crisis of her fate;
Better to die than Stafford's scorn to meet,
And her strange friend perhaps would be discreet
Presents she sent, and made a strong appeal
To woman's feelings, begging her to feel;
With too much force she wrote of jealous men,
And her tears falling spoke beyond the pen;
Eliza's silence she again implored,
And promised all that prudence could afford.
For looks composed and careless Anna tried;
She seem'd in trouble, and unconscious sigh'd:
The faithful husband, who devoutly loved
His silent partner, with concern reproved:
"What secret sorrows on my Anna press,
That love may not partake, nor care redress?"
"None, none," she answer'd, with a look so kind,
That the fond man determined to be blind.
A few succeeding weeks of brief repose,
In Anna's cheek revived the faded rose;

A hue like this the western sky displays,
That glows a while, and withers as we gaze.
Again the friend's tormenting letter came—
'The wants she suffer'd were affection's shame;
She with her child a life of terrors led,
Unhappy fruit! but of a lawful bed:
Her friend was tasting every bliss in life,
The joyful mother, and the wealthy wife;
While she was placed in doubt, in fear, in want,
To starve on trifles that the happy grant;
Poorly for all her faithful silence paid,
And tantalized by ineffectual aid:
She could not thus a beggar's lot endure;
She wanted something permanent and sure:
If they were friends, then equal be their lot,
And she was free to speak if they were not.'
Despair and terror seized the wife, to find
The artful workings of a vulgar mind;
Money she had not, but the hint of dress
Taught her new bribes, new terrors to redress:
She with such feeling then described her woes,
That envy's self might on the view repose;
Then to a mother's pains she made appeal,
And painted grief like one compell'd to feel.
Yes! so she felt, that in her air, her face,
In every purpose, and in every place;
In her slow motion, in her languid mien,
The grief, the sickness of her soul were seen.
Of some mysterious ill the husband sure,
Desired to trace it, for he hoped to cure;
Something he knew obscurely, and had seen
His wife attend a cottage on the green;
Love, loath to wound, endured conjecture long,
Till fear would speak, and spoke in language strong.
"All I must know, my Anna—truly know
Whence these emotions, terrors, troubles flow;
Give me thy grief, and I will fairly prove
Mine is no selfish, no ungenerous love."
Now Anna's soul the seat of strife became,
Fear with respect contended, love with shame;
But fear prevailing was the ruling guide,
Prescribing what to show and what to hide.
"It is my friend," she said—"But why disclose
A woman's weakness struggling with her woes?
Yes, she has grieved me by her fond complaints,
The wrongs she suffers, the distress she paints:
Something we do—but she afflicts me still,
And says, with power to help, I want the will;
This plaintive style I pity and excuse,
Help when I can, and grieve when I refuse;
But here my useless sorrows I resign,
And will be happy in a love like thine.
The husband doubted; he was kind but cool:—
"'Tis a strong friendship to arise at school;
Once more then, love, once more the sufferer aid,—
I too can pity, but I must upbraid;
Of these vain feelings then thy bosom free,
Nor be o'erwhelm'd by useless sympathy."
The wife again despatch'd the useless bribe,
Again essay'd her terrors to describe;
Again with kindest words entreated peace,
And begg'd her offerings for a time might cease.
A calm succeeded, but too like the one
That causes terror ere the storm comes on:
A secret sorrow lived in Anna's heart,
In Stafford's mind a secret fear of art;
Not long they lasted—this determined foe
Knew all her claims, and nothing would forego;
Again her letter came, where Anna read,
"My child, one cause of my distress, is dead:
Heaven has my infant."—"Heartless wretch!" she cried,
"Is this thy joy?"—"I am no longer tied:
Now will I, hastening to my friend, partake
Her cares and comforts, and no more forsake;
Now shall we both in equal station move,
Save that my friend enjoys a husband's love."
Complaint and threats so strong the wife amazed
Who wildly on her cottage neighbour gazed;
Her tones, her trembling, first betray'd her grief;
When floods of tears gave anguish its relief.
She fear'd that Stafford would refuse assent,
And knew her selfish friend would not relent;
She must petition, yet delay'd the task,
Ashamed, afraid, and yet compell'd to ask;
Unknown to him some object fill'd her mind,
And, once suspicious, he became unkind:
They sate one evening, each absorb'd in gloom,
When, hark! a noise, and, rushing to the room,
The friend tripp'd lightly in, and laughing said, 'come."
Anna received her with an anxious mind,
And meeting whisper'd, "Is Eliza kind?"
Reserved and cool, the husband sought to prove
The depth and force of this mysterious love.
To naught that pass'd between the stranger friend
And his meek partner seem'd he to attend;
But, anxious, listen'd to the lightest word
That might some knowledge of his guest afford;
And learn the reason one to him so dear
Should feel such fondness, yet betray such fear.
Soon he perceived this uninvited guest,
Unwelcome too, a sovereign power possess'd;
Lofty she was and careless, while the meek
And humbled Anna was afraid to speak:
As mute she listen'd with a painful smile,
Her friend sate laughing and at ease the while,
Telling her idle tales with all the glee
Of careless and unfeeling levity.
With calm good sense he knew his wife endued,
And now with wounded pride her conduct view'd;
Her speech was low, her every look convey'd—
"I am a slave subservient and afraid."
All trace of comfort vanish'd if she spoke,
The noisy friend upon her purpose broke;
To her remarks with insolence replied,
And her assertions doubted or denied;
While the meek Anna like an infant shook,
Wo-struck and trembling at the serpent's look.
"There is," said Stafford, "yes, there is a cause—
This creature frights her, overpowers, and awes."
Six weeks had pass'd—"In truth, my love, this friend
Has liberal notions, what does she intend?
Without a hint she came, and will she stay
Till she receives the hint to go away?"
Confused the wife replied, in spite of truth,
"I love the dear companion of my youth."
"'Tis well," said Stafford; "then your loves renew,
Trust me, your rivals, Anna, will be few."
Though playful this, she felt too much distress'd
T' admit the consolation of a jest;
Ill she reposed, and in her dreams would sigh,
And, murmuring forth her anguish, beg to die;

With sunken eye, slow pace, and pallid cheek,
She look'd confusion, and she fear'd to speak.
All this the friend beheld, for, quick of sight,
She knew the husband eager for her flight;
And that by force alone she could retain
The lasting comforts she had hope to gain:
She now perceived, to win her post for life,
She must infuse fresh terrors in the wife;
Must bid to friendship's feebler ties adieu,
And boldly claim the object in her view:
She saw the husband's love, and knew the power
Her friend might use in some propitious hour.
Meantime the anxious wife, from pure distress
Assuming courage, said, "I will confess;"
But with her children felt a parent's pride,
And sought once more the hated truth to hide.
Offended, grieved, impatient, Stafford bore
The odious change till he could bear no more;
A friend to truth, in speech and action plain,
He held all fraud and cunning in disdain;
But, fraud to find, and falsehood to detect,
For once he fled to measures indirect.
One day the friends were seated in that room
The guest with care adorn'd, and named her home:
To please the eye, there curious prints were placed,
And some light volumes to amuse the taste;
Letters and music, on a table laid,
The favourite studies of the fair betray'd;
Beneath the window was the toilet spread,
And the fire gleam'd upon a crimson bed.
In Anna's looks and falling tears were seen
How interesting had their subjects been:
"O! then," resumed the friend, "I plainly find
That you and Stafford know each other's mind;
I must depart, must on the world be thrown,
Like one discarded, worthless, and unknown;
But shall I carry, and to please a foe,
A painful secret in my bosom? No!
Think not your friend a reptile you may tread
Beneath your feet, and say, the worm is dead;
I have some feeling, and will not be made
The scorn of her whom love cannot persuade:
Would not your word, your slightest wish, effect
All that I hope, petition, or expect?
The power you have, but you the use decline—
Proof that you feel not, or you fear not mine.
There was a time, when I a tender maid,
Flew at a call, and your desires obey'd;
A very mother to the child became,
Consoled your sorrow, and conceal'd your shame;
But now, grown rich and happy, from the door
You thrust a bosom friend, despised and poor;
That child alive, its mother might have known
The hard ungrateful spirit she has shown."
Here paused the guest, and Anna cried at length—
"You try me, cruel friend! beyond my strength;
Would I had been beside my infant laid,
Where none would vex me, threaten, or upbraid."
In Anna's looks the friend beheld despair;
Her speech she soften'd, and composed her air;
Yet, while professing love, she answered still—
"You can befriend me, but you want the will."
They parted thus, and Anna went her way,
To shed her secret sorrows, and to pray.
Stafford, amused with books, and fond of home,
By reading oft dispell'd the evening gloom;
History or tale—all heard him with delight,
And thus was pass'd this memorable night.
The listening friend bestow'd a flattering smile;
A sleeping boy the mother held the while;
And ere she fondly bore him to his bed,
On his fair face the tear of anguish shed.
And now his task resumed, "My tale," said he,
"Is short and sad, short may our sadness be!"
"The Caliph Harun,* as historians tell,
Ruled, for a tyrant, admirably well;
Where his own pleasures were not touch'd, to men
He was humane, and sometimes even then;
Harun was fond of fruits, and gardens fair,
And wo to all whom he found poaching there!
Among his pages was a lively boy,
Eager in search of every trifling joy;
His feelings vivid, and his fancy strong,
He sigh'd for pleasure while he shrank from wrong;
When by the caliph in the garden placed
He saw the treasures which he long'd to taste,
And oft alone he ventured to behold
Rich hanging fruits with rind of glowing gold;
Too long he stayed forbidden bliss to view,
His virtue failing, as his longings grew;
Athirst and wearied with the noontide heat,
Fate to the garden led his luckless feet;
With eager eyes and open mouth he stood,
Smelt the sweet breath, and touch'd the fragrant food;
The tempting beauty sparkling in the sun
Charm'd his young sense—he ate, and was undone:
When the fond glutton paused, his eyes around
He turn'd, and eyes upon him turning found;
Pleased he beheld the spy, a brother page,
A friend allied in office and in age;
Who promised much that secret he would be,
But high the price he fix'd on secrecy.
"'Were you suspected, my unhappy friend,'
Began the boy, 'where would your sorrows end?
In all the palace there is not a page
The caliph would not torture in his rage:
I think I see thee now impaled alive,
Writhing in pangs—but come, my friend! revive;
Had some beheld you, all your purse contains
Could not have saved you from terrific pains;
I scorn such meanness; and, if not in debt,
Would not an asper on your folly set.'
"The hint was strong; young Osmyn search'd his store
For bribes, and found he soon could bribe no more;
That time arrived, for Osmyn's stock was small,
And the young tyrant now possess'd it all;
The cruel youth, with his companions near,
Gave the broad hint that raised the sudden fear;
Th' ungenerous insult now was daily shown,
And Osmyn's peace and honest pride were flown;
Then came augmenting woes, and fancy strong
Drew forms of suffering, a tormenting throng;
He felt degraded, and the struggling mind
Dared not be free, and could not be resign'd;
And all his pains and fervent prayers obtain'd
Was truce from insult, while the fears remain'd.

*The sovereign here meant is the Haroun Alraschid, or Harun al Rashid, who died early in the ninth century he is often the hearer, and sometimes the hero, of a tale in the Arabian Nights' Entertainments.

"One day it chanced that this degraded boy
And tyrant friend were fix'd at their employ;
Who now had thrown restraint and form aside,
And for his bribe in plainer speech applied:
'Long have I waited, and the last supply
Was but a pittance, yet how patient I!
But give me now what thy first terrors gave,
My speech shall praise thee, and my silence save.'
"Osmyn had found, in many a dreadful day
The tyrant fiercer when he seem'd in play
He begg'd forbearance; 'I have not to give,
Spare me a while, although 'tis pain to live:
O! had that stolen fruit the power possess'd
To war with life, I now had been at rest.'
"'So fond of death,' replied the boy, 'tis plain
Thou hast no certain notion of the pain;
But to the caliph were a secret shown,
Death has no pain that would be then unknown.'
"Now, says the story, in a closet near,
The monarch, seated, chanced the boys to hear;
There oft he came, when wearied on his throne,
To read, sleep, listen, pray, or be alone.
"The tale proceeds, when first the caliph found
That he was robb'd, although alone, he frown'd:
And swore in wrath, that he would send the boy
Far from his notice, favour, or employ;
But gentler movements soothed his ruffled mind,
And his own failings taught him to be kind.
"Relenting thoughts then painted Osmyn young,
His passion urgent, and temptation strong;
And that he suffer'd from that villain spy
Pains worse than death till he desired to die;
Then if his morals had received a stain,
His bitter sorrows made him pure again:
To Reason, Pity lent her generous aid,
For one so tempted, troubled, and betray'd;
And a free pardon the glad boy restored
To the kind presence of a gentle lord;
Who from his office and his country drove
That traitor friend, whom pains nor prayers could move;
Who raised the fears no mortal could endure,
And then with cruel avarice sold the cure.
"My tale is ended; but, to be applied,
I must describe the place where caliphs hide."
Here both the females look'd alarm'd, distress'd,
With hurried passions hard to be express'd.
"It was a closet by a chamber placed,
Where slept a lady of no vulgar taste;
Her friend attended in that chosen room
That she had honour'd and proclaim'd her home:
To please the eye were chosen pictures placed,
And some light volumes to amuse the taste,
Letters and music on a table laid,
For much the lady wrote, and often play'd;
Beneath the window was a toilet spread,
And a fire gleam'd upon a crimson bed."
He paused, he rose; with troubled joy the wife
Felt the new era of her changeful life;
Frankness and love appear'd in Stafford's face,
And all her trouble to delight give place.
Twice made the guest an effort to sustain
Her feelings, twice resumed her seat in vain,
Nor could suppress her shame, nor could support her pain:
Quick she retired, and all the dismal night
Thought of her guilt, her folly, and her flight;
Then sought unseen her miserable home,
To think of comforts lost, and brood on wants to come.

TALE XVII.

RESENTMENT.

She hath a tear for pity, and a hand
Open as day for melting charity;
Yet, notwithstanding, being incensed, is flint——
Her temper, therefore, must be well observ'd.
Henry IV. Part. i. act iv. sc. 4.

——Three or four wenches where I stood cried—"Alas! good soul!" and forgave him with all their hearts: but there is no heed to be taken of them; if Cæsar had stabb'd their mothers, they would have done no less.
Julius Cæsar, act i. sc. 2.

How dost? Art cold?
I'm cold myself—Where is the straw, my fellow?
The art of our necessities is strange,
That can make vile things precious.
King Lear, act iii. sc. 2.

Females there are of unsuspicious mind,
Easy and soft, and credulous and kind;
Who, when offended for the twentieth time,
Will hear th' offender and forgive the crime:
And there are others whom like these to cheat,
Asks but the humblest effort of deceit;
But they, once injured, feel a strong disdain,
And, seldom pardoning, never trust again;
Urged by religion, they forgive—but yet
Guard the warm heart, and never more forget:
Those are like wax—apply them to the fire,
Melting, they take th' impressions you desire;
Easy to mould, and fashion as you please,
And again moulded with an equal ease:—
Like smelted iron these the forms retain,
But once impress'd will never melt again.
A busy port a serious merchant made
His chosen place to recommence his trade;
And brought his lady, who, their children dead,
Their native seat of recent sorrow fled:
The husband duly on the quay was seen,
The wife at home became at length serene;
There in short time the social couple grew
With all acquainted, friendly with a few:
When the good lady, by disease assail'd,
In vain resisted—hope and science fail'd:
Then spake the female friends, by pity led,
"Poor merchant Paul! what think ye? will he wed?
A quiet, easy, kind, religious man,
Thus can he rest?—I wonder if he can."
He too, as grief subsided in his mind,
Gave place to notions of congenial kind:
Grave was the man, as we have told before;
His years were forty—he might pass for more,
Composed his features were, his stature low,
His air important, and his motion slow;
His dress became him, it was neat and plain,
The colour purple, and without a stain;
His words were few, and special was his care
In simplest terms his purpose to declare;

A man more civil, sober, and discreet,
More grave and courteous, you could seldom meet:
Though frugal he, yet sumptuous was his board,
As if to prove how much he could afford;
For though reserved himself, he loved to see
His table plenteous, and his neighbours free:
Among these friends he sat in solemn style,
And rarely soften'd to a sober smile;
For this observant friends their reasons gave—
"Concerns so vast would make the idlest grave:
And for such man to be of language free,
Would seem incongruous as a singing tree:
Trees have their music, but the birds they shield
The pleasing tribute for protection yield;
Each ample tree the tuneful choir defends,
As this rich merchant cheers his happy friends!"
In the same town it was his chance to meet
A gentle lady, with a mind discreet;
Neither in life's decline, nor bloom of youth,
One famed for maiden modesty and truth:
By nature cool, in pious habits bred,
She look'd on lovers with a virgin's dread:
Deceivers, rakes, and libertines were they,
And harmless beauty their pursuit and prey;
As bad as giants in the ancient times
Were modern lovers, and the same their crimes:
Soon as she heard of her all-conquering charms,
At once she fled to her defensive arms;
Conn'd o'er the tales her maiden aunt had told,
And statue-like, was motionlike and cold;
From prayer of love, like that Pygmalion pray'd,
Ere the hard stone became the yielding maid—
A different change in this chaste nymph ensued,
And turn'd to stone the breathing flesh and blood:
Whatever youth described his wounded heart,
"He came to rob her, and she scorn'd his art;
And who of raptures once presumed to speak,
Told listening maids he thought them fond and weak:
But should a worthy man his hopes display
In few plain words, and beg a *yes* or *nay*,
He would deserve an answer just and plain,
Since adulation only moved disdain—
Sir, if my friends object not, come again."
Hence our brave lover, though he liked the face,
Praised not a feature—dwelt not on a grace;
But in the simplest terms declared his state,
"A widow'd man, who wish'd a virtuous mate;
Who fear'd neglect, and was compell'd to trust
Dependants wasteful, idle, or unjust;
Or should they not the trusted stores destroy,
At best, they could not help him to enjoy,
But with her person and her prudence blest,
His acts would prosper, and his soul have rest:
Would she be his?"—"Why that was much to say;
She would consider: he a while might stay;
She liked his manners, and believed his word;
He did not flatter, flattery she abhorr'd:
It was her happy lot in peace to dwell—
Would change make better what was now so well?
But she would ponder."—"This," he said, "was kind,"
And begg'd to know "when she had fix'd her mind."
Romantic maidens would have scorn'd the air,
And the cool prudence of a mind so fair;
But well it pleased this wiser maid to find
Her own mild virtues in her lover's mind.
His worldly wealth she sought, and quickly grew
Pleased with her search, and happy in the view
Of vessels freighted with abundant stores,
Of rooms whose treasures press'd the groaning floors;
And he of clerks and servants could display
A little army, on a public day.
Was this a man like needy bard to speak
Of balmy lip, bright eye, or rosy cheek?
The sum appointed for her widow'd state,
Fix'd by her friend, excited no debate;
Then the kind lady gave her hand and heart,
And, never finding, never dealt with art:
In his engagements she had no concern;
He taught her not, nor had she wish to learn:
On him in all occasions she relied,
His word her surety, and his worth her pride.
When ship was launch'd, and merchant Paul had share,
A bounteous feast became the lady's care;
Who then her entry to the dinner made,
In costly raiment, and with kind parade.
Call'd by this duty on a certain day,
And robed to grace it in a rich array,
Forth from her room with measured step she came,
Proud of th' event, and stately look'd the dame:
The husband met her at his study-door—
"This way, my love—one moment and no more:
A trifling business—you will understand,
The law requires that you affix your hand;
But first attend, and you shall learn the cause
Why forms like these have been prescribed by laws."
Then from his chair a man in black arose,
And with much quickness hurried off his prose:
That "Ellen Paul the wife, and so forth, freed
From all control, her own the act and deed,
And forasmuch"—said she, "I've no distrust,
For he that asks it is discreet and just;
Our friends are waiting—where am I to sign?
There!——Now be ready when we meet to dine."
This said, she hurried off in great delight,
The ship was launch'd, and joyful was the night.
Now, says the reader, and in much disdain,
This serious merchant was a rogue in grain;
A treacherous wretch, an artful, sober knave,
And ten times worse for manners cool and grave,
And she devoid of sense, to set her hand
To scoundrel deeds she could not understand.
Alas! 'tis true; and I in vain had tried
To soften crime, that cannot be denied;
And might have labour'd many a tedious verse
The latent cause of mischief to rehearse:
Be it confess'd, that long, with troubled look,
This trader view'd a huge accompting book
(His former marriage for a time delay'd
The dreaded hour, the present lent its aid;)
But he too clearly saw the evil day,
And put the terror, by deceit, away;
Thus by connecting with his sorrows crime,
He gain'd a portion of uneasy time.—
All this too late the injured lady saw,
What love had given, again she gave to law;
His guilt, her folly—these at once impress'd
Their lasting feelings on her guileless breast

"Shame I can bear," she cried, "and want sustain,
But will not see this guilty wretch again;"
For all was lost, and he, with many a tear,
Confess'd the fault—she turning scorn'd to hear.
To legal claim he yielded all his worth,
But small the portion, and the wrong'd were wroth,
Nor to their debtor would a part allow;
And where to live he knew not—knew not how.
The wife a cottage found, and thither went
The suppliant man, but she would not relent:
Thenceforth she utter'd with indignant tone,
"I feel the misery, and will feel alone."
He would turn servant for her sake, would keep
The poorest school; the very streets would sweep,
To show his love.—"It was already shown:
And her affliction should be all her own.
His wants and weakness might have touch'd her heart,
But from his meanness she resolved to part."
In a small alley was she lodged, beside
Its humblest poor, and at the view she cried,
"Welcome—yes! let me welcome, if I can,
The fortune dealt me by this cruel man;
Welcome this low thatch'd roof, this shatter'd door,
These walls of clay, this miserable floor;
Welcome, my envied neighbours; this, to you,
Is all familiar—all to me is new;
You have no hatred to the loathsome meal;
Your firmer nerves no trembling terrors feel,
Nor, what you must expose, desire you to conceal;
What your coarse feelings bear without offence,
Disgusts my taste, and poisons every sense:
Daily shall I your sad relations hear,
Of wanton women, and of men severe;
There will dire curses, dreadful oaths abound,
And vile expressions shock me and confound;
Noise of dull wheels, and songs with horrid words,
Will be the music that this lane affords;
Mirth that disgusts, and quarrels that degrade
The human mind, must my retreat invade:
Hard is my fate! yet easier to sustain
Than to abide with guilt and fraud again;
A grave impostor! who expects to meet,
In such gray locks and gravity, deceit?
Where the sea rages, and the billows roar,
Men know the danger, and they quit the shore;
But, be there nothing in the way descried,
When o'er the rocks smooth runs the wicked tide,
Sinking unwarn'd, they execrate the shock,
And the dread peril of the sunken rock."
A frowning world had now the man to dread,
Taught in no arts, to no profession bred;
Pining in grief, beset with constant care,
Wandering he went, to rest he knew not where.
Meantime the wife—but she abjured the name—
Endured her lot, and struggled with the shame;
When lo! an uncle on the mother's side,
In nature something, as in blood allied,
Admired her firmness, his protection gave,
And show'd a kindness she disdain'd to crave.
Frugal and rich the man, and frugal grew
The sister mind, without a selfish view;
And further still; the temperate pair agreed
With what they saved the patient poor to feed:
His whole estate, when to the grave consign'd,
Left the good kinsman to the kindred mind;
Assured that law, with spell secure and tight,
Had fix'd it as her own peculiar right.
Now to her ancient residence removed,
She lived as widow, well endow'd and loved,
Decent her table was, and to her door
Came daily welcomed the neglected poor;
The absent sick were soothed by her relief,
As her free bounty sought the haunts of grief;
A plain and homely charity had she,
And loved the objects of her alms to see;
With her own hands she dress'd the savoury meal
With her own fingers wrote the choice receipt;
She heard all tales that injured wives relate,
And took a double interest in their fate;
But of all husbands not a wretch was known
So vile, so mean, so cruel as her own.
This bounteous lady kept an active spy,
To search th' abodes of want, and to supply;
The gentle Susan served the liberal dame—
Unlike their notions, yet their deeds the same:
No practised villain could a victim find
Than this stern lady more completely blind;
Nor (if detected in his fraud) could meet
One less disposed to pardon a deceit;
The wrong she treasured, and on no pretence
Received th' offender, or forgot th' offence:
But the kind servant, to the thrice-proved knave
A fourth time listen'd, and the past forgave.
First in her youth, when she was blithe and gay
Came a smooth rogue, and stole her love away:
Then to another and another flew,
To boast the wanton mischief he could do:
Yet she forgave him, though so great her pain,
That she was never blithe or gay again.
Then came a spoiler, who, with villain art,
Implored her hand, and agonized her heart;
He seized her purse, in idle waste to spend
With a vile wanton, whom she call'd her friend;
Five years she suffer'd—he had revell'd five—
Then came to show her he was just alive;
Alone he came, his vile companion dead;
And he, a wandering pauper, wanting bread;
His body wasted, wither'd life and limb,
When this kind soul became a slave to him:
Nay, she was sure that, should he now survive,
No better husband would be left alive;
For him she mourn'd, and then, alone and poor,
Sought and found comfort at her lady's door:
Ten years she served, and, mercy her employ,
Her tasks were pleasure, and her duty joy.
Thus lived the mistress and the maid, design'd
Each other's aid—one cautious, and both kind:
Oft at their window, working, they would sigh
To see the aged and the sick go by;
Like wounded bees, that at their home arrive,
Slowly and weak, but labouring for the hive.
The busy people of a mason's yard
The curious lady view'd with much regard;
With steady motion she perceived them draw
Through blocks of stone the slowly-working saw
It gave her pleasure and surprise to see
Among these men the signs of revelry:
Cold was the season, and confined their view,
Tedious their tasks, but merry were the crew;
There she beheld an aged pauper wait,
Patient and still, to take an humble freight,
Within the panniers on an ass he laid
The ponderous grit, and for the portion paid:

This he resold, and, with each trifling gift,
Made shift to live, and wretched was the shift.
Nor will it be by every reader told
Who was this humble trader, poor and old.
In vain an author would a name suppress,
From the least hint a reader learns to guess;
Of children lost our novels sometimes treat,
We never care—assured again to meet:
In vain the writer for concealment tries,
We trace his purpose under all disguise;
Nay, though he tells us they are dead and gone,
Of whom we wot—they will appear anon;
Our favourites fight, are wounded, hopeless lie,
Survive they cannot—nay, they cannot die;
Now, as these tricks and stratagems are known,
'Tis best, at once, the simple truth to own.
This was the husband; in an humble shed
He nightly slept, and daily sought his bread:
Once for relief the weary man applied;
"Your wife is rich," the angry vestry cried:
Alas! he dared not to his wife complain,
Feeling her wrongs, and fearing her disdain;
By various methods he had tried to live,
But not one effort would subsistence give:
He was an usher in a school, till noise
Made him less able than the weaker boys;
On messages he went, till he in vain
Strove names, or words, or meanings to retain;
Each small employment in each neighbouring town
By turn he took, to lay as quickly down:
For, such his fate, he fail'd in all he plann'd,
And nothing prosper'd in his luckless hand.
At his old home, his motive half suppress'd,
He sought no more for riches, but for rest:
There lived the bounteous wife, and at her gate
He saw in cheerful groups the needy wait;
"Had he a right with bolder hope t' apply?"
He ask'd, was answer'd, and went groaning by:
For some remains of spirit, temper, pride,
Forbade a prayer he knew would be denied.
Thus was the grieving man, with burden'd ass,
Seen day by day along the street to pass:
"Who is he, Susan? who the poor old man?
He never calls; do make him, if you can."
The conscious damsel still delay'd to speak,
She stopp'd confused, and had her words to seek;
From Susan's fears the fact her mistress knew,
And cried—"The wretch! what scheme has he in view?
Is this his lot?—but let him, let him feel—
Who wants the courage, not the will to steal."
A dreadful winter came, each day severe,
Misty when mild, and icy cold when clear;
And still the humble dealer took his load,
Returning slow, and shivering on the road:
The lady, still relentless, saw him come,
And said, "I wonder, has the wretch a home?"—
"A hut! a hovel!"—"Then his fate appears
To suit his crime."—"Yes, lady, not his years;—
No, nor his sufferings, nor that form decay'd."—
"Well! let the parish give its paupers aid;
You must the vileness of his acts allow."—
"And you, dear lady, that he feels it now."—
"When such dissemblers on their deeds reflect,
Can they the pity they refused expect?
He that doth evil, evil shall he dread."—
"The snow," quoth Susan, "falls upon his bed—
It blows beside the thatch—it melts upon his head."
"'Tis weakness, child, for grieving guilt to feel."—
"Yes, but he never sees a wholesome meal;
Through his bare dress appears his shrivell'd skin,
And ill he fares without, and worse within!
With that weak body, lame, diseased, and slow,
What cold, pain, peril, must the sufferer know?"—
"Think on his crime."—"Yes, sure, 'twas very wrong;
But look, (God bless him!) how he gropes along."—
"Brought me to shame."—"O! yes, I know it all;
What cutting blast! and he can scarcely crawl;
He freezes as he moves; he dies! if he should fall
With cruel fierceness drives this icy sleet,
And must a Christian perish in the street,
In sight of Christians?—There! at last, he lies;—
Nor unsupported can he ever rise:
He cannot live."—"But is he fit to die?"—
Here Susan softly mutter'd a reply,
Look'd round the room, said something of its state,
Dives the rich, and Lazarus at his gate;
And then aloud—"In pity do behold
The man affrighten'd, weeping, trembling, cold:
O! how those flakes of snow their entrance win
Through the poor rags, and keep the frost within
His very heart seems frozen as he goes,
Leading that starved companion of his woes:
He tried to pray—his lips, I saw them move,
And he so turn'd his piteous looks above;
But the fierce wind the willing heart opposed,
And, ere he spoke, the lips in misery closed:
Poor suffering object! yes, for ease you pray'd,
And God will hear—he only, I'm afraid."
"Peace! Susan, peace! Pain ever follows sin."
—"Ah! then," thought Susan, "when will ours begin?
When reach'd his home, to what a cheerless fir
And chilling bed will those cold limbs retire!
Yet ragged, wretched as it is, that bed
Takes half the space of his contracted shed;
I saw the thorns beside the narrow grate,
With straw collected in a putrid state:
There will he, kneeling, strive the fire to raise,
And that will warm him, rather than the blaze;
The sullen, smoky blaze, that cannot last
One moment after his attempt is past:
And I so warmly and so purely laid,
To sink to rest—indeed, I am afraid."—
"Know you his conduct?"—"Yes, indeed, I know—
And how he wanders in the wind and snow:
Safe in our rooms the threatening storm we hear,
But he feels strongly what we faintly fear."—
"Wilful was rich, and he the storm defied,
Wilful is poor, and must the storm abide;"
Said the stern lady—"'Tis in vain to feel;
Go and prepare the chicken for our meal."
Susan her task reluctantly began,
And utter'd as she went—"The poor old man!"
But while her soft and ever-yielding heart
Made strong protest against her lady's part,
The lady's self began to think it wrong
To feel so wrathful and resent so long.
"No more the wretch would she receive again,
No more behold him—but she would sustain;

Great his offence, and evil was his mind,—
But he had suffer'd, and she would be kind:
She spurn'd such baseness, and she found within
A fair acquittal from so foul a sin;
Yet she too err'd, and must of Heaven expect
To be rejected, him should she reject."
Susan was summon'd; "I'm about to do
A foolish act, in part seduced by you;
Go to the creature, say that I intend,
Foe to his sins, to be his sorrow's friend;
Take, for his present comforts, food and wine,
And mark his feelings at this act of mine:
Observe if shame be o'er his features spread,
By his own victim to be soothed and fed;
But, this inform him, that it is not love
That prompts my heart, that duties only move:
Say, that no merits in his favour plead,
But miseries only, and his abject need;
Nor bring me grovelling thanks, nor high-flown praise;
I would his spirits, not his fancy raise;
Give him no hope that I shall ever more
A man so vile to my esteem restore;
But warn him rather, that, in time of rest,
His crimes be all remember'd and confess'd:
I know not all that form the sinner's debt,
But there is one that he must not forget."
The mind of Susan prompted her with speed
To act her part in every courteous deed:
All that was kind she was prepared to say,
And keep the lecture for a future day;
When he had all life's comforts by his side,
Pity might sleep, and good advice be tried.
This done, the mistress felt disposed to look,
As self-approving, on a pious book:
Yet, to her native bias still inclined,
She felt her act too merciful and kind;
But when, long musing on the chilling scene
So lately past—the frost and sleet so keen—
The man's whole misery in a single view—
Yes! she could think some pity was his due.
Thus fix'd, she heard not her attendant glide
With soft slow step—till, standing by her side,
The trembling servant gasp'd for breath, and shed
Relieving tears, then utter'd—"He is dead!"
"Dead!" said the startled lady. "Yes, he fell
Close at the door where he was wont to dwell;
There his sole friend, the ass, was standing by,
Half dead himself, to see his master die."
"Expired he then, good Heaven! for want of food?"—
"No! crusts and water in a corner stood;—
To have this plenty, and to wait so long,
And to be right too late, is doubly wrong:
Then, every day to see him totter by,
And to forbear—O! what a heart had I!"
"Blame me not, child; I tremble at the news."—
"'Tis my own heart," said Susan, "I accuse:
To have this money in my purse—to know
What grief was his, and what to grief we owe:
To see him often, always to conceive
How he must pine and languish, groan and grieve;
And every day in ease and peace to dine,
And rest in comfort!—what a heart is mine!"

TALE XVIII.

THE WAGER.

'Tis thought your deer doth hold you at a bay.
Taming of the Shrew, act v. sc. 2

I choose her for myself:
If she and I are pleased, what's that to you
Ibid.

Let's send each one to his wife,
And he whose wife is most obedient
Shall win the wager.
Ibid.

Now by the world it is a lusty wench,
I love her ten times more than e'er I did.
ib. act. ii. sc. 1

COUNTER and CLUBB were men in trade, whose pains,
Credit, and prudence, brought them constant gains
Partners and punctual, every friend agreed
Counter and Clubb were men who must succeed.
When they had fix'd some little time in life,
Each thought of taking to himself a wife;
As men in trade alike, as men in love
They seem'd with no according views to move;
As certain ores in outward view the same,
They show'd their difference when the magnet came.
Counter was vain: with spirit strong and high,
'Twas not in him like suppliant swain to sigh:
"His wife might o'er his men and maids preside,
And in her province be a judge and guide;
But what he thought, or did, or wish'd to do,
She must not know, or censure if she knew;
At home, abroad, by day, by night, if he
On aught determined, so it was to be:
How is a man," he ask'd, "for business fit,
Who to a female can his will submit?
Absent a while, let no inquiring eye
Or plainer speech presume to question why,
But all be silent; and, when seen again,
Let all be cheerful;—shall a wife complain?
Friends I invite, and who shall dare t' object,
Or look on them with coolness or neglect?
No! I must ever of my house be head,
And, thus obey'd, I condescend to wed."
Clubb heard the speech—"My friend is nice, said he;
"A wife with less respect will do for me:
How is he certain such a prize to gain?
What he approves, a lass may learn to feign,
And so affect t' obey, till she begins to reign;
A while complying, she may vary then,
And be as wives of more unwary men;
Besides, to him who plays such lordly part
How shall a tender creature yield her heart?
Should he the promised confidence refuse,
She may another more confiding choose;
May show her anger, yet her purpose hide,
And wake his jealousy, and wound his pride.
In one so humbled, who can trace the friend?
I on an equal, not a slave, depend;
If true, my confidence is wisely placed,
And being false, she only is disgraced."
Clubb, with these notions, cast his eye around
And one so easy soon a partner found.
The lady chosen was of good repute;
Meekness she had not, and was seldom mute

Though quick to anger, still she loved to smile;
And would be calm if men would wait a while.
She knew her duty, and she loved her way,
More pleased in truth to govern than obey;
She heard her priest with reverence, and her spouse
As one who felt the pressure of her vows;
Useful and civil, all her friends confess'd,
Give her her way, and she would choose the best;
Though some, indeed, a sly remark would make,
Give it her not, and she would choose to take.
All this, when Clubb some cheerful months had spent,
He saw, confess'd, and said he was content.
Counter meantime selected, doubted, weigh'd,
And then brought home a young complying maid;
A tender creature, full of fears as charms,
A beauteous nursling from its mother's arms;
A soft, sweet blossom, such as men must love,
But to preserve must keep it in the stove:
She had a mild, subdued, expiring look—
Raise but the voice, and this fair creature shook;
Leave her alone, she felt a thousand fears—
Chide, and she melted into floods of tears;
Fondly she pleaded, and would gently sigh,
For very pity, or she knew not why;
One whom to govern none could be afraid—
Hold up the finger, this meek thing obey'd;
Her happy husband had the easiest task—
Say but his will, no question would she ask;
She sought no reasons, no affairs she knew,
Of business spoke not, and had naught to do.
Oft he exclaim'd, "How meek! how mild! how kind!
With her 'twere cruel but to seem unkind;
Though ever silent when I take my leave,
It pains my heart to think how hers will grieve;
'Tis heaven on earth with such a wife to dwell,
I am in raptures to have sped so well;
But let me not, my friend, your envy raise,
No! on my life, your patience has my praise."
His friend, though silent, felt the scorn implied,
"What need of patience?" to himself he cried:
"Better a woman o'er her house to rule,
Than a poor child just hurried from her school;
Who has no care, yet never lives at ease;
Unfit to rule, and indisposed to please;
What if he govern? there his boast should end,
No husband's power can make a slave his friend."
It was the custom of these friends to meet
With a few neighbours in a neighbouring street;
Where Counter oft times would occasion seize
To move his silent friend by words like these:
"A man," said he, "if govern'd by his wife,
Gives up his rank and dignity in life;
Now better fate befalls my friend and me"—
He spoke, and look'd th' approving smile to see.
The quiet partner, when he chose to speak,
Desired his friend, "another theme to seek;
When thus they met, he judged that state affairs
And such important subjects should be theirs."
But still the partner, in his lighter vein,
Would cause in Clubb affliction or disdain;
It made him anxious to detect the cause
Of all that boasting; "Wants my friend applause?
This plainly proves him not at perfect ease,
For, felt he pleasure, he would wish to please.
These triumphs here for some regrets atone—
Men who are blest let other men alone."
Thus made suspicious, he observed and saw
His friend each night at early hour withdraw;
He sometimes mention'd Juliet's tender nerves,
And what attention such a wife deserves:
"In this," thought Clubb, "full sure some mystery lies—
He laughs at me, yet he with much complies,
And all his vaunts of bliss are proud apologies."
With such ideas treasured in his breast,
He grew composed, and let his anger rest;
Till Counter once (when wine so long went round
That friendship and discretion both were drown'd)
Began in teasing and triumphant mood
His evening banter.—"Of all earthly good,
The best," he said, "was an obedient spouse,
Such as my friend's—that every one allows:
What if she wishes his designs to know?
It is because she would her praise bestow;
What if she wills that he remains at home?
She knows that mischief may from travel come
I, who am free to venture where I please,
Have no such kind preventing checks as these;
But mine is double duty, first to guide
Myself aright, then rule a house beside;
While this our friend, more happy than the free,
Resigns all power, and laughs at liberty."
"By Heaven," said Clubb, "excuse me if I swear,
I'll bet a hundred guineas, if he dare,
That uncontroll'd I will such freedoms take,
That he will fear to equal—there's my stake."
"A match!" said Counter, much by wine inflamed;
"But we are friends; let smaller stake be named:
Wine for our future meeting, that will I
Take, and no more—what peril shall we try?"
"Let's to Newmarket," Clubb replied; "or choose
Yourself the place, and what you like to lose;
And he who first returns, or fears to go,
Forfeits his cash—" Said Counter, "Be it so."
The friends around them saw with much delight
The social war, and hail'd the pleasant night;
Nor would they further hear the cause discuss'd,
Afraid the recreant heart of Clubb to trust.
Now sober thoughts return'd as each withdrew,
And of the subject took a serious view:
"'Twas wrong," thought Counter, "and will grieve my love."
"'Twas wrong," thought Clubb, "my wife will not approve:
But friends were present; I must try the thing,
Or with my folly half the town will ring."
He sought his lady; "Madam, I'm to blame,
But was reproach'd, and could not bear the shame;
Herein my folly—for 'tis best to say
The very truth—I've sworn to have my way:
To that Newmarket—(though I hate the place,
And have no taste or talents for a race,
Yet so it is—well, now prepare to chide)—
I laid a wager that I dared to ride;
And I must go: by Heaven, if you resist
I shall be scorn'd, and ridiculed, and hiss'd;
Let me with grace before my friends appear,
You know the truth, and must not be severe;
He too must go, but that he will of course;
Do you consent?—I never think of force."
"You never need," the worthy dame replies
"The husband's honour is the woman's pride,

If I in trifles be the wilful wife,
Still for your credit I would lose my life;
Go! and when fix'd the day of your return,
Stay longer yet, and let the blockheads learn,
That though a wife may sometimes wish to rule,
She would not make th' indulgent man a fool;
I would at times advise—but idle they
Who think th' assenting husband *must* obey."
The happy man, who thought his lady right
In other cases, was assured to-night;
Then for the day with proud delight prepared,
To show his doubting friends how much he dared.
Counter—who grieving sought his bed, his rest
Broken by pictures of his love distress'd—
With soft and winning speech the fair prepared;
'She all his counsels comforts, pleasures shared:
She was assured he loved her from his soul,
She never knew and need not fear control;
But so it happen'd he was grieved at heart
It happen'd so, that they a while must part—
A little time—the distance was but short,
And business call'd him—he despised the sport;
But to Newmarket he engaged to ride,
With his friend Clubb," and there he stopp'd and sigh'd.
A while the tender creature look'd dismay'd,
Then floods of tears the call of grief obey'd.
"She an objection! No?" she sobb'd, "not one;
Her work was finish'd, and her race was run;
For die she must, indeed she would not live
A week alone, for all the world could give;
He too must die in that same wicked place;
It always happen'd—was a common case;
Among those horrid horses, jockeys, crowds,
'Twas certain death—they might bespeak their shrowds;
He would attempt a race, be sure to fall—
And she expire with terror—that was all;
With love like hers she was indeed unfit
To bear such horrors, but she must submit."
"But for three days, my love! three days at most—"
"Enough for me; I then shall be a ghost—"
'My honour's pledged!"—"O! yes, my dearest life,
I know your honour must outweigh your wife;
But ere this absence, have you sought a friend?
I shall be dead—on whom can you depend?
Let me one favour of your kindness crave,
Grant me the stone I mention'd for my grave."
"Nay, love, attend—why, bless my soul—I say
I will return—there—weep no longer—nay!"
"Well! I obey, and to the last am true,
But spirits fail me; I must die; adieu!"
"What, madam! must?—'tis wrong—I'm angry—zounds!
Can I remain and lose a thousand pounds?"
"Go then, my love! it is a monstrous sum,
Worth twenty wives—go, love! and I am dumb—
Nor be displeased—had I the power to live,
You might be angry, now you must forgive;
Alas! I faint—ah! cruel—there's no need
Of wounds or fevers—this had done the deed."
The lady fainted, and the husband sent
For every aid, for every comfort went;
Strong terror seized him; "O! she loved as well,
And who th' effect of tenderness could tell?"
She now recover'd, and again began
With accent querulous—"Ah! cruel man—"
Till the sad husband, conscience struck, confess'd,
'Twas very wicked with his friend to jest;
For now he saw that those who were obey'd,
Could like the most subservient feel afraid;
And though a wife might not dispute the will
Of her liege lord, she could prevent it still.
The morning came, and Clubb prepared to ride
With a smart boy, his servant and his guide;
When, ere he mounted on the ready steed,
Arrived a letter, and he stopp'd to read.
"My friend," he read—"Our journey I decline,
A heart too tender for such strife is mine;
Yours is the triumph, be you so inclined,
But you are too considerate and kind.
In tender pity to my Juliet's fears
I thus relent, o'ercome by love and tears;
She knows your kindness; I have heard her say,
A man like you 'tis pleasure to obey:
Each faithful wife, like ours, must disapprove
Such dangerous trifling with connubial love;
What has the idle world, my friend, to do
With our affairs? they envy me and you:
What if I could my gentle spouse command—
Is that a cause I should her tears withstand?
And what if you, a friend of peace, submit
To one you love—is that a theme for wit?
'Twas wrong, and I shall henceforth judge it weak
Both of submission and control to speak:
Be it agreed that all contention cease,
And no such follies vex our future peace;
Let each keep guard against domestic strife,
And find nor slave nor tyrant in his wife."
"Agreed," said Clubb, "with all my soul agreed"—
And to the boy, delighted, gave his steed;
"I think my friend has well his mind express'd,
And I assent; such things are not a jest."
"True," said the wife, "no longer he can hide
The truth that pains him by his wounded pride:
Your friend has found it not an easy thing,
Beneath his yoke, this yielding soul to bring,
These weeping willows, though they seem inclined
By every breeze, yet not the strongest wind
Can from their bent divert this weak but stubborn kind;
Drooping they seek your pity to excite,
But 'tis at once their nature and delight;
Such women feel not; while they sigh and weep,
'Tis but their habit—their affections sleep;
They are like ice that in the hand we hold,
So very melting, yet so very cold;
On such affection let not man rely,
The husbands suffer, and the ladies sigh;
But your friend's offer let us kindly take,
And spare his pride for his vexation's sake;
For he has found, and through his life will find,
'Tis easiest dealing with the firmest mind—
More just when it resists, and, when it yields, more kind."

TALE XIX.

THE CONVERT.

——A tapster is a good trade, and an old cloak makes a new jerkin; a wither'd serving-man, a fresh tapster.
Merry Wives of Windsor, act i. sc. 3.

A fellow, sir, that I have known go about with my troll-my-dames.
Winter's Tale, act iv. sc. 2.

——I myself, sometimes leaving the fear of Heaven on the left hand, and holding mine honour in my necessity, am forced to shuffle, to hedge, and to lurch.
Merry Wives of Windsor, act ii. sc. 2.

Yea, and at that very moment,
Consideration like an angel came,
And whipp'd th' offending Adam out of him.
Henry V. act i. sc. 1.

I have lived long enough: My May of life
Is fall'n into the sere, the yellow leaf;
And that which should accompany old age,
As honour, love, obedience, troops of friends,
I must not look to have.
Macbeth, act v. sc. 3.

Some to our hero have a hero's name
Denied, because no father's he could claim;
Nor could his mother with precision state
A full fair claim to her certificate;
On her own word the marriage must depend—
A point she was not eager to defend:
But who, without a father's name, can raise
His own so high, deserves the greater praise:
The less advantage to the strife he brought,
The greater wonders has his prowess wrought;
He who depends upon his wind and limbs,
Needs neither cork nor bladder when he swims;
Nor will by empty breath be puff'd along,
As not himself—but in his helpers—strong.
Suffice it then, our hero's name was clear,
For, call John Dighton, and he answer'd, "Here!"
But who that name in early life assign'd
He never found, he never tried to find;
Whether his kindred were to John disgrace,
Or John to them, is a disputed case;
His infant state owed nothing to their care—
His mind neglected, and his body bare;
All his success must on himself depend,
He had no money, counsel, guide, or friend;
But in a market town an active boy
Appear'd, and sought in various ways employ;
Who soon, thus cast upon the world, began
To show the talents of a thriving man.
With spirit high John learn'd the world to brave,
And in both senses was a ready knave:
Knave as of old, obedient, keen, and quick,
Knave as at present, skill'd to shift and trick;
Some humble part of many trades he taught,
He for the builder and the painter wrought;
For serving maids on secret errands ran,
The waiter's helper, and the hostler's man;
And when he chanced (oft chanced he) place to lose,
His varying genius shone in blacking shoes:
A midnight fisher by the pond he stood,
Assistant poacher, he o'erlook'd the wood;
At an election John's impartial mind
Was to no cause nor candidate confined;
To all in turn full he allegiance swore,
And in his hat the various badges bore:
His liberal soul with every sect agreed,
Unheard their reasons, he received their creed;
At church he deign'd the organ pipes to fill,
And at the meeting sang both loud and shrill:
But the full purse these different merits gain'd
By strong demands his lively passions drain'd
Liquors he loved of each inflaming kind,
To midnight revels flew with ardent mind;
Too warm at cards, a losing game he play'd,
To fleecing beauty his attention paid;
His boiling passions were by oaths express'd,
And lies he made his profit and his jest.
Such was the boy, and such the man had been,
But fate or happier fortune changed the scene;
A fever seized him, "He should surely die—"
He fear'd, and lo! a friend was praying by;
With terror moved, this teacher he address'd,
And all the errors of his youth confess'd:
The good man kindly clear'd the sinner's way
To lively hope, and counsell'd him to pray;
Who then resolved, should he from sickness rise,
To quit cards, liquors, poaching, oaths, and lies:
His health restored, he yet resolved, and grew
True to his masters, to their meeting true:
His old companions at his sober face
Laugh'd loud, while he, attesting it was grace,
With tears besought them all his calling to embrace:
To his new friends such converts gave applause,
Life to their zeal, and glory to their cause:
Though terror wrought the mighty change, yet strong
Was the impression, and it lasted long;
John at the lectures due attendance paid,
A convert meek, obedient, and afraid.
His manners strict, though form'd on fear alone,
Pleased the grave friends, nor less his solemn tone,
The lengthen'd face of care, the low and inward groan:
The stern good men exulted, when they saw
Those timid looks of penitence and awe;
Nor thought that one so passive, humble, meek,
Had yet a creed and principles to seek.
The faith that reason finds, confirms, avows,
The hopes, the views, the comforts she allows—
These were not his, who by his feelings found,
And by them only, that his faith was sound;
Feelings of terror these, for evil past,
Feelings of hope, to be received at last;
Now weak, now lively, changing with the day,
These were his feelings, and he felt his way.
Sprung from such sources, will this faith remain
While these supporters can their strength retain:
As heaviest weights the deepest rivers pass,
While icy chains fast bind the solid mass;
So, born of feelings, faith remains secure,
Long as their firmness and their strength endure:
But when the waters in their channel glide,
A bridge must bear us o'er the threatening tide:
Such bridge is reason, and there faith relies,
Whether the varying spirits fall or rise.
His patrons, still disposed their aid to lend,
Behind a counter placed their humble friend;
Where pens and paper were on shelves display'd,
And pious pamphlets on the windows laid;

By nature active and from vice restrain'd,
Increasing trade his bolder views sustain'd;
His friends and teachers, finding so much zeal
In that young convert whom they taught to feel,
His trade encouraged, and were pleased to find
A hand so ready, with such humble mind.

And now, his health restored, his spirits eased,
He wish'd to marry, if the teachers pleased.
They, not unwilling, from the virgin class
Took him a comely and a courteous lass;
Simple and civil, loving and beloved,
She long a fond and faithful partner proved;
In every year the elders and the priest
Were duly summon'd to a christening feast;
Nor came a babe, but by his growing trade,
John had provision for the coming made:
For friends and strangers all were pleased to deal
With one whose care was equal to his zeal.

In human friendship, it compels a sigh,
To think what trifles will dissolve the tie.
John, now become a master of his trade,
Perceived how much improvement might be made;
And as this prospect open'd to his view,
A certain portion of his zeal withdrew;
His fear abated—"What had he to fear—
His profits certain, and his conscience clear?"
Above his door a board was placed by John,
And, "Dighton, stationer," was gilt thereon;
His window next, enlarged to twice the size,
Shone with such trinkets as the simple prize;
While in the shop with pious works were seen
The last new play, review, or magazine:
In orders punctual, he observed—"The books
He never read, and could he judge their looks?
Readers and critics should their merits try,
He had no office but to sell and buy;
Like other traders, profit was his care;
Of what they print, the authors must beware."
He held his patrons and his teachers dear,
But with his trade—they must not interfere.

'Twas certain now that John had lost the dread
And pious thoughts that once such terrors bred;
His habits varied, and he more inclined
To the vain world, which he had half resign'd:
He had moreover in his brethren seen,
Or he imagined, craft, conceit, and spleen;
"They are but men," said John, "and shall I then
Fear man's control, or stand in awe of men?
'Tis their advice, (their convert's rule and law,)
And good it is—I will not stand in awe."

Moreover Dighton, though he thought of books
As one who chiefly on the title looks,
Yet sometimes ponder'd o'er a page to find,
When vex'd with cares, amusement for his mind;
And by degrees that mind had treasured much
From works his teachers were afraid to touch:
Satiric novels, poets bold and free,
And what their writers term philosophy;
All these were read, and he began to feel
Some self-approval on his bosom steal.
Wisdom creates humility, but he
Who thus collects it will not humble be:
No longer John was fill'd with pure delight
And humble reverence in a pastor's sight;
Who, like a grateful zealot, listening stood,
To hear a man so friendly and so good;
But felt the dignity of one who made
Himself important by a thriving trade;
And growing pride in Dighton's mind was bred
By the strange food on which it coarsely fed.

Their brother's fall the grieving brethren heard
The pride indeed to all around appear'd;
The world, his friends agreed, had won the soul
From its best hopes, the man from their control:
To make him humble, and confine his views
Within their bounds, and books which they peruse;
A deputation from these friends select,
Might reason with him to some good effect;
Arm'd with authority, and led by love,
They might those follies from his mind remove;
Deciding thus, and with this kind intent,
A chosen body with its speaker went.

"John," said the teacher, "John, with great concern,
We see thy frailty, and thy fate discern;
Satan with toils thy simple soul beset,
And thou art careless, slumbering in the net;
Unmindful art thou of thy early vow?
Who at the morning meeting sees thee now?
Who at the evening? where is brother John?
We ask—are answer'd, To the tavern gone:
Thee on the Sabbath seldom we behold;
Thou canst not sing, thou'rt nursing for a cold;
This from the churchmen thou hast learn'd, for they
Have colds and fevers on the Sabbath day;
When in some snug warm room they sit, and pen
Bills from their ledgers, (world entangled men!)

"See with what pride thou hast enlarged thy shop
To view thy tempting stores the heedless stop;
By what strange names dost thou these baubles know,
Which wantons wear, to make a sinful show?
Hast thou in view these idle volumes placed,
To be the pander of a vicious taste?
What's here? a book of dances!—you advance
In goodly knowledge—John, wilt learn to dance?
How! 'Go!—' it says, and 'to the devil go!
And shake thyself!' I tremble—but 'tis so——
Wretch as thou art, what answer canst thou make?
O! without question thou wilt go and shake.
What's here? the 'School for Scandal'—pretty schools!
Well, and art thou proficient in the rules?
Art thou a pupil, is it thy design
To make our names contemptible as thine?
'Old Nick, a novel!' O! 'tis mighty well;
A fool has courage when he laughs at hell;
'Frolic and Fun,' the humours of 'Tim Grin;'
Why, John, thou grow'st facetious in thy sin;
And what? 'th' Archdeacon's Charge'—'tis mighty well—
If Satan publish'd, thou wouldst doubtless sell;
Jests, novels, dances, and this precious stuff,
To crown thy folly we have seen enough;
We find thee fitted for each evil work—
Do print the Koran, and become a Turk.

"John, thou art lost; success and worldly pride
O'er all thy thoughts and purposes preside,
Have bound thee fast, and drawn thee far aside:
Yet turn; these sin-traps from thy shop expel,
Repent and pray, and all may yet be well.

"And here thy wife, thy Dorothy, behold,
How fashion's wanton robes her form infold!
Can grace, can goodness with such trappings dwell?
John, thou hast made thy wife a Jezebel:

See! on her bosom rests the sign of sin,
The glaring proof of naughty thoughts within;
What! 'tis a cross; come hither—as a friend
Thus from thy neck the shameful badge I rend."
"Rend, if you dare," said Dighton; "you shall find
A man of spirit, though to peace inclined;
Call me ungrateful! have I not my pay
At all times ready for th' expected day?—
To share my plenteous board you deign to come,
Myself your pupil, and my house your home;
And shall the persons who my meat enjoy
Talk of my faults, and treat me as a boy?
Have you not told how Rome's insulting priests
Led their meek laymen like a herd of beasts;
And by their fleecing and their forgery made
Their holy calling an accursed trade?
Can you such acts and insolence condemn,
Who to your utmost power resemble them?
"Concerns it you what books I set for sale?
The tale perchance may be a virtuous tale;
And for the rest, 'tis neither wise nor just,
In you, who read not, to condemn on trust;
Why should th' Archdeacon's Charge your spleen excite?
He, or perchance th' archbishop, may be right.
"That from your meetings I refrain, is true;
I meet with nothing pleasant—nothing new;
But the same proofs, that not one text explain,
And the same lights, where all things dark remain;
I thought you saints on earth—but I have found
Some sins among you, and the best unsound:
You have your failings, like the crowds below,
And at your pleasure hot and cold can blow.
When I at first your grave deportment saw,
(I own my folly,) I was fill'd with awe;
You spoke so warmly, and it seems so well,
I should have thought it treason to rebel;
Is it a wonder that a man like me
Should such perfection in such teachers see?
Nay, should conceive you sent from heaven to brave
The host of sin, and sinful souls to save?
But as our reason wakes, our prospects clear,
And failings, flaws, and blemishes appear.
"When you were mounted in your rostrum high,
We shrank beneath your tone, your frown, your eye;
Then you beheld us abject, fallen, low,
And felt your glory from our baseness grow;
Touch'd by your words, I trembled like the rest,
And my own vileness and your power confess'd:
These, I exclaim'd, are men divine, and gazed
On him who taught, delighted, and amazed;
Glad when he finish'd, if by chance he cast
One look on such a sinner, as he pass'd.
"But when I view'd you in a clearer light,
And saw the frail and carnal appetite;
When, at his humble prayer, you deign'd to eat
Saints as you are, a civil sinner's meat;
When as you sat contented and at ease,
Nibbling at leisure on the ducks and pease;
And, pleased some comforts in such place to find,
You could descend to be a little kind;
And gave us hope, in heaven there might be room
For a few souls besides your own to come;
While this world's good engaged your carnal view,
And like a sinner you enjoy'd it too;
All this perceiving, can you think it strange
That change in you should work an equal change?"
"Wretch that thou art," an elder cried, "and gone
For everlasting."——"Go thyself," said John;
"Depart this instant, let me hear no more
My house my castle is, and that my door."
The hint they took, and from the door withdrew
And John to meeting bade a long adieu;
Attach'd to business, he in time became
A wealthy man of no inferior name.
It seem'd, alas! in John's deluded sight,
That all was wrong because not all was right;
And when he found his teachers had their stains,
Resentment and not reason broke his chains:
Thus on his feelings he again relied,
And never look'd to reason for his guide:
Could he have wisely view'd the frailty shown,
And rightly weigh'd their wanderings and his own,
He might have known that men may be sincere,
Though gay and feasting on the savoury cheer;
That doctrines sound and sober they may teach,
Who love to eat with all the glee they preach;
Nay, who believe the duck, the grape, the pine,
Were not intended for the dog and swine;
But Dighton's hasty mind on every theme
Ran from the truth, and rested in th' extreme:
Flaws in his friends he found, and then withdrew
(Vain of his knowledge) from their virtues too.
Best of his books he loved the liberal kind,
That, if they improve not, still enlarge the mind;
And found himself, with such advisers, free
From a fix'd creed, as mind enlarged could be.
His humble wife at these opinions sigh'd,
But her he never heeded till she died:
He then assented to a last request,
And by the meeting window let her rest;
And on her stone the sacred text was seen,
Which had her comfort in departing been.
Dighton with joy beheld his trade advance,
Yet seldom publish'd, loath to trust to chance;
Then wed a doctor's sister—poor indeed,
But skill'd in works her husband could not read
Who, if he wish'd new ways of wealth to seek,
Could make her half-crown pamphlet in a week;
This he rejected, though without disdain,
And chose the old and certain way to gain.
Thus he proceeded, trade increased the while,
And fortune woo'd him with perpetual smile:
On early scenes he sometimes cast a thought,
When on his heart the mighty change was wrought
And all the ease and comfort converts find
Was magnified in his reflecting mind:
Then on the teacher's priestly pride he dwelt,
That caused his freedom, but with this he felt
The danger of the free—for since that day,
No guide had shown, no brethren join'd his way
Forsaking one, he found no second creed,
But reading doubted, doubting what to read.
Still, though reproof had brought some present pain,
The gain he made was fair and honest gain,
He laid his wares, indeed, in public view,
But that all traders claim a right to do:
By means like these, he saw his wealth increase,
And felt his consequence, and dwelt in peace.
Our hero's age was threescore years and five,
When he exclaim'd, "Why longer should I strive?
Why more amass, who never must behold
A young John Dighton, to make glad the old?"

.The sons he had to early graves were gone,
And girls were burdens to the mind of John.)
"Had I a boy, he would our name sustain,
That now to nothing must return again;
But what are all my profits, credit, trade,
And parish honours?—folly and parade."

Thus Dighton thought, and in his looks appear'd
Sadness increased by much he saw and heard:
The brethren often at the shop would stay,
And make their comments ere they walk'd away:
They mark'd the window, fill'd in every pane
With lawless prints of reputations slain;
Distorted forms of men with honours graced,
And our chief rulers in derision placed:
Amazed they stood, remembering well the days
When to be humble was their brother's praise,
When at the dwelling of their friend they stopp'd
To drop a word, or to receive it dropp'd;
Where they beheld the prints of men renown'd,
And far-famed preachers pasted all around;
Such mouths! eyes! hair! so prim! so fierce! so sleek!
They look'd as speaking what is wo to speak:)
On these the passing brethren loved to dwell—
How long they spake! how strongly! warmly! well!
What power had each to dive in mysteries deep,
To warm the cold, to make the harden'd weep;
To lure, to fright, to soothe, to awe the soul,
And listening flocks to lead and to control!

But now discoursing, as they linger'd near,
They tempted John (whom they accused) to hear
Their weighty charge—"And can the lost one feel,
As in the time of duty, love, and zeal;
When all were summon'd at the rising sun,
And he was ready with his friends to run;
When he, partaking with a chosen few,
Felt the great change, sensation rich and new?
No! all is lost, her favours Fortune shower'd
Upon the man, and he is overpower'd;
The world has won him with its tempting store
Of needless wealth, and that has made him poor:
Success undoes him, he has risen to fall,
Has gain'd a fortune, and has lost his all;
Gone back from Sion, he will find his age
Loath to commence a second pilgrimage;
He has retreated from the chosen track;
And now must ever bear the burden on his back."

Hurt by such censure, John began to find
Fresh revolutions working in his mind;
He sought for comfort in his books, but read
Without a plan or method in his head;
What once amused, now rather made him sad,
What should inform, increased the doubts he had;
Shame would not let him seek at church a guide,
And from his meeting he was held by pride;
His wife derided fears she never felt,
And passing brethren daily censures dealt;
Hope for a son was now for ever past,
He was the first John Dighton, and the last;
His stomach fail'd, his case the doctor knew,
But said, "He still might hold a year or two."
"No more!" he said, "but why should I complain?
A life of doubt must be a life of pain:
Could I be sure—but why should I despair?
I'm sure my conduct has been just and fair;
In youth indeed I had a wicked will,
But I repented and have sorrow still:
I had my comforts, and a growing trade
Gave greater pleasure than a fortune made;
And as I more possess'd and reason'd more,
I lost those comforts I enjoy'd before,
When reverend guides I saw my table round,
And in my guardian guest my safety found:
Now sick and sad, no appetite, no ease,
Nor pleasure have I, nor a wish to please;
Nor views, nor hopes, nor plans, nor taste have I,
Yet sick of life, have no desire to die."

He said, and died; his trade, his name is gone
And all that once gave consequence to John.
Unhappy Dighton! had he found a friend,
When conscience told him it was time to mend!
A friend discreet, considerate, kind, sincere,
Who would have shown the grounds of hope and fear;
And proved that spirits, whether high or low,
No certain tokens of man's safety show;
Had reason ruled him in her proper place,
And virtue led him while he lean'd on grace;
Had he while zealous been discreet and pure,
His knowledge humble, and his hope secure;—
These guides had placed him on the solid rock,
Where faith had rested, nor received a shock;
But his, alas! was placed upon the sand,
Where long it stood not, and where none can stand.

TALE XX.

THE BROTHERS.

A brother noble,
Whose nature is so far from doing harms,
That he suspects none; on whose foolish honesty
My practice may ride easy.
King Lear, act i. sc. 2.

He lets me feed with hinds,
Bars me the place of brother.
As You Like It, act i. sc. 1.

'Twas I, but 'tis not I: I do not shame
To tell you what I was, being what I am.
Ib. act iv. sc. 3.

THAN old George Fletcher, on the British coast,
Dwelt not a seaman who had more to boast;
Kind, simple, and sincere—he seldom spoke,
But sometimes sang and chorus'd, "*Hearts of Oak*
In dangers steady, with his lot content,
His days in labour and in love were spent.

He left a son so like him, that the old
With joy exclaim'd, "'tis Fletcher we behold;"
But to his brother when the kinsmen came,
And view'd his form, they grudged the father's name.

George was a bold, intrepid, careless lad,
With just the failings that his father had;
Isaac was weak, attentive, slow, exact,
With just the virtues that his father lack'd.

George lived at sea; upon the land a guest—
He sought for recreation, not for rest;
While, far unlike, his brother's feebler form
Shrank from the cold, and shudder'd at the storm,
Still with the seaman's to connect his trade,
The boy was bound where blocks and ropes were made.

George, strong and sturdy, had a tender mind
And was to Isaac pitiful and kind:

A very father, till his art was gain'd,
And then a friend unwearied he remain'd:
He saw his brother was of spirit low,
His temper peevish, and his motions slow;
Not fit to bustle in a world, or make
Friends to his fortune for his merit's sake:
But the kind sailor could not boast the art
Of looking deeply in the human heart;
Else had he seen that this weak brother knew
What men to court, what objects to pursue;
That he to distant gain the way discern'd,
And none so crooked but his genius learn'd.
Isaac was poor, and this the brother felt;
He hired a house, and there the landsman dwelt;
Wrought at his trade, and had an easy home,
For there would George with cash and comforts come;
And when they parted, Isaac look'd around,
Where other friends and helpers might be found.
He wish'd for some port-place, and one might fall,
He wisely thought, if he should try for all;
He had a vote—and, were it well applied,
Might have its worth—and he had views beside;
Old Burgess Steel was able to promote
An humble man who served him with a vote;
For Isaac felt not what some tempers feel,
But bow'd and bent the neck to Burgess Steel;
And great attention to a lady gave,
His ancient friend, a maiden spare and grave:
One whom the visage long and look demure
Of Isaac pleased—he seem'd sedate and pure;
And his soft heart conceived a gentle flame
For her who waited on this virtuous dame:
Not an outrageous love, a scorching fire,
But friendly liking and chastised desire;
And thus he waited, patient in delay,
In present favour and in fortune's way.
George then was coasting—war was yet delay'd,
And what he gain'd was to his brother paid;
Nor ask'd the seaman what he saved or spent:
But took his grog, wrought hard, and was content;
Till war awaked the land, and George began
To think what part became a useful man:
"Press'd, I must go; why then, 'tis better far
At once to enter like a British tar,
Than a brave captain and the foe to shun,
As if I fear'd the music of a gun."
"Go not!" said Isaac—"You shall wear disguise."
"What!" said the seaman, "clothe myself with lies?"
"O! but there's danger."—"Danger in the fleet?
You cannot mean, good brother, of defeat;
And other dangers I at land must share—
So now adieu! and trust a brother's care."
Isaac awhile demurr'd—but, in his heart,
So might he share, he was disposed to part:
The better mind will sometimes feel the pain
Of benefactions—favour is a chain;
But they the feeling scorn, and what they wish disdain;—
While beings form'd in coarser mould will hate
The helping hand they ought to venerate;
No wonder George should in this cause prevail,
With one contending who was glad to fail:
'Isaac, farewell! do wipe that doleful eye;
Crying we came, and groaning we may die.
Let us do something 'twixt the groan and cry:
And hear me, brother, whether pay or prize.
One-half to thee I give and I devise;
For thou hast oft occasion for the aid
Of learn'd physicians, and they will be paid:
Their wives and children men support, at sea,
And thou, my lad, art wife and child to me:
Farewell!—I go where hope and honour call,
Nor does it follow that who fights must fall."
Isaac here made a poor attempt to speak,
And a huge tear moved slowly down his cheek;
Like Pluto's iron drop, hard sign of grace,
It slowly roll'd upon the rueful face,
Forced by the striving will alone its way to trace.
Years fled—war lasted—George at sea remain'd,
While the slow landsman still his profits gain'd:
An humble place was vacant; he besought
His patron's interest, and the office caught;
For still the virgin was his faithful friend,
And one so sober could with truth commend,
Who of his own defects most humbly thought,
And their advice with zeal and reverence sought:
Whom thus the mistress praised, the maid approved,
And her he wedded whom he wisely loved.
No more he needs assistance—but, alas!
He fears the money will for liquor pass;
Or that the seaman might to flatterers lend,
Or give support to some pretended friend:
Still he must write—he wrote, and he confess'd
That, till absolved, he should be sore distress'd;
But one so friendly would, he thought, forgive
The hasty deed—heaven knew how he should live
"But you," he added, "as a man of sense,
Have well consider'd danger and expense:
I ran, alas! into the fatal snare,
And now for trouble must my mind prepare;
And how, with children, I shall pick my way,
Through a hard world, is more than I can say:
Then change not, brother, your more happy state,
Or on the hazard long deliberate."
George answer'd gravely, "It is right and fit,
In all our crosses, humbly to submit:
Your apprehensions are unwise, unjust;
Forbear repining, and expel distrust."
He added, "Marriage was the joy of life,"
And gave his service to his brother's wife;
Then vow'd to bear in all expense a part,
And thus concluded, "Have a cheerful heart."
Had the glad Isaac been his brother's guide,
In these same terms the seaman had replied;
At such reproofs the crafty landsman smiled,
And softly said, "This creature is a child."
Twice had the gallant ship a capture made,
And when in port the happy crew were paid,
Home went the sailor, with his pocket stored,
Ease to enjoy, and pleasure to afford;
His time was short, joy shone in every face,
Isaac half fainted in the fond embrace:
The wife resolved her honour'd guest to please,
The children clung upon their uncle's knees;
The grog went round, the neighbours drank his health,
And George exclaim'd, "Ah! what to this is wealth?
Better," said he, "to bear a loving heart,
Than roll in riches——but we now must part!"
All yet is still—but hark! the winds o'ersweep
The rising waves, and howl upon the deep;
Ships late becalm'd on mountain-billows ride—
So life is threaten'd, and so man is tried.

Ill were the tidings that arrived from sea,
The worthy George must now a cripple be;
His leg was lopp'd; and though his heart was sound,
Though his brave captain was with glory crown'd,
Yet much it vex'd him to repose on shore,
An idle log, and be of use no more:
True, he was sure that Isaac would receive
All of his brother that the foe might leave;
To whom the seaman his design had sent,
Ere from the port the wounded hero went:
His wealth and expectations told, he "knew
Wherein they fail'd, what Isaac's love would do;
That he the grog and cabin would supply,
Where George at anchor during life would lie."
The landsman read—and, reading, grew distress'd:—
'Could he resolve t' admit so poor a guest?
Better at Greenwich might the sailor stay,
Unless his purse could for his comforts pay;"
So Isaac judged, and to his wife appeal'd,
But yet acknowledged it was best to yield:
"Perhaps his pension, with what sums remain
Due or unsquander'd, may the man maintain;
Refuse we must not."—With a heavy sigh
The lady heard, and made her kind reply:
"Nor would I wish it, Isaac, were we sure
How long his crazy building will endure;
Like an old house, that every day appears
About to fall—he may be propp'd for years;
For a few months, indeed, we might comply,
But these old batter'd fellows never die."
The hand of Isaac, George on entering took,
With love and resignation in his look;
Declared his comfort in the fortune past,
And joy to find his anchor safely cast;
"Call then my nephews, let the grog be brought,
And I will tell them how the ship was fought."
Alas! our simple seaman should have known,
That all the care, the kindness, he had shown,
Were from his brother's heart, if not his memory, flown:
All swept away to be perceived no more,
Like idle structures on the sandy shore;
The chance amusement of the playful boy,
That the rude billows in their rage destroy.
Poor George confess'd, though loath the truth to find,
Slight was his knowledge of a brother's mind:
The vulgar pipe was to the wife offence,
The frequent grog to Isaac an expense;
Would friends like hers, she question'd, "choose to come,
Where clouds of poison'd fume defiled a room?
This could their lady friend, and Burgess Steel,
(Teased with his worship's asthma,) bear to feel?
Could they associate or converse with him—
A loud rough sailor with a timber limb?"
Cold as he grew, still Isaac strove to show,
By well-feign'd care, that cold he could not grow;
And when he saw his brother look distress'd,
He strove some petty comforts to suggest;
On his wife solely their neglect to lay,
And then t' excuse it, is a woman's way;
He too was chidden when her rules he broke,
And then she sicken'd at the scent of smoke.
George, though in doubt, was still consoled to find
His brother wishing to be reckon'd kind:
That Isaac seem'd concern'd by his distress
Gave to his injured feelings some redress;
But none he found disposed to lend an ear
To stories, all were once intent to hear:
Except his nephew, seated on his knee,
He found no creature cared about the sea;
But George indeed—for George they call'd the boy,
When his good uncle was their boast and joy—
Would listen long, and would contend with sleep
To hear the woes and wonders of the deep;
Till the fond mother cried—"That man will teach
The foolish boy his loud and boisterous speech."
So judged the father—and the boy was taught
To shun the uncle, whom his love had sought.
The mask of kindness now but seldom worn,
George felt each evil harder to be borne;
And cried, (vexation growing day by day,)
"Ah! brother Isaac!—What! I'm in the way?"
"No! on my credit, look ye, No! but I
Am fond of peace, and my repose would buy
On any terms—in short, we must comply:
My spouse had money—she must have her will—
Ah! brother—marriage is a bitter pill."
George tried the lady—"Sister, I offend."
"Me?" she replied—"O no!—you may depend
On my regard—but watch your brother's way,
Whom I, like you, must study and obey."
"Ah!" thought the seaman, "what a head was mine,
That easy birth at Greenwich to resign!
I'll to the parish"——but a little pride,
And some affection, put the thought aside.
Now gross neglect and open scorn he bore
In silent sorrow—but he felt the more:
The odious pipe he to the kitchen took,
Or strove to profit by some pious book.
When the mind stoops to this degraded state,
New griefs will darken the dependant's fate;
"Brother!" said Isaac, "you will sure excuse
The little freedom I'm compell'd to use:
My wife's relations—(curse the haughty crew)—
Affect such niceness, and such dread of you:
You speak so loud—and they have natures soft—
Brother——I wish——do go upon the loft!"
Poor George obey'd, and to the garret fled,
Where not a being saw the tears he shed:
But more was yet required, for guests were come,
Who could not dine if he disgraced the room.
It shock'd his spirit to be esteem'd unfit
With an own brother and his wife to sit;
He grew rebellious—at the vestry spoke
For weekly aid——they heard it as a joke:
"So kind a brother, and so wealthy——you
Apply to us?——No! this will never do:
Good neighbour Fletcher," said the overseer,
"We are engaged—you can have nothing here"
George mutter'd something in despairing tone
Then sought his loft, to think and grieve alone;
Neglected, slighted, restless on his bed,
With heart half broken, and with scraps ill fed;
Yet was he pleased, that hours for play design'd
Were given to ease his ever-troubled mind,
The child still listen'd with increasing joy.
And he was soothed by the attentive boy
At length he sicken'd, and this duteous child
Watch'd o'er his sickness, and his pains beguiled;

The mother bade him from the loft refrain,
But, though with caution, yet he went again;
And now his tales the sailor feebly told,
His heart was heavy, and his limbs were cold:
The tender boy came often to entreat
His good kind friend would of his presents eat;
Purloin'd or purchased, for he saw, with shame,
The food untouch'd that to his uncle came;
Who, sick in body and in mind, received
The boy's indulgence, gratified and grieved.
"Uncle will die!" said George—the piteous wife
Exclaim'd, "She saw no value in his life;
But sick or well, to my commands attend,
And go no more to your complaining friend."
The boy was vex'd; he felt his heart reprove
The stern decree.—What! punish'd for his love!
No! he would go, but softly to the room,
Stealing in silence—for he knew his doom.
Once in a week the father came to say,
"George, are you ill?"—and hurried him away;
Yet to his wife would on their duties dwell,
And often cry, "Do use my brother well:"
And something kind, no question, Isaac meant,
Who took vast credit for the vague intent.
But truly kind, the gentle boy essay'd
To cheer his uncle, firm, although afraid;
But now the father caught him at the door,
And, swearing—yes, the man in office swore,
And cried, "Away! How! brother, I'm surprised,
That one so old can be so ill advised:
Let him not dare to visit you again,
Your cursed stories will disturb his brain;
Is it not vile to court a foolish boy,
Your own absurd narrations to enjoy?
What! sullen!—ha! George Fletcher! you shall see,
Proud as you are, your bread depends on me!"
He spoke, and, frowning, to his dinner went,
Then cool'd and felt some qualms of discontent;
And thought on times when he compell'd his son
To hear these stories, nay, to beg for one:
But the wife's wrath o'ercame the brother's pain,
And shame was felt, and conscience rose in vain.
George yet stole up, he saw his uncle lie
Sick on the bed, and heard his heavy sigh:
So he resolved, before he went to rest,
To comfort one so dear and so distress'd;
Then watch'd his time, but with a childlike art,
Betray'd a something treasured at his heart:
Th' observant wife remark'd, "The boy is grown
So like your brother, that he seems his own;
So close and sullen! and I still suspect
They often meet—do watch them and detect."
George now remark'd that all was still at night,
And hasten'd up with terror and delight;
"Uncle!" he cried, and softly tapp'd the door,
"Do let me in"—but he could add no more;
The careful father caught him in the fact,
And cried,—"You serpent! is it thus you act?
Back to your mother!"—and with hasty blow,
He sent th' indignant boy to grieve below;
Then at the door an angry speech began—
"Is this your conduct?—is it thus you plan?
Seduce my child, and make my house a scene
Of vile dispute——What is it that you mean?—
George, are you dumb? do learn to know your friends,
And think a while on whom your bread depends
What! not a word? be thankful I am cool—
But, sir, beware, no longer play the fool;
Come! brother, come! what is that you seek
By this rebellion?—Speak, you villain, speak!—
Weeping! I warrant—sorrow makes you dumb:
I'll ope your mouth, impostor! if I come:
Let me approach—I'll shake you from the bed,
You stubborn dog——O God! my brother's dead!"
Timid was Isaac, and in all the past
He felt a purpose to be kind at last;
Nor did he mean his brother to depart,
Till he had shown this kindness of his heart:
But day by day he put the cause aside,
Induced by avarice, peevishness, or pride.
But now awaken'd, from this fatal time
His conscience Isaac felt, and found his crime:
He raised to George a monumental stone,
And there retired to sigh and think alone;
An ague seized him, he grew pale, and shook—
"So," said his son, "would my poor uncle look."
"And so, my child, shall I like him expire."—
"No! you have physic and a cheerful fire."—
"Unhappy sinner! yes, I'm well supplied
With every comfort my cold heart denied."
He view'd his brother now, but not as one
Who vex'd his wife by fondness for her son;
Not as with wooden limb, and seaman's tale,
The odious pipe, vile grog, or humbler ale:
He now the worth and grief alone can view
Of one so mild, so generous, and so true;
"The frank, kind brother, with such open heart,
And I to break it—'twas a demon's part"
So Isaac now, as led by conscience, feels,
Nor his unkindness palliates or conceals.
"This is your folly," said his heartless wife.
"Alas! my folly cost my brother's life;
It suffer'd him to languish and decay,
My gentle brother, whom I could not pay,
And therefore left to pine, and fret his life away."
He takes his son, and bids the boy unfold
All the good uncle of his feelings told,
All he lamented—and the ready tear
Falls as he listens, soothed, and grieved to hear.
"Did he not curse me, child?"—"He never cursed,
But could not breathe, and said his heart would burst."—
"And so will mine."—"Then, father, you must pray;
My uncle said it took his pains away."
Repeating thus his sorrows, Isaac shows
That he, repenting, feels the debt he owes,
And from this source alone his every comfort flows.
He takes no joy in office, honours, gain;
They make him humble, nay, they give him pain;
"These from my heart," he cries, "all feeling drove;
They made me cold to nature, dead to love:"
He takes no joy in home, but sighing, sees
A son in sorrow, and a wife at ease:
He takes no joy in office—see him now,
And Burgess Steel has but a passing bow;
Of one sad train of gloomy thoughts possess'd,
He takes no joy in friends, in food, in rest—
Dark are the evil days, and void of peace the best,

As thus he lives, if living be to sigh,
And from all comforts of the world to fly,
Without a hope in life—without a wish to die.

TALE XXI.

THE LEARNED BOY.

Like one well studied in a sad ostent,
To please his grandam.
Merchant of Venice, act ii. sc. 2.

And then the whining school-boy, with his satchel
And shining morning face, creeping like snail,
Unwillingly to school.
As You Like It, act ii. sc. 7.

He is a better scholar than I thought he was—
He has a good sprag memory.
Merry Wives of Windsor, act iv. sc. 1.

One that feeds
On objects, arts, and imitations,
Which out of use, and staled by other men,
Begin his fashion.
Julius Cæsar, act iv. sc. 1.

O! torture me no more—I will confess.
Henry VI. Part 2. act ii. sc. 3.

An honest man was Farmer Jones, and true,
He did by all as all by him should do;
Grave, cautious, careful, fond of gain was he,
Yet famed for rustic hospitality:
Left with his children in a widow'd state,
The quiet man submitted to his fate;
Though prudent matrons waited for his call,
With cool forbearance he avoided all;
Though each profess'd a pure maternal joy,
By kind attention to his feeble boy:
And though a friendly widow knew no rest,
Whilst neighbour Jones was lonely and distress'd:
Nay, though the maidens spoke in tender tone
Their hearts' concern to see him left alone—
Jones still persisted in that cheerless life,
As if 'twere sin to take a second wife.

O! 'tis a precious thing, when wives are dead,
To find such numbers who will serve instead:
And in whatever state a man be thrown,
'Tis that precisely they would wish their own;
Left the departed infants—then their joy
Is to sustain each lovely girl and boy:
Whatever calling his, whatever trade,
To that their chief attention has been paid;
His happy taste in all things they approve,
His friends they honour, and his food they love;
His wish for order, prudence in affairs,
And equal temper, (thank their stars!) are theirs;
In fact, it seem'd to be a thing decreed,
And fix'd as fate, that marriage must succeed;
Yet some like Jones, with stubborn hearts and hard,
Can hear such claims, and show them no regard.

Soon as our farmer, like a general, found
By what strong foes he was encompass'd round—
Engage he dared not, and he could not fly,
But saw his hope in gentle parley lie;
With looks of kindness then, and trembling heart,
He met the foe, and art opposed to art.

Now spoke that foe insidious—gentle tones,
And gentle looks, assumed for Farmer Jones:
"Three girls," the widow cried, "a lively three
To govern well—indeed it cannot be."—
"Yes," he replied, "it calls for pains and care;
But I must bear it."—"Sir, you cannot bear;
Your son is weak, and asks a mother's eye."—
"That, my kind friend, a father's may supply."—
"Such growing griefs your very soul will tease."—
"To grieve another would not give me ease—
I have a mother"—"She, poor ancient soul!
Can she the spirits of the young control?
Can she thy peace promote, partake thy care,
Procure thy comforts, and thy sorrows share?
Age is itself impatient, uncontroll'd."—
"But wives like mothers must at length be old."—
"Thou hast shrewd servants—they are evils sore."—
"Yet a shrewd mistress might afflict me more."—
"Wilt thou not be a weary wailing man?"—
"Alas! and I must bear it as I can."

Resisted thus, the widow soon withdrew,
That in his pride the hero might pursue;
And off his wonted guard, in some retreat,
Find from a foe prepared entire defeat:
But he was prudent, for he knew in flight
These Parthian warriors turn again and fight:
He but at freedom, not at glory aim'd,
And only safety by his caution claim'd.

Thus, when a great and powerful state decrees
Upon a small one, in its love, to seize—
It vows in kindness to protect, defend,
And be the fond ally, the faithful friend;
It therefore wills that humbler state to place
Its hopes of safety in a fond embrace;
Then must that humbler state its wisdom prove,
By kind rejection of such pressing love;
Must dread such dangerous friendship to commence,
And stand collected in its own defence:—
Our farmer thus the proffer'd kindness fled,
And shunn'd the love that into bondage led.

The widow failing, fresh besiegers came,
To share the fate of this retiring dame:
And each foresaw a thousand ills attend
The man that fled from so discreet a friend;
And pray'd, kind soul! that no event might make
The harden'd heart of Farmer Jones to ache.

But he still govern'd with resistless hand,
And where he could not guide, he would command
With steady view in course direct he steer'd,
And his fair daughters loved him, though they fear'd;
Each had her school, and, as his wealth was known
Each had in time a household of her own.

The boy indeed was, at the grandam's side,
Humour'd and train'd, her trouble and her pride:
Companions dear, with speech and spirits mild,
The childish widow and the vapourish child;
This nature prompts; minds uninform'd and weak,
In such alliance ease and comfort seek;
Push'd by the levity of youth aside,
The cares of man, his humour, or his pride,
They feel, in their defenceless state, allied:
The child is pleased to meet regard from age
The old are pleased e'en children to engage;
And all their wisdom, scorn'd by proud mankind,
They love to pour into the ductile mind;
By its own weakness into error led,
And by fond age with prejudices fed.

The father, thankful for the good he had,
Yet saw with pain a whining, timid lad:

Whom he, instructing, led through cultured fields,
To show what man performs, what nature yields:
But Stephen, listless, wander'd from the view,
From beasts he fled, for butterflies he flew,
And idly gazed about, in search of something new.
The lambs indeed he loved, and wish'd to play
With things so mild, so harmless, and so gay;
Best pleased the weakest of the flock to see,
With whom he felt a sickly sympathy.

Meantime, the dame was anxious, day and night,
To guide the notions of her babe aright,
And on the favourite mind to throw her glimmering light;
Her Bible stories she impress'd betimes,
And fill'd his head with hymns and holy rhymes;
On powers unseen, the good and ill, she dwelt,
And the poor boy mysterious terrors felt;
From frightful dreams, he waking sobb'd in dread,
Till the good lady came to guard his bed.

The father wish'd such errors to correct,
But let them pass in duty and respect:
But more it grieved his worthy mind to see
That Stephen never would a farmer be;
In vain he tried the shiftless lad to guide,
And yet 'twas time that something should be tried:
He at the village school perchance might gain
All that such mind could gather and retain;
Yet the good dame affirm'd her favourite child
Was apt and studious, though sedate and mild;
"That he on many a learned point could speak,
And that his body, not his mind, was weak."

The father doubted—but to school was sent
The timid Stephen, weeping as he went:
There the rude lads compell'd the child to fight,
And sent him bleeding to his home at night;
At this the grandam more indulgent grew,
And bade her darling "Shun the beastly crew;
Whom Satan ruled, and who were sure to lie,
Howling in torments, when they came to die."
This was such comfort, that in high disdain
He told their fate, and felt their blows again:
Yet if the boy had not a hero's heart,
Within the school he play'd a better part;
He wrote a clean, fine hand, and at his slate,
With more success than many a hero, sate;
He thought not much indeed—but what depends
On pains and care, was at his fingers' ends.

This had his father's praise, who now espied
A spark of merit, with a blaze of pride:
And though a farmer he would never make,
He might a pen with some advantage take;
And as a clerk that instrument employ,
So well adapted to a timid boy.

A London cousin soon a place obtain'd,
Easy, but humble—little could be gain'd:
The time arrived when youth and age must part,
Tears in each eye, and sorrow in each heart;
The careful father bade his son attend
To all his duties, and obey his friend;
To keep his church and there behave aright,
As one existing in his Maker's sight,
Till acts to habits led, and duty to delight:
"Then try, my boy, as quickly as you can,
T' assume the looks and spirit of a man;
I say, be honest, faithful, civil, true,
And this you may, and yet have courage too:
Heroic men, their country's boast and pride,
Have fear'd their God, and nothing fear'd beside:
While others daring, yet imbecile, fly
The power of man, and that of God defy:
Be manly then, though mild, for sure as fate,
Thou art, my Stephen, too effeminate;
Here, take my purse, and make a worthy use
('Tis fairly stock'd) of what it will produce:
And now my blessing, not as any charm
Or conjuration, but 'twill do no harm."

Stephen, whose thoughts were wandering up and down,
Now charm'd with promised sights in London town,
Now loath to leave his grandam—lost the force,
The drift, and tenor of this grave discourse,
But, in a general way, he understood
'Twas good advice, and meant, "My son, be good;"
And Stephen knew that all such precepts mean,
That lads should read their Bible, and be clean.

The good old lady, though in some distress,
Begg'd her dear Stephen would his grief suppress;
"Nay, dry those eyes, my child—and, first of all,
Hold fast thy faith, whatever may befall:
Hear the best preacher, and preserve the text
For meditation, till you hear the next;
Within your Bible night and morning look;
There is your duty, read no other book;
Be not in crowds, in broils, in riots seen,
And keep your conscience and your linen clean:
Be you a Joseph, and the time may be,
When kings and rulers will be ruled by thee.'

"Nay," said the father—"Hush, my son," replied
The dame; "The Scriptures must not be denied."

The lad, still weeping, heard the wheels approach,
And took his place within the evening coach,
With heart quite rent asunder. On one side
Was love, and grief, and fear, for scenes untried;
Wild beasts and wax-work fill'd the happier part
Of Stephen's varying and divided heart:
This he betray'd by sighs and questions strange,
Of famous shows, the Tower, and the Exchange.

Soon at his desk was placed the curious boy,
Demure and silent at his new employ:
Yet as he could, he much attention paid
To all around him, cautious and afraid;
On older clerks his eager eyes were fix'd,
But Stephen never in their council mix'd:
Much their contempt he fear'd, for if like them,
He felt assured he should himself contemn;
O! they were all so eloquent, so free,
No! he was nothing—nothing could he be:
They dress so smartly, and so boldly look,
And talk as if they read it from a book;
"But I," said Stephen, "will forbear to speak,
And they will think me prudent and not weak.
They talk, the instant they have dropp'd the pen,
Of singing women, and of acting men;
Of plays and places where at night they walk
Beneath the lamps, and with the ladies talk;
While other ladies for their pleasure sing.
O! 'tis a glorious and a happy thing:
They would despise me, did they understand
I dare not look upon a scene so grand;
Or see the plays when critics rise and roar,
And hiss and groan, and cry—Encore! encore!
There's one among them looks a little kind;
If more encouraged, I would ope my mind."

Alas! poor Stephen, happier had he kept
His purpose secret, while his envy slept;

Virtue, perhaps, had conquer'd, or his shame
At least preserved him simple as he came.
A year elapsed before this clerk began
To treat the rustic something like a man
He then in trifling points the youth advised,
Talk'd of his coat, and had it modernized;
Or with the lad a Sunday walk would take,
And kindly strive his passions to awake;
Meanwhile explaining all they heard and saw,
Till Stephen stood in wonderment and awe:
To a neat garden near the town they stray'd,
Where the lad felt delighted and afraid;
There all he saw was smart, and fine, and fair,—
He could but marvel how he ventured there:
Soon he observed, with terror and alarm,
His friend enlock'd within a lady's arm,
And freely talking—"But it is," said he,
"A near relation, and that makes him free;"
And much amazed was Stephen, when he knew
This was the first and only interview:
Nay, had that lovely arm by him been seized,
The lovely owner had been highly pleased:
"Alas!" he sigh'd, "I never can contrive,
At such bold, blessed freedoms to arrive;
Never shall I such happy courage boast,
I dare as soon encounter with a ghost."
Now to a play the friendly couple went,
But the boy murmur'd at the money spent;
"He loved," he said, "to buy, but not to spend—
They only talk a while, and there's an end."
"Come, you shall purchase books," the friend replied;
"You are bewilder'd, and you want a guide;
To me refer the choice, and you shall find
The light break in upon your stagnant mind!"
The cooler clerks exclaim'd, "In vain your art
T' improve a cub without a head or heart;
Rustics though coarse, and savages though wild,
Our cares may render liberal and mild;
But what, my friend, can flow from all these pains!
There is no dealing with a lack of brains."—
"True I am hopeless to behold him man,
But let me make the booby what I can:
Though the rude stone no polish will display,
Yet you may strip the rugged coat away."
Stephen beheld his books—"I love to know
How money goes—now here is that to show:
And now," he cried, "I shall be pleased to get
Beyond the Bible—there I puzzle yet."
He spoke abash'd—"Nay, nay!" the friend replied,
"You need not lay the good old book aside;
Antique and curious, I myself indeed
Read it at times, but as a man should read;
A fine old work it is, and I protest
I hate to hear it treated as a jest;
The book has wisdom in it, if you look
Wisely upon it, as another book:
For superstition (as our priests of sin
Are pleased to tell us) makes us blind within:
Of this hereafter—we will now select
Some works to please you, others to direct:
Tales and romances shall your fancy feed,
And reasoners form your morals and your creed."
The books were view'd, the price was fairly paid,
And Stephen read undaunted, undismay'd:
But not till first he paper'd all the row,
And placed in order, to enjoy the show;
Next letter'd all the backs with care and speed,
Set them in ranks, and then began to read.
The love of order,—I the thing receive
From reverend men, and I in part believe,—
Shows a clear mind and clean, and whoso needs
This love, but seldom in the world succeeds;
And yet with this some other love must be,
Ere I can fully to the fact agree:
Valour and study may by order gain,
By order sovereigns hold more steady reign:
Through all the tribes of nature order runs,
And rules around in systems and in suns:
Still has the love of order found a place,
With all that's low, degrading, mean, and base
With all that merits scorn, and all that meets disgrace:
In the cold miser, of all change afraid,
In pompous men in public seats obey'd;
In humble placemen, heralds, solemn drones,
Fanciers of flowers, and lads like Stephen Jones;
Order to these is armour and defence,
And love of method serves in lack of sense.
For rustic youth could I a list produce
Of Stephen's books, how great might be the use;
But evil fate was theirs—survey'd, enjoy'd
Some happy months, and then by force destroy'd:
So will'd the fates—but these, with patience read,
Had vast effect on Stephen's heart and head.
This soon appear'd—within a single week
He oped his lips, and made attempt to speak;
He fail'd indeed—but still his friend confess'd
The best have fail'd, and he had done his best:
The first of swimmers, when at first he swims,
Has little use or freedom in his limbs;
Nay, when at length he strikes with manly force,
The cramp may seize him, and impede his course
Encouraged thus, our clerk again essay'd
The daring act, though daunted and afraid;
Succeeding now, though partial his success,
And pertness mark'd his manner and address,
Yet such improvement issued from his books,
That all discern'd it in his speech and looks;
He ventured then on every theme to speak,
And felt no feverish tingling in his cheek;
His friend approving, hail'd the happy change,
The clerks exclaim'd—"'Tis famous, and 'tis strange!"
Two years had pass'd; the youth attended still
(Though thus accomplish'd) with a ready quill;
He sat th' allotted hours, though hard the case,
While timid prudence ruled in virtue's place:
By promise bound, the son his letters penn'd
To his good parent, at the quarter's end.
At first he sent those lines, the state to tell
Of his own health, and hoped his friends were well;
He kept their virtuous precepts in his mind,
And needed nothing—then his name was sign'd:
But now he wrote of Sunday walks and views,
Of actors' names, choice novels, and strange news
How coats were cut, and of his urgent need
For fresh supply, which he desired with speed.
The father doubted, when these letters came,
To what they tended, yet was loath to blame:
"Stephen was once *my duteous son*, and now
My most obedient—this can I allow?

Can I with pleasure or with patience see
A boy at once so heartless, and so free?"
  But soon the kinsman heavy tidings told,
That love and prudence could no more withhold:
'Stephen, though steady at his desk, was grown
A rake and coxcomb—this he grieved to own;
His cousin left his church, and spent the day
Lounging about in quite a heathen way;
Sometimes he swore, but had indeed the grace
To show the shame imprinted on his face:
I search'd his room, and in his absence read
Books that I knew would turn a stronger head;
The works of atheists half the number made,
The rest were lives of harlots leaving trade;
Which neither man or boy would deign to read,
If from the scandal and pollution freed:
I sometimes threaten'd, and would fairly state
My sense of things so vile and profligate;
But I'm a cit, such works are lost on me—
They're knowledge, and (good Lord!) philosophy."
  "O, send him down," the father soon replied;
"Let me behold him, and my skill be tried:
If care and kindness lose their wonted use,
Some rougher medicine will the end produce."
  Stephen with grief and anger heard his doom—
"Go to the farmer? to the rustic's home?
Curse the base threat'ning—" "Nay, child, never
curse;
Corrupted long, your case is growing worse."—
"I!" quoth the youth, "I challenge all mankind
To find a fault; what fault have you to find?
mprove I not in manner, speech, and grace?
Inquire—my friends will tell it to your face;
Have I been taught to guard his kine and sheep?
A man like me has other things to keep;
This let him know."—"It would his wrath excite:
But come, prepare, you must away to-night."—
"What! leave my studies, my improvements leave,
My faithful friends and intimates to grieve!"—
"Go to your father, Stephen, let him see
All these improvements: they are lost on me."
  The youth, though loath, obey'd, and soon he saw
The farmer father, with some signs of awe;
Who kind, yet silent, waited to behold
How one would act, so daring yet so cold:
And soon he found, between the friendly pair
That secrets pass'd which he was not to share;
But he resolved those secrets to obtain,
And quash rebellion in his lawful reign.
  Stephen, though vain, was with his father
mute;
He fear'd a crisis, and he shunn'd dispute:
And yet he long'd with youthful pride to show
He knew such things as farmers could not know:
These to the grandam he with freedom spoke,
Saw her amazement, and enjoy'd the joke:
But on the father when he cast his eye,
Something he found that made his valour shy;
And thus there seem'd to be a hollow truce,
Still threatening something dismal to produce.
  Ere this the father at his leisure read
The son's choice volumes, and his wonder fled;
He saw how wrought the works of either kind
On so presuming, yet so weak a mind;
These in a chosen hour he made his prey,
Condemn'd, and bore with vengeful thoughts away;
Then in a close recess, the couple near,
He sat unseen to see unheard to hear.

  There soon a trial for his patience came;
Beneath were placed the youth and ancient dame,
Each on a purpose fix'd—but neither thought
How near a foe, with power and vengeance fraught.
  And now the matron told, as tidings sad,
What she had heard of her beloved lad;
How he to graceless, wicked men gave heed,
And wicked books would night and morning read
Some former lectures she again began,
And begg'd attention of her little man;
She brought, with many a pious boast, in view
His former studies, and condemn'd the new:
Once he the names of saints and patriarchs old,
Judges and kings, and chiefs and prophets, told;
Then he in winter nights the Bible took,
To count how often in the sacred book
The sacred Name appear'd; and could rehearse
Which were the middle chapter, word and verse,
The very letter in the middle placed,
And so employ'd the hours that others waste.
  "Such wert thou once; and now, my child,
they say
Thy faith like water runneth fast away;
The prince of devils hath, I fear, beguiled
The ready wit of my backsliding child."
  On this, with lofty looks, our clerk began
His grave rebuke, as he assumed the man—
  "There is no devil," said the hopeful youth,
"Nor prince of devils; that I know for truth:
Have I not told you how my books describe
The arts of priests and all the canting tribe?
Your Bible mentions Egypt, where it seems
Was Joseph found when Pharaoh dream'd his
dreams:
Now in that place, in some bewilder'd head
(The learned write) religious dreams were bred;
Whence through the earth, with various forms
combined,
They came to frighten and afflict mankind,
Prone (so I read) to let a priest invade
Their souls with awe, and by his craft be made
Slave to his will, and profit to his trade:
So say my books, and how the rogues agreed
To blind the victims, to defraud and lead;
When joys above to ready dupes were sold,
And hell was threaten'd to the shy and cold.
  "Why so amazed, and so prepared to pray?
As if a Being heard a word we say:
This may surprise you; I myself began
To feel disturb'd, and to my Bible ran;
I now am wiser—yet agree in this,
The book has things that are not much amiss;
It is a fine old work, and I protest
I hate to hear it treated as a jest:
The book has wisdom in it, if you look
Wisely upon it as another book."—
  "O! wicked! wicked! my unhappy child,
How hast thou been by evil men beguiled!"
  "How! wicked, say you? you can little guess
The gain of that which you call wickedness:
Why, sins you think it sinful but to name
Have gain'd both wives and widows, wealth and
fame;
And this because such people never dread
Those threaten'd pains; hell comes not in their
head:
Love is our nature, wealth we all desire,
And what we wish 'tis lawful to acquire;

So say my books—and what besides they show
'Tis time to let this honest farmer know.
Nay, look not grave; am I commanded down
To feed his cattle and become his clown?
Is such his purpose? then he shall be told
The vulgar insult—"
—"Hold, in mercy hold—"
"Father, O! father! throw the whip away;
I was but jesting, on my knees I pray—
There, hold his arm—O! leave us not alone:
In pity cease, and I will yet atone
For all my sin—" In vain; stroke after stroke,
On side and shoulder, quick as mill-wheels broke;
Quick as the patient's pulse, who trembling cried,
And still the parent with a stroke replied;
Till all the medicine he prepared was dealt,
And every bone the precious influence felt;
Till all the panting flesh was red and raw,
And every thought was turn'd to fear and awe;
Till every doubt to due respect gave place—
Such cures are done when doctors know the case.
"O! I shall die—my father! do receive
My dying words; indeed I do believe;
The books are lying books, I know it well,
There is a devil, O! there is a hell;
And I'm a sinner: spare me, I am young,
My sinful words were only on my tongue;
My heart consented not; 'tis all a lie:
O! spare me then, I'm not prepared to die."
"Vain, worthless, stupid wretch!" the father cried,
"Dost thou presume to teach? art thou a guide?
Driveller and dog, it gave the mind distress
To hear thy thoughts in their religious dress;
Thy pious folly moved my strong disdain,
Yet I forgave thee for thy want of brain:
But Job in patience must the man exceed
Who could endure thee in thy present creed;
Is it for thee, thou idiot, to pretend
The wicked cause a helping hand to lend?
Canst thou a judge in any question be?
Atheists themselves would scorn a friend like thee.—
"Lo! yonder blaze thy worthies; in one heap
Thy scoundrel favourites must for ever sleep:
Each yields his poison to the flame in turn,
Where whores and infidels are doom'd to burn;
Two noble fagots made the flame you see,
Reserving only two fair twigs for thee;
That in thy view the instruments may stand,
And be in future ready for my hand:
The just mementos that, though silent, show
Whence thy correction and improvements flow;
Beholding these, thou wilt confess their power,
And feel the shame of this important hour.
"Hadst thou been humble, I had first design'd
By care from folly to have freed thy mind;
And when a clean foundation had been laid,
Our priest, more able, would have lent his aid:
But thou art weak, and force must folly guide
And thou art vain, and pain must humble pride:
Teachers men honour, learners they allure;
But learners teaching, of contempt are sure;
Scorn is their certain meed, and smart their easy cure.

THOMAS CHATTERTON.

THOMAS CHATTERTON, the posthumous son of a schoolmaster in Bristol, was born there on the 20th of November, 1752. At the age of five years, he was placed at the school which his father had superintended; but he showed such little capacity for learning, that he was sent back to his mother as a dull boy, incapable of improvement. Mrs. Chatterton, says Dr. Gregory, in his life of the subject of our memoir, was rendered extremely unhappy by the apparently tardy understanding of her son, till he "fell in love," as she expressed herself, with the illuminated capitals of an old musical manuscript, in French, which enabled her, by taking advantage of the momentary passion, to initiate him in the alphabet. She afterwards taught him to read out of a black-letter Bible; and this circumstance, in conjunction with the former, is supposed to have inspired him with that fondness for antiquities which he subsequently displayed. At eight years of age, he was removed to Colston's charity-school, where he remained for some time undistinguished, except by a pensive gravity of demeanour, and a thirst for pre-eminence over his playmates. This he exhibited, says his sister, even before he was five years old; and not long afterward, her brother being asked what device he would have painted on a small present of earthenware about to be made to him, "Paint me," he is said to have replied, "an angel, with wings, and a trumpet, to trumpet my name over the world."

It was not, however, until his tenth year, that he acquired a taste for reading; for which he suddenly imbibed such a relish, that he devoted his little pocket-money to the hire of books from a library, and borrowed others as he had opportunity. Before he was twelve he had gone through about seventy volumes in this manner, consisting chiefly of history and divinity; and, about the same time, he appears to have filled with poetry a pocket-book, which had been presented to him by his sister as a new-year's gift. Among these verses, were probably those entitled Apostate Will, a satire upon his instructers and school-fellows. In 1765, he was confirmed by the bishop; and his sister relates, that he made very sensible and serious remarks on the awfulness of the ceremony, and on his own feelings preparatory to it. In July, 1767, at which time he possessed a knowledge of drawing and music, in addition to his other acquirements, he was articled to Mr. Lambert, an attorney at Bristol, where the only fault his master had to find with him, for the first year, was the sending an abusive anonymous letter to his late schoolmaster, of which he was discovered to be the author, from his inability to disguise his own handwriting so successfully as he did afterward.

As a preface to the history of Chatterton's literary impostures, which commenced about this time, a short sketch will be necessary of the circumstances which gave rise to them. It was well known at Bristol, that in the church of St. Mary, Redcliffe, an old chest had been opened, about 1727, for the purpose of searching for some title deeds, and that since that time, a number of other manuscripts, being left exposed to casual depredation, had, at various times, been taken away. The uncle of Chatterton's father being sexton to the church, enabled his nephew to enter it freely; and, upon these occasions, he removed baskets full of parchments, of which, however, he made no other use than to cover books. A thread-paper belonging to his mother, which had been formed out of one of these parchments, attracted the notice of young Chatterton, soon after the commencement of his clerkship; and his curiosity was so excited, that he obtained a remaining hoard of them yet unused, and ultimately acquired possession of all that remained in the old chest, and in his mother's house. His answer to inquiries on the subject was, "that he had a treasure, and was so glad nothing could be like it." The parchments, he said, consisted of poetical and other compositions, by Mr. Canynge and Thomas Rowley, whom our author, at first, called a monk, and afterward a secular priest of the fifteenth century.

Thus prepared for carrying on his system of literary imposture, he, on the opening of the new bridge at Bristol, in October, 1768, drew up a paper, entitled, A Description of the Fryars first passing over the Old Bridge, taken from an ancient manuscript. It was inserted in Farley's Bristol Journal, and the authorship was traced to Chatterton; who, being questioned in an authoritative tone, haughtily refused to give any account. Milder usage at length induced him to enter into an explanation; and, after some prevarication, he asserted that he had received the paper in question from his father, who had found it, with several others, in Redcliffe Church. The report that he was in possession of the poetry of Canynge and Rowley was now spread about; and coming to the ears of Mr. Catcott, an inhabitant of Bristol, of an inquiring turn, he procured an introduction to Chatterton, who furnished him, gratuitously, with various poetical pieces under the name of Rowley. These were communicated to Mr. Barrett, a surgeon, then employed in writing a history of Bristol, into which he introduced several of the above fragments, by the permission of our author, who was, in return, occasionally supplied with money, and introduced into company He also studied surgery, for a short time, under Mr Barrett, and would talk, says Mr. Thistlethwayte, "of Galen, Hippocrates, and Paracelsus, with all the confidence and familiarity of a modern empi-

ric." His favourite studies, however, were heraldry and English antiquities; and one of his chief occupations was in making a collection of old English words from the glossaries of Chaucer and others. During these pursuits, he employed his pen in writing satirical essays, in prose and verse; and, about the same period, gave way to fits of poetical enthusiasm, by wandering about Redcliffe meadows, talking of the productions of Rowley, and sitting up at night to compose poems at the full of the moon. "He was always," says Mr. Smith, "extremely fond of walking in the fields; and would sometimes say to me, 'Come, you and I will take a walk in the meadow. I have got the cleverest thing for you imaginable. It is worth half-a-crown merely to have a sight of it, and to hear me read it to you.'" This he would generally do in one particular spot, within view of the church, before which he would sometimes lie down, keeping his eyes fixed upon it in a kind of trance.

In 1769, he contributed several papers to the Town and Country Magazine, among which were some extracts from the pretended Rowley, entitled Saxon poems, written in the style of Ossian, and subscribed with Chatterton's usual signature of *Dunhelmus Bristoliensis*. But his most celebrated attempt at imposture, in this year, was an offer to furnish Horace Walpole with some accounts of a series of eminent painters who had flourished at Bristol, at the same time enclosing two small specimens of the Rowley poems. Mr. Walpole returned a very polite reply, requesting further information; and, in answer, was informed of the circumstances of Chatterton, who hinted a wish that the former would free him from an irksome profession, and place him in a situation where he might pursue the natural bias of his genius. In the mean time, however, Gray and Mason having pronounced the poems sent to Walpole to be forgeries, the latter, who, nevertheless, could not, as he himself confesses, help admiring the spirit of poetry displayed in them, wrote a cold monitory letter to our author, advising him to apply himself to his profession. Incensed at this, he demanded the immediate return of his manuscripts, which Walpole enclosed in a blank cover, after his return from a visit to Paris, when he found another letter from Chatterton, peremptorily requiring the papers, and telling Walpole "that he would not have dared to use him so, had he not been acquainted with the narrowness of his circumstances." Here their correspondence ended, and on these circumstances alone is the charge founded against Mr. Walpole of barbarously neglecting, and finally causing the death of, Chatterton. Mr. Walpole, observes Dr. Gregory, afterward regretted that he had not seen this extraordinary youth, and that he did not pay a more favourable attention to his correspondence; but to ascribe to Mr. Walpole's neglect the dreadful catastrophe which happened at the distance of nearly two years after, would be the highest degree of injustice and absurdity.

Our author now entered into politics; and, in March, 1770, composed a satirical poem of one thousand three hundred lines, entitled Kew Gardens, in which he abused the Princess-dowager of Wales and Lord Bute, together with the partisans of ministry at Bristol, not excepting Mr. Catcott, and other of his friends and patrons. His character, also, in other respects, began to develope itself in an unfavourable light; but the assertion that he plunged into profligacy at this period, is contradicted by unexceptionable testimony. The most prominent feature in his conduct was his continued and open avowal of infidelity, and of his intention to commit suicide as soon as life should become burdensome to him. He had also grown thoroughly disgusted with his profession; and purposely, it is supposed, leaving upon his desk a paper, entitled his Last Will, in which he avowed his determination to destroy himself on Easter Sunday, he gladly received his dismissal from Mr. Lambert, into whose hands the document had fallen. He now determined to repair to London; and on being questioned by Mr. Thistlethwayte concerning his plan of life, returned this remarkable answer: "My first attempt," said he, "shall be in the literary way; the promises I have received are sufficient to dispel doubt; but should I, contrary to expectation, find myself deceived, I will, in that case, turn Methodist preacher. Credulity is as potent a deity as ever, and a new sect may easily be devised. But if that, too, should fail me, my last and final resource is a pistol." Such was the language of one not much beyond seventeen years of age; certainly, as Dr. Aikin observes, not that of a simple, ingenuous youth, "smit with the love of sacred song," a Beattie's minstrel, as some of Chatterton's admirers have chosen to paint him.

At the end of April, he arrived in the metropolis; and, on the 6th of May, writes to his mother that he is in such a settlement as he could desire. "I get," he adds, "four guineas a month by one magazine; shall engage to write a history of England, and other pieces, which will more than double that sum. Occasional essays for the daily papers would more than support me. What a glorious prospect!" His engagements, in fact, appear to have been numerous and profitable; but we are cautioned, by Dr. Gregory, against giving implicit credence to every part of Chatterton's letters, written at this time, relative to his literary and political friends in the metropolis. It seems, however, that he had been introduced to Mr. Beckford, then lord mayor, and had formed high expectations of patronage from the opposition party, which he at first espoused; but the death of Beckford, at which he is said to have gone almost frantic, and the scarcity of money which he found on the opposition side, altered his intentions. He observed to a friend, that "he was a poor author, who could write on both sides;" and it appears that he actually did so, as two essays were found after his death, one eulogizing, and the other abusing, the administration, for rejecting the city remonstrance. On the latter, addressed to Mr. Beckford, is the indorsement:

Accepted by Bingley—set for, and thrown out of the North Britain, 21st of June, on account of the lord mayor's death.

Lost by his death on this essay	£1 11 6
Gained in elegies	£2 2
——— in essays	3 3
	5 5 0
Am glad he is dead by	£3 13 6

His hopes of obtaining eminence as a political writer now became extravagantly sanguine, and he already seems to have considered himself a man of considerable public importance. "My company," he says, in a letter to his sister, "is courted everywhere; and could I humble myself to go into a compter, could have had twenty places before now; but I must be among the great; state matters suit me better than commercial." These bright prospects, about July, appear to have been suddenly clouded; and, after a short career of dissipation, which kept pace with his hopes, he found that he had nothing to expect from the patronage of the great; and, to escape the scene of his mortification, made an unsuccessful attempt to obtain the post of surgeon's-mate to the coast of Africa. It is less certain to what extent he was now employed by the booksellers, than that he felt the idea of dependence upon them insupportable, and soon fell into such a state of indigence as to be reduced to the want of necessary food. Such was his pride, however, that when, after a fast of three days, his landlady invited him to dinner, he refused the invitation as an insult, assuring her he was not hungry. This is the last act recorded of his life; a few hours afterward, he swallowed a dose of arsenic, and was found dead the next morning, August the 25th, 1770, surrounded by fragments of numerous manuscripts, which he appeared to have destroyed. His suicide took place in Brook-street, Holborn, and he was interred, in a shell, in the burying-ground of Shoe lane workhouse. This melancholy catastrophe is heightened by the fact, that Dr. Fry, head of St. John's College, Oxford, had just gone to Bristol, for the purpose of assisting Chatterton, when he was there informed of his death.

The controversy respecting the authenticity of the poems attributed to Rowley is now at an end; though there are still a few, perhaps, who may side with Dean Milles and others, against the host of writers, including Gibbon, Johnson, and the two Wartons, who ascribe the entire authorship to Chatterton. The latter have, perhaps, come to a conclusion, which is not likely to be again disputed, viz. that however extraordinary it was for Chatterton to produce them in the eighteenth century, it was impossible that Rowley could have written them in the fifteenth. But, whether Chatterton was or was not the author of the poems ascribed to Rowley, his transcendent genius must ever be the subject of wonder and admiration. The eulogy of his friends, and the opinions of the controversialists respecting him, are certainly too extravagant. Dean Milles prefers Rowley to Homer, Virgil, Spencer, and Shakspeare; Mr. Malone "believes Chatterton to have been the greatest genius that England has produced since the days of Shakspeare;" and Mr. Croft, the author of *Love and Madness*, asserts, that "no such human being, at any period of life, has ever been known, or possibly ever will be known." This enthusiastic praise is not confined to the critical writers; the British muse has paid some of her most beautiful tributes to the genius and memory of Chatterton. The poems of Rowley, as published by Dean Milles, consist of pieces of all the principal classes of poetical composition: tragedies, lyric and heroic poems, pastorals, epistles, ballads, &c. Sublimity and beauty pervade many of them; and they display wonderful powers of imagination and facility of composition; yet, says Dr. Aikin, there is also much of the commonplace flatness and extravagance, that might be expected from a juvenile writer, whose fertility was greater than his judgment, and who had fed his mind upon stores collected with more avidity than choice The haste and ardour, with which he pursued his various literary designs, was in accordance with his favourite maxim, "that God had sent his creatures into the world with arms long enough to reach any thing, if they would be at the trouble of extending them."

In 1778, a miscellaneous volume of the avowed writings of Chatterton was published; and, in 1803, an edition of his works appeared, in three volumes, octavo, with an account of his life, by Dr. Gregory, from whom we have before quoted. The general character of his productions has been well appreciated by Lord Orford, who, after expatiating upon his quick intuition, his humour, his vein of satire the rapidity with which he seized all the topics of conversation, whether of politics, literature, or fashion, remarks, "Nothing in Chatterton can be separated from Chatterton. His noblest flight, his sweetest strain, his grossest ribaldry, and his most commonplace imitations of the productions of magazines, were all the effervescences of the same ungovernable impulse, which, cameleon-like, imbibed the colours of all it looked on. It was Ossian, or a Saxon monk, or Gray, or Smollett, or Junius; and if it failed most in what it most affected to be, a poet of the fifteenth century, it was because it could not imitate what had not existed." In person, Chatterton is said to have been, like his genius, premature; he had, says his biographer, a manliness and dignity beyond his years, and there was a something about him uncommonly prepossessing. His most remarkable feature was his eyes, which, though gray, were uncommonly piercing; when he was warmed in argument, or otherwise, they sparkled with fire; and one eye, it is said, was still more remarkable than the other.

The character of Chatterton has been sufficiently developed in the course of the preceding memoir; his ruling passion, we have seen, was literary fame; and it is doubtful whether his death was not rather occasioned through fear of losing the reputation he had already acquired, than despair of being able to obtain a future subsistence. This is rendered at least plausible, by the fact of his having received pecuniary assistance from Mr. Hamilton, senior, the proprietor of the Critical Review, not long before his death, with a promise of more; that he was employed by his literary friends, almost to the last hour of his existence; and that he was aware of the suspicions existing that himself and Rowley were the same. Though he neither confessed nor denied this, it was evident that his conduct was influenced by some mystery, known only to himself; he grew wild, abstracted, and incoherent, and a settled gloominess at length took possession of his countenance, which was a presage of his fatal resolution. He has been accused of libertinism, but there are no proofs of this during his residence either at London or Bristol: though

many of his productions show a laxity of principle which might justify the supposition. The best qualities in his character were the negative ones of temperance and affection for his family, to whom he sent small presents out of his first gains, and always spoke of their welfare as one of the principal ends of his exertions. But what deeper affliction could he have brought upon them than that caused by the last act of his life? His sister says, that "he was a lover of truth from the earliest dawn of reason;" yet his life was one continued career of deception. He is to be pitied for his misfortunes, and admired for his genius; but, with Kirke White in our remembrance, we could wish to forget all else that belonged to Chatterton.

BRISTOWE TRAGEDIE;

OR, THE DETHE OF SYR CHARLES BAWDIN.

THE featherd songster chaunticleer
Han wounde hys bugle horne,
And tolde the earlie villager
The commynge of the morne:

Kynge Edwarde sawe the ruddie streakes
Of lyghte eclypse the greie;
And herde the raven's crokynge throte
Proclayme the fated daie.

"Thou'rt ryght," quod he, "for, by the Godde
That syttes enthroned on hyghe!
Charles Bawdin, and hys fellowes twaine,
To-daie shall surelie die."

Thenne wythe a jugge of nappy ale
Hys knyghtes dydd onne hymm waite;
"Goe tell the traytour, thatt to-daie
Hee leaves thys mortall state."

Syr Canterlone thenne bendedd lowe
Wythe harte brymm-fulle of woe;
Hee journey'd to the castle-gate,
And to Syr Charles dydd goe.

But whenne hee came, hys children twaine,
And eke hys lovynge wyfe,
Wythe brinie tears dydd wett the floore,
For goode Syr Charleses lyfe.

"O goode Syr Charles!" sayd Canterlone,
"Badde tydynge I doe brynge."
Speke boldlie, manne," sayd brave Syr Charles,
"Whatte says the traytour kynge?"

"I greeve to telle: before yonne sonne
Does fromme the welkinn flye,
Hee hath uppon hys honour sworne
Thatt thou shalt surelie die."

"We all must die," quod brave Syr Charles,
"Of thatte I'm not affearde;
Whatte bootes to lyve a little space?
Thanke Jesu, I'm prepared:

Butt telle thye kynge, for myne hee's not,
I'de sooner die to-daie,
Thanne lyve hys slave, as manie are,
Though I shoulde lyve for aie."

Then Canterlone hee dydd goe out,
To tell the maior straite
To gett all thynges ynne reddyness
For goode Syr Charleses fate.

Thenne Maister Canynge saughte the kynge,
And felle down onne hys knee;
"I'm come," quod hee, "unto your grace,
To move your clemencye."

"Thenne," quod the kynge, "youre tale speke out,
You have been much oure friende:
Whatever youre request may bee,
Wee wylle to ytte attende."

"My nobile leige! alle my requeste
Ys for a nobile knyghte,
Who, though mayhap hee has donne wronge,
He thoughte ytte stylle was ryghte:

"Hee has a spouse and children twaine;
Alle rewyn'd are for aie,
Yff that you are resolved to lett
Charles Bawdin die to-daie."

"Speke not of such a traytour vile,"
The kynge ynn furie sayde,
"Before the evening starre doth sheene,
Bawdin shall loose hys hedde:

"Justice does loudlie for hym calle,
And hee shalle have hys meede:
Speke, Maister Canynge! whatte thynge else
Att present doe you neede?"

"My nobile leige!" goode Canynge sayde,
"Leave justice to our Godde,
And laye the yronne rule asyde;
Be thyne the olyve rodde.

"Was Godde to serche our hertes and reines,
The best were synners grete;
Christ's vicarr only knowes ne synne,
Ynne all thys mortall state.

"Lett mercie rule thyne infante reigne,
'Twylle faste thye crowne fulle sure;
From race to race thye familie
Alle sovereigns shall endure:

"But yff wythe bloode and slaughter thou
Beginne thy infante reigne,
Thy crowne upponne thy childrennes brows
Wylle never long remayne."

"Canynge, awaie! thys traytour vile
Has scorn'd my power and mee;
Howe canst thou then for such a manne
Entreate my clemencye?"

"My nobile leige! the trulie brave
Wylle val'rous actions prize,
Respect a brave and nobile mynde,
Although ynne enemies."

"Canynge, awake! By Godde ynne heaven
Thatt dydd mee being gyve
I wylle nott taste a bitt of breade
Whilst thys Syr Charles dothe lyve.

"By Marie, and alle seinctes ynne heaven,
Thys sunne shall be hys laste."
Thenne Canynge dropp'd a brinie teare,
And from the presence paste.

Wyth herte brymm-fulle of gnawynge griefe,
Hee to Syr Charles dydd goe,
And sat hymm downe uponne a stoole,
And teares beganne to flowe.

"Wee all must die," quod brave Syr Charles;
"Whatte bootes ytte howe or whenne;
Dethe ys the sure, the certaine fate
Of all wee mortall menne.

"Say why, my friende, thie honest soul
Runns over att thyne eye;
Ys ytte for my most welcome doome
Thatt thou dost child-lyke crye?"

Quod godlie Canynge, "I doe weepe,
Thatt thou so soone must die,
And leave thy sonnes and helpless wyfe;
'Tys thys thatt wettes myne eye."

"Thenne drie the teares thatt out thyne eye
From godlie fountaines sprynge;
Dethe I despise, and alle the power
Of Edwarde, traytour kynge.

"Whan through the tyrant's welcome meanis
I shall resigne my lyfe,
The Godde I serve wylle soone provyde
For bothe my sonnes and wyfe.

"Before I sawe the lyghtsome sunne,
Thys was appointed mee;
Shall mortall manne repyne or grudge
What Godde ordeynes to bee?

"Howe oft ynne battaile have I stoode,
Whan thousands dyed arounde;
Whan smokynge streemes of crimson bloode
Imbrew'd the fatten'd grounde:

"Howe dydd I knowe thatt every darte,
Thatt cutte the airie waie,
Myghte nott fynde passage toe my harte,
And close myne eyes for aie?

"And shall I nowe, forr feere of dethe,
Looke wanne and bee dysmayde?
Ne! fromm my herte flie childyshe feere;
Bee alle the manne display'd.

"Ah, goddelyke Henry! Godde forefende,
And guarde thee and thye sonne,
Yff 'tis hys wylle; but yff 'tis nott,
Why thenne hys wylle bee donne.

"My honest friende, my faulte has beene
To serve Godde and my prynce;
And thatt I no tyme-server am,
My dethe wylle soone convynce.

"Ynne Londonne citye was I borne,
Of parents of grete note;
My fadre dydd a nobile armes
Emblazon onne hys cote:

"I make no doubte butt hee ys gone,
Where soone I hope to goe;
Where wee for ever shall bee blest,
From oute the reech of woe.

"Hee taughte mee justice and the lawe
Wyth pitie to unite;
And eke hee taughte mee howe to knowe
The wronge cause from the ryghte:

"Hee taughte mee wythe a prudent hande
To feede the hungrie poore,
Ne lett mye sarvants dryve awaie
The hungrie fromm my doore:

"And none can saye but alle mye lyfe
I have hys wordyes kept;
And summ'd the actyonns of the daie
Eche nyghte before I slept.

"I have a spouse, goe aske of her
Yff I defyled her bedde;
I have a kynge, and none can laie
Black treason onne my hedde.

"Ynne Lent, and onne the holie eve,
Fromm fleshe I dydd refrayne;
Whie should I thenne appeare dismay'd
To leave thys worlde of payne?

"Ne, hapless Henrie! I rejoyce
I shall ne see thye dethe;
Moste willynglie ynne thye just cause
Doe I resign my brethe.

"Oh, fickle people! rewyn'd londe!
Thou wylt kenne peace ne moe;
Whyle Richard's sonnes exalt themselves,
Thye brookes wythe bloude wylle flowe.

"Saie, were ye tyred of godlie peace,
And godlie Henrie's reigne,
Thatt you dydd choppe your easie daies
For those of bloude and peyne?

"Whatte though I onne a sledde be drawne,
And mangled by a hynde,
I doe defye the traytour's power,
Hee can ne harm my mynde;

"Whatte though, uphoisted onne a pole,
My lymbes shall rotte ynne ayre,
And ne ryche monument of brasse
Charles Bawdin's name shall bear;

"Yett ynne the holie book above,
Whyche tyme can't eate awaie,
There wythe the sarvants of the Lord
Mye name shall lyve for aie.

"Thenne welcome dethe! for lyfe eterne
I leave thys mortall lyfe:
Farewell vayne worlde, and all that's deare
Mye sonnes and lovynge wyfe!

"Nowe dethe as welcome to mee comes
As e'er the moneth of Maie;
Nor woulde I even wyshe to lyve,
Wyth my dere wyfe to staie."

Quod Canynge, "'Tys a goodlie thynge
To bee prepared to die;
And from thys worlde of peyne and greife
To Godde ynne heaven to flie."

And nowe the belle began to tolle,
And claryonnes to sound;
Syr Charles hee herde the horses feete
A prauncyng onne the grounde:

And just before the officers
His lovynge wyfe came ynne,
Weepynge unfeigned teers of woe,
Wythe loude and dysmalle dynne.

"Sweet Florence! nowe I praie forbere,
Ynn quiet lett mee die;
Praie Godde that every Christian soule
Maye looke onne dethe as I.

"Sweet Florence! why these brinie teers?
Theye washe my soule awaie,
And almost make mee wyshe for lyfe,
Wyth thee, sweete dame, to staie.

"'Tys butt a journie I shalle goe
Untoe the lande of blysse;
Nowe, as a proofe of husbande's love,
Receive thys holie kysse."

Thenne Florence, fault'ring ynne her saie,
Tremblynge these wordyes spoke,
"Ah, cruele Edwarde! bloudie kynge!
Mye herte ys welle nyghe broke:

"Ah, sweete Syr Charles! why wylt thou goe
Wythoute thye lovynge wyfe?
The cruelle axe thatt cuttes thyo necke,
Ytte eke shall ende mye lyfe."

And nowe the officers came ynne
To brynge Syr Charles awaie,
Who turnedd to hys lovynge wyfe,
And thus to her dydd saie:

"I goe to lyfe, and nott to dethe;
Truste thou ynne Godde above,
And teache thy sonnes to feare the Lorde,
And ynne theyre hertes hym love:

"Teache them to runne the nobile race
Thatt I theyre fader runne;
Florence! should dethe thee take—adieu!
Yee officers, leade onne.

Thenne Florence raved as anie madde,
And dydd her tresses tere;
"Oh, staie mye husbande, lorde, and lyfe!"—
Syr Charles thenne dropt a teare.

'Tyll tyredd oute wythe ravynge loude,
Shee fellen onne the floore;
Syr Charles exerted alle hys myghte,
And march'd fromm oute the dore.

Uponne a sledde hee mounted thenne,
Wythe lookes fulle brave and sweete,
Lookes thatt enshone ne moe concern
Thanne anie ynne the strete.

Before hym went the council-menne,
Ynne scarlett robes and golde,
And tassils spanglynge ynne the sunne,
Muche glorious to beholde:

The Freers of Seincte Augustyne next
Appeared to the syghte,
Alle cladd ynne homelie russett weedes,
Of godlie monkysh plyghte:

Ynne diffraunt partes a godlie psaume
Moste sweetlie theye dydd chaunt;
Behynde theyre backes syx mynstrelles came,
Who tuned the strunge bataunt.

Thenne fyve-and-twenty archers came;
Echone the bowe dydd bende,
From rescue of Kynge Henrie's friends
Syr Charles forr to defend.

Bolde as a lyon came Syr Charles,
Drawne onne a cloth-ladye sledde.
Bye two blacke stedes ynne trappynges whyte,
Wyth plumes uponne theyre hedde:

Behynde hym fyve-and-twenty moe
Of archers strong and stoute,
Wyth bended bowe echone ynne hande,
Marched ynne goodlie route:

Seincte Jameses Freers marched next,
Echone hys parte dydd chaunt;
Behynde theyre backes syx mynstrelles came,
Who tuned the strunge bataunt:

Thenne came the maior and eldermenne,
Ynne clothe of scarlett deck't;
And theyre attendyng menne echone,
Lyke easterne princes trick't:

And after them a multitude
Of citizenns dydd thronge;
The wyndowes were alle fulle of heddes
As hee dydd passe alonge.

And whenne hee came to the hyghe crosse,
Syr Charles dydd turne and saie,
"O Thou thatt savest manne fromme synne,
Washe mye soule clean thys daie!"

Att the grete mynster wyndowe sat
The kynge ynne myckle state,
To see Charles Bawdin goe alonge
To hys most welcom fate

Soone as the sledde drewe nyghe enowe,
Thatt Edwarde hee myghte heare,
The brave Syr Charles hee dydd stande uppe,
And thus hys wordes declare:

"Thou seest me, Edwarde! traytour vile!
Exposed to infamie;
Butt bee assured, disloyall manne!
I'm greaterr nowe thanne thee.

"Bye foule proceedyngs, murdre, bloude,
Thou wearest nowe a crowne;
And hast appoynted mee to die,
By power nott thyne owne.

"Thou thynkest I shall dye to-daie;
I have beene dede till nowe,
And soone shall lyve to weare a crowne
For aie uponne my browe:

"Whylst thou, perhapps, for some few yeares,
Shalt rule thys fickle lande,
To lett them knowe howe wyde the rule
'Twixt kynge and tyrante hande:

"Thye power unjust, thou traytour slave!
Shall falle onne thye owne hedde"—
Fromm out of hearyng of the kynge
Departed thenne the sledde.

Kynge Edwarde's soule rush'd to hys face,
Hee turn'd hys hedde awaie,
And to hys broder Gloucester
Hee thus dydd speke and saie:

"To hym that soe-much-dreaded dethe
Ne ghastlie terrors brynge,
Beholde the manne! hee spake the truthe,
Hee's greater thanne a kynge!"

"Soe lett hym die!" Duke Richarde sayde;
"And maye echone oure foes
Bende downe theyre neckes to bloudie axe,
And feede the carryon crowes."

And nowe the horses gentlie drewe
Syr Charles uppe the hyghe hylle;
The axe dydd glysterr ynne the sunne,
Hys pretious bloude to spylle.

Syr Charles dydd uppe the scaffold goe,
As uppe a gilded carre
Of victorye, bye val'rous chiefs
Gayn'd ynne the bloudie warre:

And to the people hee dyd saie,
"Beholde you see mee dye,
For servynge loyally mye kynge,
Mye kynge most ryghtfullie.

'As longe as Edwarde rules thys lande,
Ne quiet you wylle knowe:
Your sonnes and husbandes shalle bee slayne.
And brookes wythe bloude shalle flowe.

"You leave your goode and lawfulle kynge,
Whenne ynne adversitye;
Lyke mee, untoe the true cause stycke,
And for the true cause dye."

Thenne hee, wyth preestes, uponne hys knees,
A prayer to Godde dyd make,
Beseechynge hym unto hymselfe
Hys partynge soule to take.

Thenne kneelynge downe, hee layde hys hedde,
Most seemlie onne the blocke;
Whyche fromme hys bodie fayre at once
The able heddes-manne stroke:

And oute the bloude beganne to flowe,
And rounde the scaffolde twyne;
And teares, enow to washe't awaie,
Dydd flowe fromme each man's eyne.

The bloudie axe hys bodie fayre
Ynnto foure partes cutte;
And everye parte, and eke hys hedde,
Uponne a pole was putte.

One parte dyd rotte onne Kynwulph-hylle,
One onne the mynster-tower,
And one from off the castle-gate
The crowen dydd devoure:

The other onne Seyncte Powle's goode gate,
A dreery spectacle;
Hys hedde was placed onne the hyghe crosse,
Ynne hyghe strete most nobile.

Thus was the ende of Bawdin's fate:
Godde prosper longe oure kynge,
And grante hee maye, wyth Bawdin's soule,
Ynne Heaven Godde's mercie synge!

MYNSTRELLES SONGE.

O! synge untoe mie roundelaie,
O! droppe the brynie teare wythe mee,
Daunce ne moe atte hallie daie,
Lycke a rennynge ryver bee;
Mie love ys dedde,
Gon to hys death-bedde,
Al under the wyllowe tree.

Blacke hys eryne as the wyntere nyghte,
Whyte hys rode as the sommer snowe,
Rodde hys face as the mornynge lyghte,
Cald he lyes ynne the grave belowe;
Mie love ys dedde,
Gon to hys death-bedde,
Al under the wyllowe tree.

Swote hys tongue as the throstles note,
Quycke ynn daunce as thought canne bee,
Defte hys taboure, codgelle stote,
O! hee lyes bie the wyllowe tree:
Mie love ys dedde,
Gonne to hys death-bedde,
Al under the wyllowe tree.

Harke, the ravenne flappes hys wynge,
Ynne the briered delle belowe;
Harke! the dethe-owle loude dothe synge,
To the nyghte-mares as heie goe;
Mie love ys dedde,
Gonne to hys death-bedde,
Al under the wyllowe tree.

See! the whyte moone sheenes onne hie,
Whyterre ys mie true love's shroude;
Whyterre yanne the mornynge skie,
Whyterre yanne the evenynge cloude;
Mie love ys dedde,
Gon to hys death-bedde,
Al under the wyllowe tree.

Heere uponne mie true love's grave,
Schalle the baren fleurs be layde,
Nee on hallie seyncte to save
Al the celness of a mayde.
Mie love ys dedde,
Gon to hys death-bedde,
Al under the wyllowe tree.

Wythe mie hondes I'll dente the brieres
Rounde his hallie corse to gre,
Ouphante fairie, lyghte your fyres,
Heere mie bodie still schalle bee.
Mie love ys dedde,
Gon to hys death-bedde,
Al under the wyllowe tree.

Comme, wythe acorne-coppe and thorne,
Drayne mie hartys blodde awaie;
Lyfe and alle yts goode I scorne,
Daunce bie nete, or feaste bie daie.
Mie love ys dedde,
Gon to hys death-bedde,
Al under the wyllowe tree.

Waterre wytches, crownede wythe reytes
Bere mee to yer leathalle tyde.
I die: I comme; mie true love waytes.—
Thos the damselle spake, and dyed.

WILLIAM GIFFORD

WILLIAM GIFFORD, the son of a plumber and glazier, who dissipated his property by intemperance and extravagance, was born at Ashburton, in Devonshire, in April, 1755. He lost his father when only twelve years of age, and in about a year afterward his mother died, leaving himself and an infant brother, "without a relation or friend in the world." The latter was sent to the workhouse, and the subject of our memoir was received into the house of his godfather, who put him to school for about three months, but at the end of that period took him home, with the view of employing him as a ploughboy. Being unfitted, however, for this occupation, by an injury on his breast, he was sent to sea in a coasting vessel, in which he remained for nearly a year. "It will be easily conceived," he says in his autobiography, "that my life was a life of hardship. I was not only 'a ship-boy on the high and giddy mast,' but also in the cabin, where every menial office fell to my lot; yet, if I was restless and discontented, I can safely say it was not so much on account of this, as of my being precluded from all possibility of reading; as my master did not possess, nor do I recollect seeing, during the whole time of my abode with him, a single book of any description, except the Coasting Pilot."

He was at length recalled by his godfather, and again put to school, where he made such rapid progress, that in a few months he was qualified to assist his master in any extraordinary emergency; and, although only in his fifteenth year, began to think of turning instructer himself. His plans were, however, treated with contempt by his guardian, who apprenticed him to a shoemaker, at Ashburton, to whom our author went "in sullenness and in silence," and with a perfect hatred of his new occupation. His favourite pursuit at this time was arithmetic, and the manner in which he continued to extend his knowledge of that science is thus related by himself: "I possessed," he observes, "but one book in the world; it was a treatise on algebra, given to me by a young woman, who had found it in a lodging-house. I considered it as a treasure, but it was a treasure locked up; for it supposed the reader to be well acquainted with simple equations, and I knew nothing of the matter. My master's son had purchased Fenning's Introduction: this was precisely what I wanted; but he carefully concealed it from me, and I was indebted to chance alone for stumbling on his hiding-place. I sat up for the greatest part of several nights successively; and, before he suspected his treatise was discovered, had completely mastered it. I could now enter upon my own: and that carried me pretty far into the science. This was not done without difficulty. I had not a farthing on earth, nor a friend to give me one; pen, ink, and paper, therefore, (in despite of the flippant remark of Lord Orford,) were, for the most part, as completely out of my reach as a crown and sceptre. There was, indeed, a resource; but the utmost caution and secrecy were necessary in applying to it. I beat out pieces of leather as smooth as possible, and wrought my problems on them with a blunted awl; for the rest, my memory was tenacious, and I could multiply and divide by it to a great extent."

Under the same unfavourable circumstances, he composed and recited to his associates small pieces of poetry, and, being at last invited to repeat them to other circles, little collections were made for him, which, he says, sometimes produced him "as much as sixpence in an evening." The sums which he thus obtained, he devoted to the purchase of pens, paper, &c.; books of geometry, and of the higher branches of algebra; but his master, finding that he had, in some of the verses before mentioned, satirized both himself and his customers, seized upon his books and papers, and prohibited him from again repeating a line of his compositions. At length, in the sixth year of his apprenticeship, his lamentable doggerel, as he terms it, having reached the ears of Mr. Cookesley, a surgeon, that gentleman set on foot "a subscription for purchasing the remainder of the time of William Gifford, and for enabling him to improve himself in writing and English grammar."

He now quitted shoemaking, and entered the school of the Rev. Thomas Smerdon; and in two years and two months from what he calls the day of his emancipation, he had made such progress, that his master declared him to be fit for the university. He was accordingly sent by Mr. Cookesley to Oxford, where he obtained, by the exertions of the same gentleman, the office of Bible reader at Exeter College, of which he was entered a member. Here he pursued his studies with unremitting diligence, and had already commenced his poetical translation of the Satires of Juvenal, when the death of Mr. Cookesley interrupted the progress of the work. A fortunate accident procured him a new patron in Earl Grosvenor, in whose family he for some time resided, and afterward accompanied to the continent his son, Lord Belgrave. On his return to England, he settled in London, and, devoting himself to literary pursuits, published, in 1791, and 1794, successively, his poetical satires, the Baviad, and the Mæviad; the one containing an attack on the drama, and the other an invective against the favourite poets of the day. In 1800, he published his Epistle to Peter Pindar, in which he charged the satirist with blasphemy: and Wolcot accused him of obscenity. This led to

an assault, and Wolcot would have inflicted severe chastisement on Gifford, but for the interference of a powerful Frenchman, who happened to be present, and who turned Wolcot out of the reading-room, where the scene occurred, into the street, throwing his wig and cane after him. In 1802, appeared his long-promised version of Juvenal, which was attacked by the Critical Review, in an erudite but somewhat personal article, that called forth a reply from our author, entitled, Examination of the Strictures of the Critical Review upon Juvenal.

In 1805, and 1816, he published, successively, his editions of Massinger, and Ben Jonson; and in 1821, appeared his translation of Persius. He next edited the works of Ford, in two volumes; and he had proceeded with five volumes of those of Shirley, when his labours were terminated by his death. He died at Pimlico, on the 31st of December, 1826, and was interred in Westminster Abbey. Being a single man, he died in opulent circumstances; having enjoyed, for some years, an annuity from Lord Grosvenor, besides holding the office of pay-master of the band of gentleman pensioners, with a salary of 300*l.* a year; and, for a time, that of comptroller of the lottery, with a salary of 600*l.* a year.

The fame of Gifford rests principally upon his Juvenal, which occupied the greater part of his life, and was sent into the world with every advantage that could be derived from the most careful attention on the part of the author, and the correction of his most able friends. It still falls short, however, of Mr. Gifford's attempt to give Juvenal entire, except in his grossness, and to make him speak as he would have spoken among us. In this he has so far failed, that whilst he omits to furnish the glowing imagery, luxuriant diction, and impetuous fluency of the Roman satirist, he has retained many of his worst and most objectionable passages. It has been well observed, by a writer in the New Monthly Magazine, that his translation presents us rather with the flail of an infatuated rustic, than with the exterminating falchion of Juvenal. His Baviad and Mæviad evince first-rate satirical powers; but in these, as in most of his writings, a degree of coarse virulence displays itself, which shows that literary associations had not refined his mind.

These satires would not have found a place in this collection, but for their intimate connexion with English literary history, and the influence they undoubtedly exerted in reforming public taste, and preparing the way for that galaxy of illustrious poets who succeeded him. Of late years Gifford was principally known as the editor of the Quarterly Review, a work established by himself in 1809, and of which he continued to be the conductor till 1824. He also for some time edited the Anti-jacobin newspaper, in which he displayed his usual acuteness, asperity, and subservience to the party by which he thrived; his politics being invariably those of his interest.

Gifford is chiefly known in America by his base and venomous attacks upon us in the Quarterly Review. These, however, were probably necessary in order for him to retain the direction of that periodical. He slandered for his bread.

THE BAVIAD.

INTRODUCTION.

Tota cohors tamen est inimica, omnesque manipli
Consensu magno officiunt:—dignum erit ergo
Declamatoris Mutinensis corde Vagelli,
Cum duo crura habeas, offendere tot caligatos!

IN 1785, a few English of both sexes,* whom chance had jumbled together at Florence, took a fancy to while away their time in scribbling high-flown panegyrics on themselves, and complimentary "canzonettas" on two or three Italians,† who understood too little of the language in which they were written to be disgusted with them. In this there was not much harm; nor, indeed, much good: but, as folly is progressive, they soon wrought themselves into an opinion that the fine things were really deserved, which they mutually said and sung of each other.

Thus persuaded, they were unwilling that their inimitable productions should be confined to the little circle which produced them; they therefore transmitted them hither; and, as their friends were strictly enjoined not to show them, they were first handed about the town with great assiduity, and then sent to the press.

A short time before the period of which we speak, a knot of fantastic coxcombs, headed by one Este,

* Among whom I find the names of Mrs. Piozzi, Mr. Greathead, Mr. Merry, Mr. Parsons, &c.

† Mrs. Piozzi has since published a work on what she is pleased to call British Synonymes: the better, I suppose, to enable these foreign gentlemen to comprehend her multifarious erudition.

Though "no one better knows his own house" than I the vanity of this woman, yet the idea of her undertaking such a work had never entered my head; and I was thunderstruck when I first saw it announced. To execute it with any tolerable degree of success, required a rare combination of talents, among the least of which may be numbered, neatness of style, acuteness of perception, and a more than common accuracy of discrimination; and Mrs. Piozzi brought to the task a jargon long since become proverbial for its vulgarity, an utter incapability of defining a single term in the language, and just as much Latin from a child's Syntax, as sufficed to expose the ignorance which she so anxiously labours to conceal. "If such a one be fit to write on Synonymes, speak." Pignotti himself laughs in his sleeve; and his countrymen, long since undeceived, prize the lady's talents at their true worth,

Et centum Tales[1] curto centusse licentur.[2]

1 Quære Thrales!—*Printer's Devil.*

2 Thus translated by Mr. Bulmer's devil, (the young gentleman who furnished the conjectural emendation above, which is highly spoken of by the German critics:)

And, for a clipt half-crown, expose to sale
A hundred Synonists like Madam Thra'e.

had set up a daily paper called the World.* It was perfectly unintelligible, and therefore much read; it was equally lavish of praise and abuse, (praise of what appeared in its own columns, and abuse of every thing that appeared elsewhere;) and as its conductors were at once ignorant and conceited, they took upon themselves to direct the taste of the town, by prefixing a short panegyric to every trifle which came before them.

It is scarcely necessary to observe, that Yendas, and Laura Marias, and Tony Pasquins, have long claimed a prescriptive right to infest our periodical publications: but as the editors of them never pretended to criticise their harmless productions, they were merely perused, laughed at, and forgotten. A paper, therefore, which introduced their trash with hyperbolical encomiums, and called upon the town to admire it, was an acquisition of the utmost importance to these poor people, and naturally became the grand depository of their lucubrations.

At this auspicious period the first cargo of poetry arrived from Florence, and was given to the public through the medium of this favoured paper. There was a specious brilliancy in these exotics which dazzled the native grubs who had never ventured beyond a sheep, and a crook, and a rose tree grove, with an ostentatious display of "blue hills," and 'crashing torrents," and "petrifying suns!"† From admiration to imitation is but a step. Honest Yonda tried his hand at a descriptive ode, and succeeded beyond his hopes; Anna Matilda followed; in a word,

> —— Contagio labem
> Hanc dedit in plures, sicut grex totus in agris
> Unius scabie cadit, et porrigine porci.

While the epidemic malady was raging from fool to fool, Della Crusca came over, and immediately announced himself by a sonnet to Love. Anna Matilda wrote an incomparable piece of nonsense in praise of it: and the two "great luminaries of the age," as Mr. Bell properly calls them, fell desperately in love‡ with each other. From that period, not a day passed without an amatory epistle fraught with thunder and lightning, et quicquid habent telorum armamentaria cœli.——The fever turned to a frenzy; Laura Maria, Carlos, Orlando, Adelaide, and a thousand nameless names caught the infection: and from one end of the kingdom* to the other, all was nonsense and Della Crusca.

Even THEN, I waited, with a patience which I can better account for than excuse, for some one (abler than myself) to step forth to correct the growing depravity of the public taste, and check the inundation of absurdity now bursting upon us from a thousand springs. As no one appeared, and as the evil grew every day more alarming, (for bedridden old women, and girls at their samplers began to rave,) I determined, without much confidence of success, to try what could be effected by my feeble powers; and accordingly wrote the following poem.

——

1800.

Whoever has read the first editions of the BAVIAD must have perceived, that its satire was directed against the wretched taste of the followers of the *Cruscan* school, without the slightest reference to their other qualities, moral or political.

In this I should have persevered to the end, had I not been provoked to transgress the bounds prescribed to myself, by the diabolical conduct of one of my heroes, the notorious *Anthony Pasquin*.

This man, who earned a miserable subsistence by working on the fear or vanity of artists, actors, &c., hardened by impunity, flew at length at higher

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* In this paper were given the earliest specimens of those unqualified and audacious attacks on all private character; which the town first smiled at for their quaintness, then tolerated for their absurdity, and now—that other papers, equally wicked, and more intelligible, have ventured to imitate it,—will have to lament to the last hour of British liberty.

† Here Mr. Parsons is pleased to advance his farthing rushlight. "Crashing torrents and petrifying suns are extremely ridiculous,"—*habes confitentem!* "but they are not to be found in the Florence Miscellany." Who said they were? But apropos of the Florence Miscellany. Mr. Parsons says that I obtained a copy of it by a breach of confidence; and seems to fancy, "good easy man!" that I derived some prodigious advantage from it: yet I had written both the poems, and all the notes save one, before I knew that there was such a treasure in existence. He might have seen, if passion had not rendered him as blind as a mill horse, that I constantly allude to poems published separately in the periodical sheets of the day, and afterward collected with great parade by Bell and others. I never looked into the Florence Miscellany but once; and the only use then made of it was to extract a sounding passage from the odes of that deep-mouthed Theban, Bertie Greathead, Esq.

‡ The termination of this "everlasting" attachment was curious. When the genuine enthusiasm of the correspondence (Preface to the Album) had continued for some time, Della Crusca became impatient for a sight of his beloved, and Anna, in evil hour, consented to become visible. What was the consequence?

> Tacta places, audita places, *si non videare*
> Tota places, neutro *si videare* places.

Mr. Bell, however, tells the story another way. According to him, "Chance alone procured the interview." Whatever procured it, all the lovers of "true poetry," with Mrs. Piozzi at their head, expected wonders from it. The flame that burned with such ardour while the lady was yet unseen, they hoped would blaze with unexampled brightness at the sight of the bewitching object. Such were their hopes. But what, as Dr. Johnson gravely asks, are the hopes of man! or indeed of woman! —for this fatal meeting put an end to the whole. With the exception of a marvellous dithyrambic, which Della Crusca wrote while the impression was yet warm upon him, and which consequently gave a most accurate account of it, nothing has since appeared to the honour of Anna Matilda: and the "tenth muse," the "angel," the "goddess," has sunk into an old woman; with the comforting reflection of having mumbled love to an ungrateful swain.

> ——Non hic est sermo pudicus
> In *vetula*, quoties lascivum intervenit illud
> Ζωη και Ψυχη.

* Kingdom. This is a trifle. Heaven itself, if we may believe Mrs. Robinson, took part in the general infatuation:

> ——"When midst ethereal fire
> Thou strikest thy DELLA CRUSCAN lyre,
> Round to catch the *heavenly* song,
> Myriads of *wondering* seraphs throng!"

I almost shudder while I quote: but so it ever is,

> Fools rush in where angels fear to tread.

And Merry had given an example of impious temerity which this wretched woman was but too eager to imitate

game, and directed his attacks against an illustrious stranger.

These, which were continued, from day to day, in the Morning Post, with a rancour that seemed indefatigable, were, after some time, incorporated with such additional falsehoods as the most savage hostility could supply, and printed in a book, to which Anthony thought fit to prefix his name.

It was now that I first found a fair opportunity for dragging this pest before the public, and setting him up to view in his true light. I was not slow in seizing it, and the immediate consequence was, that an action was commenced, or threatened against every publisher of the Baviad.

If we did not know the horror which these obscure reptiles, who fatten on the filthy dregs of slander and obscenity, feel at being forced into day, we might be justly surprised that a man who lived by violating the law should have recourse to it for protection; that a common libeller, who spared no rank nor condition, should cry out on the license of the times, and solicit pity and redress from that community, almost every individual of which he had wantonly and wickedly insulted.

The first, and, indeed, the only trial that came on, was that of Mr. Faulder, (a name not often coupled with that of a dealer in libels,) who was not only acquitted, but, by a verdict of his peers, declared to have been unjustly put in a state of accusation.

Mr. Garrow was furnished with a number of extracts from Anthony's multifarious productions. I lamented at first, that the impatient indignation of the jury at the plaintiff's baseness, coinciding with that of the upright judge who presided, stopped him short, and prevented their being read. But I am now satisfied with the interruption. It is better that such a collection of slander, and obscenity, and treason, and impiety, should moulder in the obscurity to which its ineffable stupidity has condemned it, than that it should be brought forward to the reprobation and abhorrence of the public.

Mr. Erskine, who did every thing for his client which could be expected from his integrity and abilities, applied in the "next ensuing term" for a new trial.—I have forgotten the motives for this application, but it was resisted by Lord Kenyon; and chiefly on the ground of the marked indignation shown by the jury at the plaintiff's infamous conduct and character, and that, even before Mr. Garrow had fully entered into them,

To finish Anthony's history.—His occupation was now gone. As a minister of malevolence he was no longer worth hiring; and as a dispenser of fame, no longer worth feeding. Thus abandoned, without meat and without money, he applied to a charitable institution for a few guineas, with which he shipped himself off for America,

——Leonum
Arida nutrix.

But he was even here too late; that country had discovered, some time before Anthony reached it, that receiving into its bosom the refuse and offal of every clime, and seemingly for no other reason but because they were so, was neither the way to grow rich nor respectable. Anthony had, therefore, no congratulatory addresses presented to him on his arrival, but was left, with hundreds of his poor persecuted brethren, to shift for himself. He accordingly engaged in a New York paper, called "*The Federalist*," but unfortunately his writings did not happen to hit the taste of his adopted countrymen; for after a few numbers had appeared, he was taken up for a libel, and is now either chained to a wheelbarrow on the Albany road, or rotting in the provincial jail.

I take some little credit to myself for having driven this pernicious pest out of the society upon which he preyed: I say *some little*—for, to be candid, (though I would not have shrunk from any talents in the contest,) the warfare with Anthony was finished ere well begun. Short and slight as it was, however, it furnishes an important lesson. Those general slanderers, those bugbears of a timid public, are as sneaking as they are insolent, as weak as they are wicked.—Resist them, and like the devil, to use a sacred expression, "Resist them, and they will flee from you."

THE BAVIAD;

A PARAPHRASTIC IMITATION OF THE FIRST SATIRE OF PERSIUS.

Impune ergo mihi recitaverit ille SONETTAS,
Hic ELEGOS.

P. WHEN I look round on man, and find how vain
His passions—
F. Save me from this canting strain!
Why, who will read it?
P. This, my friend, to me
F. None, by my life.
P. What! none? Sure, two or three—
F. No, no; not one. 'Tis sad; but—
P. "Sad, but!"—Why?
Pity is insult here. I care not, I,
Though Boswell,* of a song and supper vain,

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* *Cui non dictus Hylas?* And who has not heard of James Boswell, Esq.? All the world knows (for all the world has it under his own hand) that he composed a BALLAD in honour of Mr. Pitt, with very little assistance from Dr. Trusler, and less from Mr. Dibdin; which he produced, to the utter confusion of the Foxites, and sang at the lord mayor's table. This important "state paper," thanks to the *scombri, et quicquid ineptis amicitur chartis*, I have not been able to procure; but the terror and dismay which it occasioned among the enemy, with a variety of other circumstances highly necessary to be known, may be gathered from the following letter:

"*To the Conductor of the World.*

"Sir,—The wasps of opposition have been very busy with my *State Ballad*, 'the GROCER of LONDON,' and they are welcome. Pray let them know that I am vain of a hasty composition which has procured me large draughts of that popular applause in which I delight. Let me add, that there was certainly no *servility* on my part; for I publicly declared in Guildhall, between the *encores*, 'that this same Grocer had treated ME arrogantly and ungratefully; but that, from his great merit as a minister, I was compelled to support him!'

"The time WILL come when I shall have a proper opportunity to show, that in one instance, at least, the man has wanted wisdom—— "JAM. BOS."

Atqui vultus erat multa et præclara minantis!

Poor BOZZY! But I too threaten.—And is there nee of thy example, then, to convince us that on

And Bell's whole choir,* (an ever-jingling train,)
In splay-foot madrigals their powers combine,
To praise Miles Andrews' verse,† and censure mine—

——————Our quickest attempts
The noiseless and inaudible foot of time
Steals ere we can effect them ?

* "'Bell's whole choir!' Quousque tantum—Yes, sir, I am proud of the insinuation while I despise it. *The owl, they say, was a baker's daughter.* We know what we are, but we know not what we may be. Thereby hangs a tale: and the World shall have it—Choice biography is the boast of my paper—Verba sat—I have friends—so has Laura Maria—She is the Sappho of the age. I wrong her—The Monthly Reviewers read Greek, and they prefer our fair countrywoman. I read Greek, too, but I make no boast of it. I sell Mrs. Robinson's works, and I know their value—*'It is the bright day that brings forth the adder.'*

"Yenda I despise; Anthony Pasquin I execrate—The brilliant effusions of fancy, the bright coruscations of genius only, illuminate the Oracle—and Arno and Cæsario, names dear to the muse of glory, constitute a proud distinction between the *unfading leaves* of the Pythian shrine, and the *perishable records* of the day.

"JOHN BELL.

"P. S. 'Blockheads with reason'—you know the rest. I fear nothing—yet I love not everlasting feuds—At a word: Will one of my new commonplace books be acceptable ?

"J. B."

† This gentleman, who has long been known as an industrious paragraph-monger in the morning papers, took it into his head, some time since, to try his hand at a prologue. Having none of the requisites for this business, he laboured to little purpose till Dullness, whose attention to her children is truly maternal, suggested to him, that unmeaning ribaldry and vulgarity might possibly be substituted for harmony, spirit, taste, and sense. —He caught at the hint, made the experiment, and succeeded to a miracle. Since that period every play-wright from O'Keefe to Della Crusca, "a heavy declension!" has been sollicitous to preface his labours with a few lines of his manufacturing, to excite and perpetuate the good-humour of his audience. As the reader may probably not dislike a short specimen of Mr. Andrews' wonder-working poetry, I have subjoined the following extract from his last and best performance, his prologue to Lorenzo.

"Feg," cries fat Madam Dump, from Wapping Wall,
"I don't love plays no longer not at all;
They're now so vulgar, and begin so soon,
None but low people dines till afternoon;
Then they mean summot, and the like o' that,
And it's impossible to sit and chat.
Give me the uppero, where folks come so grand in,
And nobody need have no understanding.
Ambizione! del tiranno!
Piu forte, piu piano, a che fin—
Zounds! here's my warrant, and I will come in.
Diavolo; who comes here to so confound us ?
The constables, to take you to the round-house
De round-house!—Mi!
Now comes the dance, the demi charactere,
Chacone, the pas de deux, the here, the there
And last, the chief high bounding on the loose toe,
Or poised like any Mercury, O che gusto!"

And this was heard with applause! and this was read with delight! O shame! where is thy blush ?

——————Morantur
Pauci ridiculum effugientem ex urbe pudorem.‡

‡ It is rightly observed by Solomon, that you may bray a fool in a mortar without making him wiser. Upon this principle I account for the stationary stupidity of Mr. A.; whose faculties, "God help the while!" do not seem a whit improved by the dreadful pounding which he has received. Of him, therefore, I wash my hands—but I would fain ask Messrs. Morton and Reynolds, ("the worthy followers of O'Keefe, and the present supporters of the British stage,") whether it be absolutely necessary to introduce their pieces with such ineffable nonsense as this,—

—— 'Betty, it's come into my head
Old maids grow cross because their cats are dead;
My governess hath been in such a fuss
About the death of our old tabby puss
She wears black stockings—ah! ah! what a pother,
'Cause one old cat's in mourning for another!'

If it be not—for pity's sake, gentlemen, spare us the disgrace of it; and O heavens! *if it be*—deign in mercy sometimes to apply to the bellman, or the grave-stone cutter, that we may stand a little chance of having our doggrel ribaldry "with a difference."

I Parsons I know, and this I heard him say,
Whilst Gifford's harmless page before him lay,
I too can laugh, I was the *first beginner*.
Parsons of himself, Teleg. March 16

Quam multi faciunt quod Eros, sed lumine sicco;
Pars major lachrymas *ridet*, et intus habet!

See the "*Will*"—a Bartholomew-fair farce, by Mr. Reynolds

No, not a whit. Let the besotted town
Bestow, as fashion prompts, the laurel crown;
But do not THOU, who makest a fair pretence
To that best boon of heaven, to COMMON SENSE,
Resign thy judgment to the rout, and pay
Knee-worship to the idol of the day:
For all are—

F. What? speak freely; let me know.

P. O might I! durst I! Then——but let it go,
Yet, when I view the follies that engage
The full-grown children of this piping age;
See snivelling Jerningham, at fifty, weep
O'er love-lorn oxen and deserted sheep;
See Cowley* frisk it to one ding-dong chime,
And weekly cuckold her poor spouse in rhyme;
See Thrale's gray widow with a satchel roam,
And bring, in pomp, her labour'd nothings home;
See Robinson forget her state, and move
On crutches towards the grave, to "Light o' Love;"†
See Parsons,‡ while all sound advice he scorns,
Mistake two soft excrescences for horns;

* For the *poetic* amours of this lady, see the British Album, particularly the poem called the Interview.

† Light o' Love, that's a tune that goes *without a burden*. —*Shakspeare.*

‡ In the first editions of this and the following poems I had overlooked Mr. Parsons, though an undoubted Bavian. This nettled him. "Ha!" quoth he, "better be damn'd than mention'd not at all." He accordingly applied to me,[1] (in a circuitous manner, I confess,) and as a particular favour was finally admitted, in the shape of a motto, into the title-page of the Mæviad. These were the lines:

May he who hates not Crusca's *sober* verse,
Love Merry's *drunken* prose, so smooth and terse;
The same may rake for sense in Parsons' skull,
And shear his hogs, poor fool! and milk his bull.

The first distich contains what Mr. Burke calls "high matter!" and can only be understood by the initiated; the second, (would it had never been written!) instead of gratifying the ambition of Mr. Parsons, as I fondly expected, and quieting him for ever, had a most fatal effect upon his poor head, and, from an honest, painstaking gentleman, converted him, in imagination, into a Minotaur:

Continuo implevit falsis mugitibus urbem,
Et sæpe in lævi quæsivit *cornua* fronte.

The motto appeared on a Wednesday; and on the Saturday after, the morosoph Este (who appears to have believed in the reality of the metamorphosis) published the first bellowings of Mr. Parsons, with the following introduction:—

And butting all he meets, with awkward pains,
Lay bare his forehead, and expose his brains:
I scarce can rule my spleen———
F. Forbear, forbear;
And what the great delight in, learn to spare.
P. It must not, cannot be; for I was born
To brand obtrusive ignorance with scorn;
On bloated pedantry to pour my rage,
And hiss preposterous fustian from the stage.
Lo, DELLA CRUSCA![*] In his closet pent,
He toils to give the crude conception vent.

Abortive thoughts, that right and wrong confound
Truth sacrificed to letters, sense to sound,
False glare, incongruous images, combine;
And noise and nonsense clatter through the line.
'Tis done. Her house the generous Piozzi lends,
And thither summons her blue-stocking friends;
The summons her blue-stocking friends obey,
Lured by the love of poetry—and tea.
The BARD steps forth, in birth-day splendour dress'd,
His right hand graceful waving o'er his breast;
His left extending, so that all may see
A roll inscribed "THE WREATH OF LIBERTY."
So forth he steps, and, with complacent air,
Bows round the circle, and assumes the chair;
With lemonade he gargles next his throat,
Then sweetly preludes to the liquid note:
And now 'tis silence all. "GENIUS OR MUSE"[*]—
Thus while the flowery subject he pursues,

"ON MR. GIFFORD'S MOTTO.

"The following SPIRITED CHASTISEMENT of the vulgar ignorance and malignity in question was sent on Thursday night—but by an accidental error in one of our clerks, or in the servant delivering the copy at the office, it was unfortunately mislaid!"—

Why this is as it should be;—'the gods take care of Cato!' Who sees not that they interfered, and by conveying the copy out of the compositor's way, procured the author of the Mæviad two comfortable nights! But to the 'spirited chastisement.'—

'Nor wool the pig, nor milk the bull produces.'

The profundity of the last observation, by-the-by, proves Mr. Parsons to be an accurate observer of nature: and if the three Irishmen who went nine miles to suck a bull, and came back a-dry, had fortunately had the honour of his acquaintance, we should probably have heard nothing of their far-famed expedition—

'Nor wool the pig, nor milk the bull produces,
Yet each has something for far different uses:
For boars, pardie! have tusks, and bulls have *horns*.'
Η, Νεμεσις δε κακαν εγραψατο φωνην·

For from that hour scarcely a week, or indeed a day, has elapsed, in which Mr. Parsons has not made himself ridiculous by threatening me in the Telegraph, Oracle, World, &c., with those formidable nonentities.

Well and wisely singeth the poet, *non unus menles agitat furor*: yet while I give an involuntary smile to the oddity of Mr. Parsons' disease, I cannot but lament that his friends, (and a gentleman who is said to belong to more clubs than Sir Watkin Lewes must need have friends,) I cannot, I say, but lament, that on the first appearance of these knobs, these 'excrescences,' as I call them, his friends did not have him cut for the simples!

[*] LO, DELLA CRUSCA!

'O thou, to whom superior worth's allied,
Thy country's honour, and the muses' pride—'

So says Laura Maria—

Et solem quis dicere falsum
Audeat?

Indeed she says a great deal more; but as I do not understand it, I forbear to lengthen my quotation.

Innumerable odes, sonnets, &c. published from time to time in the daily papers, have justly procured this gentleman the reputation of the first poet of the age: but the performance which called forth the high-sounding panegyric above-mentioned is a philosophical rhapsody in praise of the French revolution, called the "Wreath of Liberty."

Of this poem no reader (provided he can read) is at this time ignorant; but as there are various opinions concerning it, and as I do not choose, perhaps, to dispute with a lady of Mrs. Robinson's critical abilities, I shall select a few passages from it, and leave the world to judge how truly its author is said to be

——"Gifted with the sacred lyre,
Whose sounds can more than mortal thoughts inspire."

This supernatural effort of genius, then, is chiefly distinguished by three very prominent features.—Downright nonsense. Downright frigidity. Downright doggrel.—Of each of these as the instances occur.

"Hang o'er his eye the gossamery tear.
Wreathe round her airy harp the timorous joy.
Recumbent eve rock the reposing tide.
A web-work of despair, a mass of woes.
And o'er my lids the scalding tumour roll."

"TUMOUR, a morbid swelling."—*Johnson.* An excellent thing to roll over an eye, especially if it happen, as in the present case, to be "scalding."

——"Summer tints begemm'd the scene,
And silky ocean slept in glossy green."
"While air's nocturnal ghost, in paly shroud,
Glances with grisly glare from cloud to cloud,"
"And gauzy zephyrs, fluttering o'er the plain,
On twilight's bosom drop their filmy rain."

Unus instar omnium! This couplet staggered me. I should be loath to be found correcting a madman; and yet mere folly seems unequal to the production of such exquisite nonsense.

——"The explosion came
And burst the o'ercharged culverin of shame."
——"Days of old
Their perish'd, proudest pageantry unfold."
——"Nothing I descry,
But the bare boast of barren heraldry."
——"The huntress queen
Showers her shafts of silver o'er the scene.

To these add, "moody monarchs, turgid tyrant, pampered popes, radiant rivers, cooling cataracts, lazy Loires, (of which, by-the-by, there are none,) gay Garonnes, gloomy glass, mingling murder, dauntless day, lettered lightnings, delicious dilatings, sinking sorrows, blissful blessings, rich reasonings, meliorating mercies, vicious venalities, sublunary suns, dewy vapours damp, that sweep the silent swamp;" and a world of others, to be found in the compass of half a dozen pages.

"In phosphor blaze of genealogic line."

N. B. Written to "the turning of a brazen candlestick."

"O better were it ever to be lost
In blank negation's sea, than reach the coast."
"Should the zeal of Parliament be empty words."
——"Doom for a breath
A hundred reasoning hecatombs to death."

A hecatomb is a sacrifice of a hundred head of oxen. Where did this gentleman hear of their *reasoning*?

"A while I'll ruminate on time and fate;
And the most probable event of things"——

EUGE, MAGNE POETA! Well may Laura Maria say,

"That *Genius* glows in every classic line,
And *Nature* dictates—every thing that's thine."

[*] "*Genius or Muse*, whoe'er thou art, whose thrill
Exalts the fancy, and inflames the will,
Bids o'er the heart sublime sensation roll,
And wakes ecstatic fervour in the soul."

See the commencement of the Wreath of Liberty, where our great poet, with a dexterity peculiar to himself, has contrived to fill several quarto pages without a single idea

A wild delirium round th' assembly flies;
Unusual lustre shoots from Emma's eyes,
Luxurious Arno drivels as he stands,
And Anna frisks, and Laura claps her hands.
O wretched man! And dost thou toil to please,
At this late* hour, such prurient ears as these?
Is thy poor pride contented to receive
Such transitory fame as fools can give?
Fools, who, unconscious of the critics' laws,
Rain in such showers their indistinct applause,
That THOU, e'en THOU, who livest upon renown,
And, with eternal puffs, insult'st the town,
Art forced, at length, to check the idiot roar,
And cry, "For heaven's sweet sake, no more, no more!"
"But why, (thou say'st,) why am I learn'd, why fraught
With all the priest and all the sage have taught,
If the huge mass within my bosom pent
Must struggle there, despairing of a vent?"
THOU learn'd! Alas, for learning! She is sped.
And hast thou dimm'd thy eyes, and rack'd thy head,
And broke thy rest for THIS, for THIS alone?
And is thy knowledge nothing if not known?
O lost to sense!—But still, thou criest, 'tis sweet,
To hear "That's HE!" from every one we meet:
That's HE whom critic Bell declares divine,
For whom the fair diurnal laurels twine;
Whom magazines, reviews, conspire to praise
And Greathead calls the Homer of our days.
F. And is it nothing, then, to hear our name
Thus blazon'd by the GENERAL VOICE of fame?
P. Nay, it were every thing, did THAT dispense
The sober verdict found by taste and sense:
But mark OUR jury. O'er the flowing bowl,
When wine has drown'd all energy of soul,
Ere FARO comes, (a dreary interval!)
For some fond fashionable lay they call
Here the spruce ensign, tottering on his chair,
With lisping accent, and affected air,
Recounts the wayward fate† of that poor poet,
Who, born for anguish, and disposed to show it,
Did yet so awkwardly his means employ,
That gaping fiends mistook his grief for joy!
Lost in amaze at language so divine,
The audience hiccup, and exclaim, "Damn'd fine!"

And are not now the author's ashes blest?
Lies not the turf now lightly on his breast?
Do not sweet violets now around him bloom?
Laurels now burst spontaneous from his tomb?——
F. This is mere mockery: and (in your ear)
Reason is ill refuted by a sneer.
Is praise an evil? Is there to be found
One so indifferent to its soothing sound,
As not to wish hereafter to be known,
And make a long futurity his own;
Rather than—
P. With 'Squire Jerningham descend
To pastry cooks and moths, "and there an end!"
O thou, who deign'st this homely scene to share,
Thou know'st, when chance (though this indeed be rare)*
With random gleams of wit has graced my lays,
Thou know'st too well how I have relish'd praise.
Not mine the soul which pants not after fame:—
Ambitious of a poet's envied name,
I haunt the sacred fount, athirst, to prove
The grateful influence of the stream I love.
And yet, my friend—though still, at praise bestow'd,
Mine eye has glisten'd, and my cheek has glow'd,
Yet, when I prostitute the lyre to gain
The *Euges* which await the modish strain,
May the sweet muse my grovelling hopes withstand,
And tear the strings indignant from my hand!
Nor think that, while my verse too much I prize,
Too much th' applause of fashion I despise;
For mark to what 'tis given, and then declare,
Mean though I am, if it be worth my care.
—Is it not given to Este's unmeaning dash,
To Topham's fustian, Reynolds' flippant trash,
To Morton's catchword,† Greathead's idiot line,

* At this late hour—I learn from Della Crusca's lamentations, that he is declined into the vale of years; that the women say to him, as they formerly said to Anacreon, *γερων ει*, and that Love, about two years since,

——"Tore his name from his bright page,
And gave it to approaching age."

† Recounts the wayward fate, &c.—In the INTERVIEW, see the British Album, the lover, finding his mistress inexorable, comforts himself, and justifies her, by boasting how well he can play the fool. And never did Don Quixote exhibit half so many extravagant tricks in the Sierra Morena, for the *beaux yeux* of his dulcinea, as our distracted amoroso threatens to perform for the no less beautiful ones of Anna Matilda.

"Yes, I will prove that I deserve my fate,
Was born for anguish, and was formed for hate;
With such transcendent wo will breathe my sigh,
That envying fiends shall think it ecstacy," &c.

* Thou know'st, when chance, &c.—To see how a Cruscan can blunder! Mr. Parsons thus politely comments on this unfortunate hemistich:

"Thou lowest of the imitating race,
Thou imp of satire, and thou foul disgrace;
Who callest *each* coarse phrase a lucky hit," &c.

Alas! no: But this is of a piece with his qui-pro-quo on the preface of the Mæviad—where, on my saying that I had laid the poem aside for two years, he exultingly exclaims, "Soh! it was two years in hand, then!"

Mr. Parsons is highly celebrated, I am told, for his skill in driving a bargain: it is to be presumed that he does it with his spectacles on.—But, indeed, he began with a blunder:—if he had read my motto carefully, he must have seen that I never taxed him with keeping a bull for his own milking: no; it was the infatuated man who looked for sense in Mr. Parsons' skull that was charged with this solecism in economics. And yet the bare belief of it produced the metamorphosis which I have already noticed, and which his friends have not yet ceased to deplore.

† Morton's catchword. WONDERFUL is the profundity of the bathos! I thought that O'Keefe had reached the bottom of it; but, as uncle Bowling says, I thought a d—n'd lie; for Holcroft, Reynolds, and Morton have sunk beneath him. They have happily found

In the *lowest* deep a *lower* still,

and persevere in exploring it with an emulation which does them honour.

And Holcroft's Shug-lane cant,* and Merry's Moorfields whine ††
Skill'd in one useful science, at the least,
The great man comes and spreads a sumptuous feast:
Then, when his guests behold the prize at stake,
And thirst and hunger only are awake,
My friends, he cries, what think the galleries, pray,
And what the boxes, of my last new play?
Speak freely;—tell me all;—come, be sincere;
For truth, you know, is music to my ear.
They speak! alas, they cannot. But shall I?
I, who receive no bribe? who dare not lie?
This, then:—"That worse was never writ before,
Nor worse will be, till—thou shalt write once more."
Bless'd be "two-headed Janus!" though inclined,
No waggish stork can peck at him behind;
He no wry mouth, no lolling tongue can fear,
Nor the brisk twinkling of an ass's ear:
But you, ye St. Johns, cursed with one poor head,
Alas! what mockeries have not ye to dread!
Hear now our guests.—The critics, sir! they cry—
Merit like yours the critics may defy:
But this, indeed, they say, "Your varied rhymes,
At once the boast and envy of the times,
In every page, song, sonnet, what you will,
Show boundless genius and unrivall'd skill.
"If comedy be yours, the searching strain
Blends such sweet pleasure with corrective pain,
That e'en the guilty at their sufferings smile,
And bless the lancet, though they bleed the while.
If tragedy, th' impassion'd numbers flow,
In all the sad variety of wo,
With such a liquid lapse, that they betray
The breast unwares, and steal the soul away.'
Thus fool'd, the moon-struck tribe, whose base essays
Sunk in acrostics, riddles, roundelays,
To loftier labours now pretend a call,
And bustle in heroics, one and all.
*E'en Bertie burns of gods and chiefs to sing—
Bertie, who lately twitter'd to the string
His namby-pamby madrigals of love,
In the dark dingles of a glittering grove,
Where airy lays,† woven by the hand of morn,
Were hung to dry upon a cobweb thorn!
Happy the soil, where bards like mushrooms rise,
And ask no culture but what Byshe supplies.
Happier the bards, who, write whate'er they will,
Find gentle readers to admire them still!
Some love the verse that like Maria's flows,
No rubs to stagger, and no sense to pose;
Which read, and read, you raise your eyes in doubt,
And gravely wonder—what it is about.
These fancy "Bell's Poetics" only sweet,
And intercept his hawkers in the street;
There, smoking hot, inhale Mit Yenda's‡ strains,
And the rank fame of Tony Pasquin's brains.§

* And Holcroft's Shug-lane cant. This is a poor stupid wretch, to whom infidelity and disloyalty have given a momentary notoriety, which has imposed upon the obstinacy of the managers, and opened the theatre to two or three of his grovelling and senseless productions.

Will future ages believe that this facetious triumvirate should think nothing more to be necessary to the construction of a play, than an eternal repetition of some contemptible vulgarity, such as "That's your sort!" "Hey, damme!" "What's to pay?" "Keep moving!" &c. They will; for they will have blockheads of *their* own, who will found their claims to celebrity on similar follies. What, however, they will never credit is, that these drivellings of idiotism, these catchwords, should actually preserve their respective authors from being hooted off the stage. No, they will not believe that an English audience could be so besotted, so brutified, as to receive such senseless exclamations with bursts of laughter, with peals of applause. I cannot believe it myself, though I have witnessed it. Haud credo—if I may reverse the good father's position—haud credo, quia possibile est.

† Merry's Moorfields whine.—In a most wretched rhapsody of incomprehensible nonsense, addressed by this gentleman to Mrs. Robinson, which she, in her *valuable* poems, (page 100,) calls a charming composition, abounding in lines of exquisite beauty, is the following rant:

> Conjure up demons from the main,
> Storms upon storms indignant heap,
> Bid ocean howl, and nature weep,
> Till the Creator *blush to see*
> *How horrible his world can be:*
> While I will *glory to blaspheme,*
> *And make the joys of hell my theme.*"

The reader, perhaps, wonders what dreadful event gave birth to these fearful imprecations. As far as I can collect from the poem, it was the momentary refusal of the aforesaid Mrs. Robinson—*to open her eyes!* Surely, it is most devoutly to be wished that these poor creatures would recollect, amidst their frigid ravings and commonplace extravagances, that excellent maxim of Pope—

"Persist, by nature, reason, taste unawed;
But learn, ye *dunces*, not to scorn your *God*."

* E'en Bertie, &c.—For Bertie, (Greathead, I think they call him,) see the Mæviad.

† Where airy lays, &c.

> "Was it the shuttle of the morn
> That hung upon the cobweb'd thorn
> Thy airy lay? Or did it rise,
> In thousand rich enamell'd dyes,
> To greet the noonday sun?" &c.

—*Album*, vol. ii.

‡ Mit Yenda.—This is Mr. Tim, alias Mr. Timothy Adney, a most pertinacious gentleman, who makes a conspicuous figure in the daily papers under the ingenious signature above cited; it being, as the reader already sees, his own name read backward. "Gentle dulness ever loves a joke!"

Of his prodigious labours I have nothing by me but the following stanza, taken from what he calls his Poor Man:

> Reward the bounty of your generous hand,
> Your head each night in comfort shall be *laid*,
> And plenty smile throughout your fertile land,
> While I do hasten to the silent *grave*."

"Good morrow, my worthy masters and mistresses all, and a merry Christmas to you!"

I have been guilty of a misnomer. Mr. Adney has politely informed me, since the above was written, that his Christian name is not Timothy, but Thomas. The anagram in question, therefore, must be Mot Yenda, omitting the H, *euphoniæ gratia*. I am happy in an opportunity of doing justice to so correct a gentleman, and I pray him to continue his valuable lucubrations.

§ Tony Pasquin.—I have too much respect for my reader, to affront him with any specimens of this man's poetry, at once licentious and dull beyond example: at the same time I cannot resist the temptation of presenting him with the following stanzas, written by a friend of mine, and sufficiently illustrative of the character in question:

Others, like Kemble, on black-letter pore,
And what they do not understand, adore;
Buy at vast sums the *trash* of ancient days,
And draw on prodigality for praise.
These, when some lucky hit, or lucky price,
Has bless'd them with "*The Boke of gode Advice*,"
For *ekes* and *algates* only deign to seek,
And live upon a *whilome* for a week.
And can we, when such mope-eyed dolts are placed
By thoughtless fashion on the throne of taste—
Say, can we wonder whence such jargon flows,
This motley fustian, neither verse nor prose,
This old, new language which defiles our page,
The refuse and the scum of every age?
Lo! Beaufoy* tells of Afric's barren sand,
In all the flowery phrase of fairy land:

TO ANTHONY PASQUIN, ESQ.

"Why dost thou tack, most simple Anthony,
The name of *Pasquin* to thy ribald strains?
Is it a fetch of wit, to let us see,
Thou, like that statue, art devoid of brains?
"But thou mistakest: for know, though Pasquin's head
Be full as hard, and near as thick as thine,
Yet has the world, admiring, on it read
Many a keen gibe, and many a sportive line.
"While nothing from thy jobbernowl can spring
But impudence and filth; for out, alas!
Do what we will, 'tis still the same vile thing,
Within, all brick-dust—and without, all brass.
'Then blot the name of *Pasquin* from thy page:
Thou seest it will not thy poor riff-raff sell.
Some other would'st thou take? I dare engage
John Williams, or Tom Fool, will do as well."

TONY has taken my friend's advice, and now sells, or attempts to sell, his "riff-raff" under the name of JOHN WILLIAMS.

It has been represented to me, that I should do well to avoid all mention of this man, from a consideration, that one so lost to every sense of decency and shame was a fitter object for the beadle than the muse. This has induced me to lay aside a second castigation which I had prepared for him, though I do not think it expedient to omit what I had formerly written.

Here on the rack of satire let him lie,
Fit garbage for the hell-hound infamy.

One word more. I am told that there are men so weak as to deprecate this miserable object's abuse, and so vain, so despicably vain, as to tolerate his praise—for such I have nothing but pity;—though the fate of Hastings, see the "Pin-basket to the Children of Thespis," holds out a dreadful lesson to the latter:—but should there be a man or a woman, however high in rank, base enough to purchase the venal pen of this miscreant for the sake of traducing innocence and virtue, then——I was about to threaten, but 'tis not necessary: the profligate cowards who employ Anthony can know no severer punishment than the support of a man whose acquaintance is infamy, and whose touch is poison.

* Lo! Beaufoy, &c.—"The feet are *accommodated* with shoes,[1] and the head is *protected* by a—woollen night-cap."—AFRICAN ASSOCIATION, p. 139.

"From this scene of gladsome contrast, i. e. from the mountain of Zilau, (p. 288,) whose rugged sides are marked with scanty spots of brushwood, and enriched with stores of water, to the long ascent of the broad rock of Gerdonas, (p. 289,) from whose inflexible barrenness little is to be got—from this scene, I say, of gladsome contrast to the *inveterate* mountains of Gegogib, &c.

"In the long course of a seven days' passage, the traveller is scarcely sensible that a few spots of thin and *meager* brushwood slightly interrupt the vast expanse of sterility, and diminish the amplitude of desolation!!"

1 Shoes. By your leave, master critic, here is a small oversight in your quotation. The gentleman does not say their feet are accommodated with shoes, but with *slippers*. For the rest, *accommodate*, as I learn, is a scholar-like word, and a word of exceeding great propriety. "*Accommodate!* it comes from *accommodo:* that is, when a man's feet are, as they say, accommodated, or when they are—being thereby they may be thought to be accommodated: which is an excellent thing."—*Printer's Devil.*

There Fezzan's thrum-capp'd tribes, Turks, Christians, Jews,
Accommodate, ye gods! their feet with shoes;
There *meager* shrubs *inveterate* mountains grace,
And *brushwood* breaks the *amplitude of space*.
Perplex'd with terms so vague and undefined,
I blunder on; till 'wilder'd, giddy, blind,
Where'er I turn, on clouds I seem to tread
And call for Mandeville, to ease my head.
O for the good old times! WHEN all was new,
And every hour brought prodigies to view,
Our sires in unaffected language told
Of streams of amber, and of rocks of gold;
Full of their theme, they spurn'd all idle art;
And the plain tale was trusted to the heart.
Now all is changed! We fume and fret, poor elves,
Less to display our subject than ourselves.
Whate'er we paint—a grot, a flower, a bird,
Heavens, how we sweat! laboriously absurd!
Words of gigantic bulk, and uncouth sound,
In rattling triads the long sentence bound;
While points with points, with periods periods jar,
And the whole work seems one continued war!
Is not THIS sad?

F. "'Tis pitiful, heaven knows
'Tis wondrous pitiful." E'en take the prose;
But for the poetry—O, that, my friend,
I still aspire—nay, smile not—to defend.
You praise our sires, but, though they wrote with force,
Their rhymes were vicious, and their diction coarse
We want their *strength*: agreed; but we atone
For that, and more, by *sweetness* ALL OUR OWN.
For instance—*"Hasten to the lawny vale,
Where yellow morning breathes her saffron gale,
And bathes the landscape—"

P. Pshaw; I have it here
"A voice seraphic grasps my listening ear;
Wondering I gaze; when lo! methought afar,
More bright than dauntless day's imperial star,
A godlike form advances."

F. You suppose
These lines, perhaps, too turgid; what of those
"THE MIGHTY MOTHER——"

P. Now 'tis plain you sneer
For Weston's† self could find no semblance here:

* Hasten, &c.—This and the following quotation are taken from the "Laurel of Liberty," a work on which the great author most justly rests his claim to immortality. See p. 167.

† Weston.—This indefatigable gentleman has been long employed in attacking the moral character of Pope in the Gentleman's Magazine, with all the virulence of Gildon, all the impudence of Smedley, and all the ignorance of Curl and his associates.

What the views of the bland Sylvanus may be, in standing cap in hand, and complacently holding open the door of the temple, for nearly two years, to this "execrable"[1]

1 Such is the epithet applied to Pope by the "virtuous indignation" of the "amiable" traducer of worth and genius!

Weston, who slunk from truth's imperious light,
Swells, like a filthy toad, with secret spite,
And, envying the fame he cannot hope,
Spits his black venom at the dust of Pope.
—Reptile accursed!—O memorable long,
If there be force in virtue or in song,
O injured bard! accept the grateful strain,
Which I, the humblest of the tuneful train,
With glowing heart, yet trembling hand, repay
For many a pensive, many a sprightly lay!
So may thy varied verse, from age to age,
Inform the simple, and delight the sage;
While canker'd Weston, and his loathsome rhymes,
Stink in the nose of all succeeding times!
Enough. But where, (for these, you seem to say,
Are samples of the high, heroic lay,)
Where are the soft, the tender strains, which call
For the moist eye, bow'd head, and longthen'd drawl?
Lo! here—"* Canst thou, Matilda, urge my fate,
And bid me mourn thee? yes, and mourn too late!
O rash, severe decree! my maddening brain
Cannot the ponderous agony sustain;
But forth I rush, from vale to mountain run,
And with my mind's thick gloom obscure the sun."

Heavens! if our ancient vigour were not fled,
Could VERSE like this be written? or be read?
VERSE! THAT's the mellow fruit of toil intense,
Inspired by genius, and inform'd by sense;
THIS, the abortive progeny of pride,
And dulness, gentle pair, for aye allied;
Begotten without thought, born without pains,
The ropy drivel of rheumatic brains.
F. So let it be; and yet, methinks, my friend,
Silence were wise, where satire will not mend.
Why wound the feelings of our noble youth,
And grate their tender ears with odious truth?
They cherish Arno* and his flux of song,
And hate the man who tells 'em they are wrong.
Your fate already I foresee. My lord,
With cold respect, will freeze you from his board;
And his grace cry, "Hence with that sapient sneer.
Hence! we desire no currish critic here."
P. Enough. Thank heaven! my error now I see,
And all shall be divine, henceforth, for me:

Erostratus, I know not. He cannot surely be weak enough to suppose that an obscure scribbler like this has any charges to bring against our great poet, which escaped the vigilant malevolence of the Westons of the Dunciad. Or if ever, from the "natural goodness of his heart," he cherished so laudable a supposition, he ought (whatever it may cost him) to forego it: when, after twenty months' preparation, nothing is produced but an exploded accusation taken from the most common edition of the Dunciad!

It has been suggested to me, that this nightman of literature designs to reprint as much as can be collected of the heroes of the Dunciad.—If it be so, the dirty work of traducing Pope may be previously necessary; and prejudice itself must own, that he has shown uncommon penetration in the selection of the blind and outrageous mercenary now so laboriously employed in it.

Whatever be the design, the proceedings are by no means inconsistent with the plan of a work which may not unaptly be styled *the charnel-house of reputation*, and which, from the days of Lauder to the present, has delighted to asperse every thing venerable among us—which accused Swift of lust, and Addison of drunkenness! which insulted the ashes of Toup while they were yet warm, and gibbeted poor Henderson alive: which affected to idolize the great and good Howard, while idolatry was painful to him: and the moment he fell, gloriously fell, in the exercise of the most sublime virtue, attempted to stigmatize him as a brute and a monster!

* Canst thou, Matilda, &c. vide Album, vol. ii.—Matilda! "Nay then, I'll never trust a madman again." It was but a few minutes since, that Mr. Merry died for the ove of Laura Maria; and now is he about to do the same thing for the love of Anna Matilda?

What the ladies may say to such a swain, I know not; but certainly he is too prone to run wild, die, &c. &c. Such, indeed, is the combustible nature of this gentleman, that he takes fire at every female signature in the papers; and I remember, that when Olaudo Equiano, who, for a black, is not ill-featured, tried his hand at a soft sonnet, and by mistake subscribed it *Olauda*, Mr. Merry fell so desperately in love with him, and "yelled out such syllables of dolour" in consequence of it, that the pitiful-hearted negro was frightened at the mischief he had done, and transmitted in all haste the following correction to the editor—For *OlaudA*, please to read *OlaudO*, the black "MAN."

* Of the talents of this *spes altera Roma*, this second hope of the age, the following stanzas will afford a sufficient specimen. They are taken from a ballad which Mr. Bell, an admirable judge of these matters, calls a "very mellifluous one; easy, artless, and unaffected."

"*Gently* o'er the rising *billows*
Softly steals the bird of night,
Rustling through the *bending willows*:
Fluttering pinions *mark* her flight.

"Whither now in *silence bending*,
Ruthless winds *deny thee rest*:
Chilling *night-dews* fast descending,
Glisten on thy downy breast.

"Seeking some kind hand to guide thee,
Wistful turns thy *fearful* eye;
Trembling as the willows *hide* thee,
Shelter'd from th' inclement sky."

The story of this poor owl, who was at one and the same time at sea and on land, silent and noisy, sheltered and exposed, is continued through a few more of these "mellifluous" stanzas, which the reader, I doubt not, will readily forgive me for omitting; more especially if he reads the ORACLE, a paper honoured—as the grateful editor very properly has it—by the effusions of this "artless" gentleman above all others.

N.B. On looking again, I find the OWL to be a nightingale!—N'importe.

It was said of Theophilus Cibber, (I think by Goldsmith,) that as he grew older, he grew never the better. Much the same (mutatis mutandis) may be said of the gentlemen of the Baviad. After an interval of two years, I find the "mellifluous" ARNO celebrating Mrs. Robinson's novel in strains like these.

"*For the Oracle.*

SONNET TO MRS. ROBINSON,

Upon reading her VANCENZA.

"What never-ceasing music! From the throne
Where sweetest *Sensibility* enshrined,
Pours out her tender triumphs, all alone,
To every murmuring breeze of passing wind!

"O, bless'd with all the lovely lapse of song,
That bathes with purest balm the soften'd breast,
I see thee urge thy fancy's course along
The solemn glooms of *Gothic* piles *unbless'd*.

"*Vancenza* rises—o'er her time-touch'd spires
Guilt unreveal'd hovers with killing dew,
Frustrates the fondness of the *Virgin's* fires,
And bares the *murderous casket* to her view.

"The thrilling pulse creeps back upon each heart,
And *horror* lords it by thy fascinating art."—*Arno.*

Et vitula TU dignus, et HÆC! The novel IS worthy of the poetry, the poetry of the novel.

Yes, Andrews' doggrel, Greathead's idiot line,
And Morton's catchword, all, forsooth, divine!
F. 'Tis well. Here let th' indignant stricture cease,
And LEEDS at length enjoy his fool in peace.
P. Come then, around their works a circle draw,
And near it plant the dragons of the law,
With labels writ, "Critics, far hence remove,
Nor dare to censure what the great approve."
I go. Yet Hall could lash with noble rage
The purblind patron of a former age;
And laugh to scorn th' eternal sonneteer,
Who made goose pinions and white rags so dear.
Yet Oldham, in his rude, unpolish'd strain,
Could hiss the clamorous, and deride the vain,
Who bawl'd their rhymes incessant through the town,
Or bribed the hawkers for a day's renown.
Whate'er the theme, with honest warmth they wrote,
Nor cared what Mutius of their freedom thought;
Yet prose was venial in that happy time,
And life had other business than to rhyme.
And may not I—now this pernicious pest,
This metromania, creeps through every breast;
Now fools and children void their brains by loads,
And itching grandams spawl lascivious odes;
Now lords and dukes, cursed with a sickly taste,
While Burns' pure healthful nurture runs to waste,
Lick up the spittle of the bed-rid muse,
And riot on the sweepings of the stews;
Say, may not I expose—
F. No—'tis unsafe;
Prudence, my friend.
P. What! not deride? not laugh?
Well! thought at least is free—
F. O yet forbear.
P. Nay, then, I'll dig a pit, and bury there
The dreadful truth which so alarms thy fears:
THE TOWN, THE TOWN, GOOD PIT, HAS ASSES' EARS!
Thou think'st, perhaps, this wayward fancy strange;
So think thou still: yet would not I exchange
The secret humour of this simple hit
For all the Albums that were ever writ.
Of this, no more.—O THOU, (if yet there be
One bosom from this vile infection free,)
THOU who canst thrill with joy, or glow with ire,
As the great masters of the song inspire,
Canst bend enraptured o'er the magic page,
Where desperate ladies desperate lords engage,
Gnomes, sylphs, and gods the fierce contention share,
And heaven and earth hang trembling on a hair:
Canst quake with horror, while Emilia's charms,
Against a brother point a brother's arms;
And trace the fortune of the varying fray,
While hour on hour flits unperceived away—
Approach: 'twixt hope and fear I wait. O deign
To cast a glance on this incondite strain:
Here, if thou find one thought but well express'd,
One sentence higher finish'd than the rest,
Such as may win thee to proceed a while,
And smooth thy forehead with a gracious smile
I ask no more, but far from me the throng
Who fancy fire in Laura's vapid song;
Who Anna's bedlam rant for sense can take,
And over* Edwin's mewlings keep awake;

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* *Edwin's mewlings*, &c.—We come now to a character of high respect, the profound Mr. T. Vaughan, who, under the alluring signature of Edwin, favours us from time to time with a melancholy poem on the death of a bug, the flight of an earwig, the miscarriage of a cockchaffer or some other event of equal importance.

His last work was an Επιταφιον, (blessings on his learning!) which, I take for granted, means *an epitaph*, on a mouse that broke her heart: and, as it was a matter of great consequence, he very properly made the introduction as long as the poem itself. Hear how gravely he prologiseth.

"*On a tame mouse, which belonged to a lady who saved its life, constantly fed it, and even wept, (poor lady!) at its approaching death. The mouse's eyes actually dropped out of its head (poor mouse!)* THE DAY BEFORE IT DIED."

Επιταφιον.

"This feeling mouse, whose heart was warm'd
By pity's purest ray,
Because her mistress dropt a tear,
Wept both her eyes away.

"By sympathy deprived of light,
She one day darkness tried;
The grateful tear no more could flow,
So liked it not, and died.

"May we, when others weep for us,
The debt with interest pay—
And, when the generous fonts are dry,
Revert to native clay."—*Edwin.*

Mr. T. Vaughan has asserted that he is not the author of this matchless Επιταφιον with such spirit, and retorted upon one Baviad (whom the learned gentleman takes to be a man) with such strength of argument and elegance of diction, that it would wrong both him and the reader to give it in any words but his own.

"Well said, Baviad the correct!—And so the PROFOUND Mr. T. Vaughan, as you politely style him, writes under the alluring signature of Edwin, does he? and therefore a very proper subject for your satiric malignity!—But suppose for a moment, as the *truth* and the *fact* is, that this gentleman never did use that signature upon any occasion, in whatever he may have written: Do not you, the identical Baviad, in that case, for your unprovoked abuse of him, immediately fall under your own character of that nightman of literature you so liberally assign Weston? And like him, too, if there is any truth in what you say or write, do you not

"'Swell like a filthy toad with secret spite?'

"The ayes have it. And should you not be as well versed in your favourite author's fourth satire, as you are in the first, with your leave, I will *quote* from it *two* emphatic lines:

"'Into themselves how few, how few descend,
And act, at home, the free, impartial friend!
None see their own, but all, with ready eye,
The pendent wallet on a neighbour spy;
And like a Baviad will recount his shame,
Tacking his *very errors to his name.*'

"*Oracle*, 12th Jan."

And to *whose* name should they be tacked, but the author's? Let not the reader, however, imagine the absurdity to proceed from Persius, or his ingenious translator. "The truth and the fact is," that our learned brother, having a small change to make in the last two lines, blundered them, with his usual acuteness, into nonsense He is not much more happy when he accuses me of calling WESTON "the nightman of literature."—But when a gentleman does not know what he writes, it is a little hard to expect him to know what he reads. After all, Edwin or not, our egregious friend is still the PROFOUND Mr. T. Vaughan.

Yes, far from me, whate'er their birth or place,
These long-ear'd judges of the Phrygian race;
Their censure and their praise alike I scorn,
And hate the laurel by their followers worn!
Let such (a task congenial to their powers)
At sales and auctions waste the morning hours,
While the dull noon away in Rumford's fane,
And snore the evening out at Drury-lane.

THE MÆVIAD.

Qui Bavium non odit, amet tua carmina, Mævi.

INTRODUCTION.

In the INTRODUCTION to the preceding pages, a brief account is given of the rise and progress of that spurious species of poetry which lately infested this metropolis, and gave occasion to the BAVIAD.

I was not ignorant of what I exposed myself to by the publication of that work. If abuse could have affected me, I should not probably have made a set of people my enemies, habituated to ill language, and possessed of such convenient vehicles* for its dissemination. But I never regarded it from such hands, and, indeed, deprecated nothing but their praise. I respect, in common with every man of sense, the censure of the wise and good; but the angry ebullitions of folly unmasked, and vanity mortified, pass by me "like the idle wind," or, if noticed, serve merely to grace succeeding editions of the Baviad.

I confess, however, that the work was received more favourably than I expected. Bell, indeed, and a few others, whose craft was touched, vented their indignation in prose and verse; but, on the whole, the clamour against me was not loud, and was lost by insensible degrees in the applauses of such as I was truly ambitious to please.

Thus supported, the good effects of the satire (gloriose loquor) were not long in manifesting themselves. Della Crusca appeared no more in the Oracle, and, if any of his followers ventured to treat the town with a soft sonnet, it was not, as before, introduced by a pompous preface. Pope and Milton resumed their superiority; and Este and his coadjutors silently acquiesced in the growing opinion of their incompetency, and showed some sense of shame.

With this I was satisfied. I had taken up my pen for no other end, and was quietly retiring, with the idea that I had "done the state some service," and purposing to abandon for ever the cestus, which a respectable critic fancies I wielded "with too much severity," when I was once more called into the lists† by the reappearance of some of the scattered enemy.

It was not enough that the stream of folly flowed more sparingly in the Oracle than before; I was determined

"To have the current in *that place* damm'd up;"

and accordingly began the present poem—for which, indeed, I had by this time other reasons. I had been told that there were still a few admirers of the Cruscan school, who thought the contempt expressed for it was not sufficiently justified by the few passages produced in the Baviad. I thought it best, therefore, to exhibit the tribe of Bell once more; and, as they passed in review before me, to make such additional extracts‡ from their works, as should put their demerits beyond the power of future question.

I remembered that this great critic, in his excellent remarks on the Baviad, had charged the author with "bespattering *nearly* all the poetical eminence of the day." Anxious, therefore, to do impartial justice, I ran for the ALBUM, to discover who had been spared. Here I read, "In this collection are names whom genius will ever look upon as its *best* supporters! Sheridan"—what, is 'Saul also among the prophets!'—"Sheridan, Merry, Parsons, Cowley, Andrews, Jerningham, Greathead, Topham, Robinson," &c.

Thus furnished with "ALL the poetical eminence of the day," I proceeded, as Mr. Bell says, to be spatter it; taking, for the vehicle of my design, a satire of Horace—to which I was led by its supplying me (amid many happy allusions) with an opportunity of briefly noticing the wretched state of dramatic poetry among us.‡

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* Most of these fashionable writers were connected with the public prints. Della Crusca was a worthy coadjutor of the mad and malignant idiot who conducted the World. Arno and Lorenzo were either proprietors or editors of another paper. Edwin and Anna Matilda were favoured contributors to several; and Laura Maria, from the sums squandered on puffs, could command a corner in all. This wretched woman, indeed, in the wane of her beauty, fell into merited poverty, exchanged poetry for politics, and wrote abusive trash against the government, at the rate of two guineas a week, for the Morning Post.

* I hope no one will do me the injustice to suppose that I imagine myself another Hercules contending with hydras, &c. Far from it. My enemies cannot well have an humbler opinion of me than I have of myself; and *yet*, "if I am not ashamed of them, I am a soused gurnet." Mere pecora inertia! The contest is without danger, and the victory without glory. At the same time, I declare against any undue advantage being taken of these concessions. Though I knew the impotence of these literary Askaparts, the town did not; and many a man, who now affects to pity me for wasting my strength upon unresisting imbecility, would, not long since, have heard their poems with applause, and their praises with delight.

† It will now be said that I have done it *sequæ ad nauseam*. I confess it; and for the reason given above. And yet I can honestly assure the reader, that most, if not all, of the trash here quoted, passed with the authors for superlative beauties, every second word being printed either in italics or capitals.

‡ I know not if the stage has been so low, since the days of Gammer Gurton, as at this hour. It seems as if all the blockheads in the kingdom had started up, and exclaimed, with one voice, Come! let us write for the theatres. In this there is nothing, perhaps, altogether new; the striking and peculiar novelty of the times seems to be, that ALL they write is received. Of the three parties concerned in this business, the writers and the managers seem the least culpable. If the town will feed on husks, extraordinary pains need not be taken to find them any thing more palatable. But what shall we say of the people? The lower orders are so brutified by the lamenta-

‡ I recollect but two exceptions. Merry's idiotical opera, and Mrs. Robinson's more idiotical farce. To have failed where Miles Andrews succeeded, argues a degree of stupidity scarcely credible. Surely "ignorance itself is a planet" over the heroes and heroines of the Baviad.

When the MÆVIAD, so I call the present poem, was nearly brought to a conclusion, I laid it aside. The times seemed unfavourable to such productions. Events of real importance were momentarily claiming the attention of the people, and the still voice of the muses was not likely to be listened to amid the din of arms. After an interval of two years, however, circumstances, which it is not material to mention, have induced me to finish, and trust it, without more preface, to the candour to which I am already so highly indebted for the kind reception of the Baviad.

YES, I DID say that Crusca's* "true sublime"
Lack'd taste, and sense, and every thing but rhyme;

ble follies of O'Keefe, and Cobbe, and Pilon, and I know not who—Sardi venales, each worse than the other—that they have lost all relish for simplicity and genuine humour; nay, ignorance itself, unless it be gross and glaring, cannot hope for "their most sweet voices." And the higher ranks are so mawkishly mild, that they take with a placid simper whatever comes before them; or, if they now and then experience a slight fit of disgust, have not resolution enough to express it, but sit yawning and gaping in each other's faces for a little encouragement in their culpable forbearance.

When this was written, I thought the town had "sounded," as Shakspeare says, "the very bass string of humility;" but it has since appeared, that the lowest point of degradation had not then been reached. The force of English folly, indeed, could go no farther, and so far I was right; but the auxiliary supplies of Germany were at hand, and the taste, vitiated by the lively nonsense of O'Keefe and Co., was destined to be utterly destroyed by successive importations of the heavy, lumbering, monotonous stupidity of Kotzebue and Schiller.

The object of these writers has been detailed with such force and precision in the introduction to "THE ROVERS," that nothing remains to be said on that head—indeed the simple perusal of "*The Rovers*" would supersede the necessity of any critique on the merits of the German drama in general; since there is not a folly, however gross, an absurdity, however monstrous, to be found in that charming jeu d'esprit, that I would not undertake to parallel from one or other of the most admired works of the German Shakspeares.† Why it has not been produced on the stage is to me a matter of astonishment, since it unites the beauties of "The Stranger" and "Pizarro;" and, though perfectly German in its sentiments, is English in its language—intelligible English; which is infinitely more than can be said of the translation from Kotzebue, so maliciously attributed to Mr. Sheridan.

In a word, if you take from the German dramas their horrid blasphemies, their wanton invocations of the sacred Name, and their minute and ridiculous stage directions, which seem calculated to turn the whole into a pantomime, nothing will remain but a caput mortuum, a vapid and gloomy mass of matter, unenlightened by a single ray of genius or nature. If you leave them their blasphemies, &c., you have then a nameless something, insipid though immoral, tedious though impious, and stupid though extravagant!—so much so, that, as a judicious writer well observes, "it becomes a doubt which are the greatest objects of contempt and scorn, those who conceived and wrote them, or those who have the effrontery to praise them." Yet "these be thy gods, O Israel!" and to these are sacrificed our taste, our sense, and our national honour.

* Crusca's "true sublime." The words between inverted commas in this and the following verses, are Mr. Bell's. They contain, as the reader sees, a short character of the works to which they are respectively affixed. Though I have the misfortune to differ from this gentle-

† So Kotzebue and Schiller are styled by the critical reviewers.

That Arno's "easy strains" were coarse and rough,
And Edwin's "matchless numbers" woful stuff.
And who—forgive, O gentle Bell, the word,
For it must out—who, prithee, so absurd,
So mulishly absurd, as not to join
In this with me, save always THEE and THINE?
Yet still, the SOUL of candour! I allow'd
Their jingling elegies amused the crowd;
That lords hung blubbering o'er each woful line,
That lady-critics wept, and cried, "divine!"
That love-lorn priests reclined the pensive head,
And sentimental ensigns, as they read,
Wiped the sad drops of pity from their eye,
And burst between a hiccup and a sigh.
Yet, not content, like horse-leeches they come,
And split my head with one eternal hum
For "more! more! more!" Away! for should I grant
The full, the unreserved applause ye want,
St. John* might then my partial voice accuse,
And claim my suffrage for his tragic muse;
And Greathead,† rising from his short disgrace,
Fling the forgotten "Regent" in my face,

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man in the present instances, yet I observe such acuteness of perception in his general criticism, that I should have styled him the "profound" instead of the "gentle" Bell, if I had not previously applied the epithet to a still greater man, (absit invidia dicto,) to—Mr. T. Vaughan.

I trust that this incidental preference will create no jealousy—for though, as Virgil properly remarks, "an oaken staff EACH merits," yet I need not inform a gentleman, who, like Mr. Bell, reads Shakspeare every day after dinner, that "if two men ride upon a horse, one of them must ride behind."

* St. John, &c. Having already observed in the Introduction, that the Mæviad was nearly finished two years since, and consequently before the death of this gentleman, I have only to add here, that though I should not have introduced any of the heroes of the Baviad, quorum Flaminia tegitur cinis, atque Latina, yet I scarcely think it necessary to make any changes for the sake of omitting such as have passed ad plures, in the interval between writing and publishing.

The reader will find, p. 181, another instance of my small pretensions to prophecy, and probably regret it more than the present.

† Greathead's Regent.—Of this tragedy, which was "recommended to the world" by the monthly reviewers and others, as "the work of a SCHOLAR," I want words to express my just contempt. The plot of it is childish, the conduct absurd, the language unintelligible, the thoughts false and unnatural, the metaphors incongruous, the general style grovelling and base; and, to sum up all in a word, the whole piece the most execrable abortion of stupidity that ever disgraced the stage.

It is to be wished that critics by profession, sensible of the influence which their opinions necessarily have on the public taste, would divest themselves of their partialities when they sit down to the execution of, what I hope they consider as, a solemn duty. We should not then find them, as in the present instance, prostituting their applause on works that call for universal reprobation.

It is but fair, however, to observe, that Mr. Parsons has added his all-sufficient suffrage to that of the reviewers, in favour of Mr. Greathead.

> "O bard! to whom belongs
> Each purest fount of poesy!
> Who old Ilyssus' hallow'd dews
> In his *own* Avon dare infuse.
> O favour'd clime! O happy age!
> That boasts, to save a sinking stage,
> A Greathead!!!"—*Gent. Mag.*

When I first read these, and other high sounding praises scattered over reviews, magazines, newspapers, and

Bid me my censure, as I may, deplore,
And, like my brother critics, cry "Encore!"
Alas! my learned friends, for such ye are,
As Bell will say, or, if ye ask it, swear;
'Tis not enough, though this be somewhat too,
And more, perhaps,* than Jerningham can do,—
'Tis not enough to dole out Ahs! and Ohs!
Through Kemble's thorax, or through Bensley's nose,
To crowd our stage with scaffolds, or to fright
Our wives with rapes, repeated thrice a night;
JUDGES——Not such as, self-created, sit
On that TREMENDOUS BENCH* which skirts the pit
Where idle Thespis nods, while Arnot† dreams
Of Nereids "purling in ambrosial streams;"
Where Este in rapture cons fantastic airs,
"Old Pistol new revived" in Topham stares,
And Boswell, aping, with preposterous pride,
Johnson's worst frailties, rolls from side to side
His heavy head from hour to hour erects,
Affects the fool, and is what he affects.‡—
JUDGES of truth and sense, yet more demand
That art to nature lend a helping hand!
That fables well devised be simply told,
Correct if new, and probable if old.
When Mason leads Elfrida forth to view,
Adorn'd with virtues which she never knew,
I feel for every tear; while, borne along
By the full tide of unresisted song,
I stop not to inquire if all be just,
But take her goodness, as her grief, on trust,
Till calm reflection checks me, and I see
The heroine as she was, and ought to be;
A bold, bad woman, wading to the throne
Through seas of blood, and crimes till then unknown:
Then, then I hate the magic that deceived,
And blush to think how fondly I believed.§

know not what, I was naturally led to conclude that Mr. G. had succeeded better in his smaller pieces than in his tragedy, and thus justified in some degree the cry of his "learning," &c. &c. But no—all was a blank!

Here are a few samples of the "Ilyssean dews infused by Mr. Greathead into his *own* Avon"[1]—muddled, I suppose, and debased by the home-bred streamlet of one Shakspeare.

"In fuller presence we descry,
'Mid mountain rocks—a deity
Than eye of man shall e'er behold
In living grace of *sculptured* gold."[1]

More matter for a May morning!

"ODE ON APATHY.

"Accursed be dull lethargic Apathy,
Whether at eve she listless ride
In sluggish car by tortoise drawn—
With mimic air of senseless pride,
She feebly throws on all her withering sight,
While too observant of her sway,
Unmark'd her droning subjects lie,
Alike to her who murmur or obey."

I hope the reader understands it.

"ODE TO DUEL.

"Never didst thou appear
While Tiber's sons gave law to all the world;
Yet much they loved to desolate and slaughter.
Carthage! attest my words.
To glut their sanguinary rage,
Not citizens but gladiators fall.
Slavery and vassalage,
And savage broils 'twixt nobles are no more.
Vanish thou likewise"——

And these are ODES, good heavens! "After the manner of Pindar," I take for granted.

Enough of Mr. Greathead. I have only to add, that I am actuated by no personal dislike; for I can say with truth, (what, indeed, I can of all the heroes of the Mæviad,) that I have not the slightest knowledge of him. But the daws have strutted too long: it is more than time to strip them of their adventitious plumage; and if, in doing it, I should pluck off any feathers which originally belonged to them, they have only to thank their own vanity, or the forwardness of their injudicious friends.

* And more, perhaps, than Jerningham can do. No; Mr. Jerningham has lately written a tragedy and a farce; both extremely well spoken of by the reviewers, and both —gone to the "pastry-cooks."

I once thought that I understood something of faces, but I must read my Lavater again, I find. That a gentleman with the "physiognomie d'un mouton qui rêve" should suddenly start forth a new Tyrtæus, and pour a dreadful note through a cracked war-trump, amazes me.—Well, FRONTI NULLA FIDES shall henceforth be my motto.

In the pride of his heart Mr. Jerningham has taken the instrument from his mouth, and given me a smart stroke on the head with it: this is fair,

"Cædimus, inque vicem præbemus crura sagittis."

He has also levelled a deadly blow at a gentleman who, most assuredly, never dreamed of having our Drawcansir for an antagonist: this, though not quite so fair, is not altogether unprecedented;

"An eagle, towering in his pride of place,
Was by a mousing owl hawk'd at!"

There is a trait of scholarship in Mr. Jerningham's last poem, which should not be overlooked; more especially as it is the only one. Having occasion to mention "Agave and her *infant*,"[1] he subjoins the following explanation "Alluding to Agave, who in a delirium slew her *child*. See Ovid." No, I'll take Mr. Jerningham's word for it, though I had twenty Ovids before me.

* When this was written, which was while the Opera House was used for plays, the "learned justices" here enumerated, together with the others *not yet taken*, were accustomed to flock nightly to this BENCH, from which the unlettered vulgar were always scornfully repelled with an *ουδεις αφυσος*.

I have not heard whether the New Theatre be possessed of such a one; I think not; for critics are no more gregarious than spiders. Like them, they *might* do great things in concert; but, like them too, they usually end with devouring one another.

† Arno.—The dreams of this gentleman, which continue to make their appearance in the Oracle, under the name of Thespis, are not always of Nereids. He dreamed one, night that Mr. Pope played Posthumus with less spirit than usual, and it was Mr. Johnston singing Grammachree! Another night, that the Mourning Bride might have been better cast, and lo! it was the Comedy of Errors that was played.

This was rather unfortunate; but the reader must have already reflected, from the strange occupations of these "self-created judges," (here faithfully described,) that sleeping or waking, they were attentive to every thing but what passed before their eyes.

‡ Pauper videri cotta vult, et est pauper!

§ Mr. Parsons' note on this passage is—"Did you BELIEVE? could you possibly be so ignorant?"—Even so. But I humbly conceive that Mr. Mason, who seduced my unsuspecting youth, is equally culpable with myself

1 "These lines (Mr. Parsons says) are not Greathead's." But they are published with his name in the Album; which, exclusive of their stupidity, is sufficient authority for me. If our doughty critic chooses to take them to himself, I can have no objection; for, after all, pugna est de paupere regno;

1 See his "Peace, Ignominy, and Destruction," p. 15.

Not so, when Edgar,* made, in some strange plot,
The hero of a day that knew him not,
Struts from the field his enemy had won,
On stately stilts, exulting and undone!
Here I can only pity, only smile;
Where not one grace, one elegance of style,
Redeems th' audacious folly of the rest.
Truth sacrificed, and history made a jest.
Let this, ye Cruscans,† if your heads be made
"Of penetrable stuff," let this persuade
Your husky tribes their wanderings to restrain,
Nor hope what taste and Mason fail'd to gain.
Then let your style be brief, your meaning clear,
Nor, like Lorenzo,‡ tire the labouring ear
With a wild waste of words; sound without sense,
And all the florid glare of impotence.
Still with your characters your language change,
From grave to gay, as nature dictates, range;
Now droop in all the plaintiveness of wo,
Now in glad numbers light and airy flow;
Now shake the stage with guilt's alarming tone,
And make the aching bosom all your own;
Now———But I sing in vain; from first to last
Your joy is fustian, and your grief bombast:
Rhetoric has banish'd reason; kings and queens
Vent in hyberboles their royal spleens;
Guardsmen in metaphors express their hopes,
And "maidens in white linen," howl in tropes.
Reverent I greet the bards of other days:
Blest be your names, and lasting be your praise!
From nature's varied face ye widely drew,
And following ages own'd the copies true.
O! had our sots, who rhyme with headlong haste,
And think reflection still a foe to taste,
But brains your pregnant scenes to understand,
And give us truth, though but at second hand,
'Twere something yet! But no, they never look—
Shall souls of fire, they cry, a tutor brook?
Forbid it, inspiration! Thus your pain
Is void, and ye have lived, for them, in vain;
In vain for Crusca and his skipping school,
Cobbe, Reynolds, Andrews, and that nobler fool;
Who naught but Laura's* tinkling trash admire,
And the mad jangle of Matilda's* lyre.

There is also one William Shakspeare, who, I am ready to take my oath, is a notorious offender in this way; having led not only me, but divers others, into the most gross and ridiculous errors; making us laugh, cry, &c., for persons whom we ought to have known to be mere nonentities.

But Mr. Parsons has happily obtained an obdurate and impassable head: let him, therefore, "give God thanks, and make no boast of it." He is a wise and a wary reader, and follows the most judicious *Bottom*, who having, like himself, too much sagacity to be imposed upon by a feigned character, was laudably anxious to undeceive the world. "No," quoth he, "let him thrust his face through the lion's neck, and say, if you think I come hither as a lion, it were pity of my life——no, I am no such thing: I am a man, as other men are;—and then, indeed, let him name his name, and tell them plainly he is SNUG the joiner."

* Edgar Atheling.—See the "Battle of Hastings," a tragedy by Mr. Cumberland.

† Ye Cruscans!

O voi, che della *Crusca* vi chiamate,
Come quel che farina non avendo
Di *quella* a tutto pasto vi saziate!

‡ Lorenzo.——"A lamentable tragedy by Della Crusca, mixed full of pleasant mirth." The house laughed a-good at it, but Mr. Harris cried sadly. Here is another instance, if it were wanted, of the bad effects of prostitute applause. Could Mr. Harris, if his mind had not been previously warped by the eternal puffs of Bell and his followers, have supposed, for a moment, that a knack of stringing together "hoar hills," and "rippling rills," and "red skies glare," and "thin, thin air," qualified a man for writing tragedy?

* Laura's tinkling trash, &c.—I had amassed a world of this "tinkling trash" for the behoof of the reader, but having, fortunately for him, mislaid it, and not being disposed to undertake again the drudgery of wading through Mr. Bell's collections, I can only offer the little which occurs to my memory. Of this little, the merits must be principally shared among Mrs. Robinson, Mrs. Cowley, and Mr. Merry;

"Et vos, O Lauri, carpam, et te, proxima Myrte,
Sic positæ quoniam suaves miscetis odores."

"—O let me fly
Where Greenland darkness drinks the beamy sky;"

"But O! beware how thou dost fling
Thy *hot pulse* o'er the quivering string!"

"Pluck from their dark and rocky bed
The yelling demons of the deep,
Who, soaring o'er the comet's head,
The bosom of the welkin sweep."

"And when the jolly full moon laughs,
In her clear zenith to behold
The envious stars withdraw their gleams of gold,
'Tis to thy health she stooping quaffs
The sapphire cup that fairy zephyrs bring!"

On considering these and the preceding lines, I was tempted to indulge a wish that the Blue Stocking club would issue an immediate order to Mr. Bell to examine the cells of Bedlam. Certainly, if an accurate transcript were made from the "darkened walls" once or twice a quarter, an Album might be presented to the fashionable world, more poetical, and far more rational, than any which they have lately honoured with their applause.

"Why does thy stream of *sweetest* song
Foam on the mountain's murmuring side,
Or through the vocal covert glide?

"I heard a tuneful phantom in the wind,
I saw it watch the rising moon afar,
Wet with the weeping of the twilight star.——

"The pilgrim who with *tearful* eye shall view
The moon's wan lustre in the midnight dew,
Soothed by her light———"

This is an admirable reason for his crying!—but what Un sot trouve toujours un plus sot qui l'admire. Mr Bell is in raptures with it, and very properly recommends it to the admiration of Della Crusca, as being the production of "a congenial soul." There is also another judicious critic, one Dr. Tasker, (should it not be Dr. Trusler?) who has given a decided opinion, it seems, in favour of the writer's abilities; which may console her for the sneers of fifty such envious scribblers as the author of the Baviad.

And first you shall hear what Mrs. Robinson says of Dr. Tasker.——"The *learned* and *ingenious* Dr. Tasker, in the third volume of his *elegant* and *critical* works, has PRONOUNCED some of Mrs. Robinson's poems superior to those of Milton on the same subject, particularly her Address to the Nightingale. The praises of so *competent* and *disinterested* a judge, STAMPS celebrity that neither time nor envy can obliterate."—*Oracle*, Dec. 10.

Next you shall hear what Dr. Tasker says of Mrs. Robinson.

"In ancient Greece by two fair forms were seen
Wisdom's stern goddess, and Love's smiling queen;
Pallas presided over arms and arts,
And Venus over gentle virgins' hearts;
But now both powers in one fair form combine,
And in famed Robinson united shine."

"This lady, equally celebrated in the polite and literary circles, has honoured Mr."——Lo! the Dr. has dwindled

But Crusca still has merit, and may claim
No humble station in the ranks of fame;
He taught us first the language to refine,
To crowd with beauties every sparkling line,
Old phrases with new meanings to dispense,
Amuse the fancy,—and confound the sense!
O, void of reason! Is it thus you praise
A linsey-woolsey song, framed with such ease,
Such vacancy of thought, that every line
Might tempt e'en Vaughan to whisper, "This is mine!"
Vaughan! well remember'd. He, good man, complains
That I affix'd his name to Edwin's* strains:

'Tis just—for what three kindred souls have done,
Is most unfairly charged, I ween, on one.
Pardon, my learned friend! With watery eyes,
Thy growing fame to truth I sacrifice;
To many a sonnet call thy claims in doubt,
And, "at one entrance, shut thy glory out."
Yet *mewl* thou still. Shall my lord's dormouse die,
And low in dust without a requiem lie?
No, *mewl* thou still: and, while thy d—s join
Their melancholy symphonies to thine,
My righteous verse shall labour to restore
The well earned fame it robb'd them of before:
Edwin, whatever elegies of wo
Drop from the gentle mouths of Vaughan and Co.,
To this or that, henceforth no more confined,
Shall, like a surname, take in all the kind.
Right! cry the brethren. When the heaven-born-muse
Shames her descent, and, for low, earthly views,
Hums o'er a beetle's bier the doleful stave,
Or sits chief mourner at a May-bug's grave,
Satire should scourge her from the vile employ,
And bring her back to friendship, love, and joy.
But spare Cesario,* Carlos,† Adelaide,‡
The truest poetess! the truest maid!

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into plain Mr.——"has honoured Mr. Tasker's poetical and other productions with high and distinguished marks of her approbation."—*Gazetteer*, Jan. 16.

Why this is the very song of Prodicus, ἡ χειρ την χειρα κνιζει——for the rest, I trust my readers will readily subscribe to the praises which these most "competent and disinterested judges" have reciprocally lavished upon each other.

But allons!

"——My hand, at night's fell noon,
Plucks from the tresses of the moon
A sparkling crown of silvery hue,
Besprent with studs of frozen dew!"

"On the dizzy *height* inclined,
I *listen* to the passing *wind*,
That loves my *mournful song* to seize,
And bears it to the *mountain breeze*."

Here we find that listening to the wind, and singing to it, are one and the same thing; and that—but I can make nothing of the rest.

"When in black obtrusive clouds
The chilly moon her pale cheek shrouds,
I mark the twinkling starry train
Exulting glitter in her wane,
And proudly gleam their borrow'd light
To gem the sombre dome of night."

What an admirable observer of nature is this great poetess! The stars *twinkling* in a cloudy night, and *gleaming* their *borrowed* lustre, is superlatively good. I had almost forgot to observe that these and the preceding lines are taken from the Ode to the Nightingale, so superior, in the reverend judgment of Dr. Tasker, to one of a Mr. John Milton on the same subject.

"——The lightning's rays
Leap through the night's scarce pervious gloom,
Attracted by"——(what! for a ducat?)
"Attracted by the rose's bloom!"
"Let but thy lyre impatient seize
Departing twilight's filmy breeze,
That winds th' enchanting chords among
In lingering labyrinths of song."——
"See in the clouds its mast the proud bark laves,
Scorning the aid of ocean's humble waves!"

From this it appears, that Mrs. Cowley imagines proud barks to float on their masts. It is proper to mention that the vessel takes such extraordinary state on herself, because she carries Della Crusca!

"——From a young grove's shade,
Whose infant boughs but mock th' expecting glade!
Sweet sounds stole forth, upborne upon the gale,
Press'd through the air, and broke upon the vale;
Then silent walk'd the breezes of the plain,
Or soar'd aloft, and seized the hovering strain."—
Della Crusca.

The force of folly can no farther go!

* Edwin's strains.—If the reader will turn to the conclusion of the Baviad, he will find a delicious Επιταφιον on a tame mouse, by this gentleman. As it seemed to give universal satisfaction, I embrace the opportunity of laying before the public another effusion of the same exquisite pen.

It will be found, I flatter myself, not less beautiful than the former; and fully prove that the author, though ostensibly devoted to elegy, can, on a proper occasion, assume an air of gayety, and be "profound" with ease, and instructive with elegance.

Εδουιν προλογιζει.

"*On the circumstance of a mastiff's running furiously (sad dog!) toward two young ladies, and, upon coming up to them, becoming instantly gentle (good dog!) and tractable.*"

Tantum ad narrandum argumentum est benignitas!

"When Orpheus took his *lyre* to hell,
To fetch his rib away,
On that same thing he pleased so well,
That devils learn'd to play.

"Besides, in books it may be read,
That whilst he swept the *lute*,
Grim Cerberus hung his savage head,
And lay astoundly mute.

"But here we can with justice say,
That nature rivals art;
He *sang* a mastiff's rage away,
You look'd one through the heart."
Fecit Edwin.

* Cesario. In the Baviad are a few stanzas of a most delectable ode to an owl. They were ascribed to Arno; nor was I conscious of any mistake, till I received a polite note from that gentleman, assuring me that he was not only not the author of them, but (horresco referens) that he thought them "execrable." Mr. Bell, on the other hand, affirms them to be "admirable."

"Who shall decide when doctors disagree?"

Be this as it may, I am happy to say that I have discovered the true author. They were written by Cesario; and as I rather incline to Mr. Bell, pace Arno dixerim, I shall make no scruple of laying the remainder of this "mellifluous piece" before the reader.

"Slighted love the *soul* subduing,
Silent sorrow *chills* the *heart*,
Treacherous fancy still *pursuing*,
Still *repels* the *poison'd* dart.

† See note †, 1st col. p. 178. ‡ See note ‡, ib

Lorenzo,§ Reuben,‖ spare: far be the thought
Of interest, far from them. Unbribed, unbought,

"*Soothing* those fond *dreams* of pleasure,
Pictured in the *glowing* breast,
Lavish of her sweetest *treasure*,
Anxious *fear* is *charm'd* to *rest*.——
"Fearless o'er the whiten'd *billows*,
Proudly rise, sweet bird of night,
Safely through the bending *willows*,
Gently wing thy *aery* flight."—*Cesario.*

Though I flatter myself that I have good sense and taste enough to see and admire the peculiar beauties of this ode, yet a regard for truth obliges me to declare that they are not original. They are taken (with improvements, I confess) from a most beautiful "Song by a person of quality," in Pope's Miscellanies. This, though it detracts a little from Cesario's inventive powers, still leaves him the praise (no mean one) of having gone beyond that great poet, in what he probably considered as the ne plus ultra of ingenuity.

Venimus ad summum fortunæ! Mr. Greathead equals Shakspeare, Mrs. Robinson surpasses Milton, and Cesario outdoes Pope in that very performance which he vainly imagined so complete as to take away all desire of imitating, all possibility of excelling it!

"O favour'd clime! O happy age!"

† Carlos.—I have nothing of this gentleman (a most pertinacious scribbler in the Oracle) but the following 'sonnet;" luckily, however, it is so ineffably stupid, that 't will more than satisfy any readers but Mr. Bell's.

"ON A LADY'S PORTRAIT.

"Oft hath the poet hail'd the breath of morn,
That wakens nature with the voice of spring,
And oft, when purple summer feeds the lawn,
Hath fancy touch'd him with her procreant wing;
Full frequent has he bless'd the golden beam
Which yellow autumn glowing spreads around,
And though pale winter press'd a paly gleam,
Fresh in his breast was young description found."

I can copy no more—Job himself would lose all patience here. Instead, therefore, of the remainder of this incomprehensible trash, I will give the reader a string of judicious observations by Mr. T. Vaughan: "Bruyere says, he will allow that good writers are scarce enough, but adds, and justly, that good critics are equally so: which *reminds our correspondent* also of what the Abbé Trublet *writes, speaking* of professed critics, where he *says*, if they were obliged to examine authors impartially——there would be fewer writers in *this way*. Was this to be the liberal practice adopted by our modern critics, we should not see a *Baviad*—falling upon men and things that are much above his capacity, and seemingly for no other reason than because they are so."

A Daniel come to judgment, yea, a Daniel! This is in truth the reason; and when Mr. Vaughan and his coadjutors condescend to humble themselves to my understanding, I will endeavour to profit by their eloquent strictures.

‡ Adelaide.—And who is Adelaide? O seri studiorum! "Not to know her, argues yourselves unknown." Hear Mr. Bell, the Longinus of newspaper writers.

"ADELAIDE.

"He who is here addressed by the first lyric writer in the kingdom, must himself endeavour to repay a debt so highly honourable, if it *can be done* by verse! This lady shall have the praise which ought to be given by the *country*, that of first discovering and drawing out the *fine powers* of Arno and Della Crusca."

"O thou, whom late I watch'd, while o'er thee hung
The orb whose glories I so oft have sung,
Beheld thee while a *shower of beam*
Made night a lovelier morning seem," &c

We might here dismiss this "first lyric writer of the

§ See note §, next col. ‖ See note ‖, ib.

They pour¶ "from their big breast's prolific zone
A proud, poetic fervour, only known

age," who, from her flippant nonsense, appears to be Mrs. Piozzi, were it not for the sake of remarking, that, whatever be the merit of "drawing out the fine powers of Arno," (which, it seems, this ungrateful country has not yet rewarded with a statue,) she must be content to share it with Julia. Hear her invocation—but first hear Mr. Bell. "A most elegant compliment, which for generous esteem has been seldom equalled, any more than the muse which inspired it."

"JULIA TO ARNO.

"Arno! where steals thy dulcet lay,
Soft as the evening's minstrel note,
Say, does it deck the rising day,
Or on the noontide breezes float?"

Mrs. Robinson (for we may as well drop the name of Julia) has been guilty of a trifling larceny here; having taken from the Baviad, without any acknowledgment, a delicious couplet, which I flattered myself would never have been seen out of that poem; but so it is, that, like Pope,

"——Write whate'er I will,
Some rising genius *sins* up to it still."

This has nettled me a little, and possibly injured the great poetess in my opinion; for I have been robbed so often of late, that I begin to think with the old economist

Ούτος αοιδων λωστος ὃς εξ εμευ οισεται ουδεν.

For the rest, this "elegant invocation" called forth a specimen of Arno's fine powers in the following *dulcet* lays.

"ARNO TO JULIA.

"Sure some dire star inimical to man,
Guides to his heart the desolating fire,
Fills with contention only his brief span,
And rouses him to murderous desire.
"There are who sagely scan the tortured world,
And tell us war is but necessity,
That millions by the Great Dispenser hurl'd,
Must suffer by the scourge, and cease to be."
Euge, Poeta!

§ Lorenzo.

Και πως εγω Σθενελου φαγοιμ' αν ρημα τι,
Εις οξος εμβαπτομενον, η λευκους αλας—

Says a hungry wight in an old comedy. But I know of no seasoning whatever, capable of making the insipid garbage of this modern Sthenelus palatable; I shall therefore spare myself the disgust of producing it.

‖ Reuben, whom I take to be Mr. Greathead in disguise, (it being this gentleman's fate, like Hercules of old, to assume the merit of all unappropriated prodigies,) introduced himself to the *World* by the following

"ADDRESS TO ANNA MATILDA.

"To thee a stranger dares address his theme,
To thee, proud mistress of Apollo's lyre,
One ray emitted from thy golden gleam,
Prompted by love, would set the world on fire!
"Adorn then love in fancy-tinctured vest,
Chameleon like, anon of various hue,
By Penseroso and Allegro dress'd,
Such genius claim'd when she Idalia drew."—
Anna Matilda, what could she less! found
"This resuscitating praise
Breathe life upon her dying lays,"

like "the daisy which spreads her bloom to the moist evening!" and accordingly produced a matchless "adornment of love," to the great contentment of the gentle Reuben.

"But, bard polite, how hard the task
Which with *such elegance* you ask!"

Who would have imagined that these lines, the simpl

¶ See note ¶, 1st col. p. 179.

To souls like theirs?" as Anna's youth inspires,
As Laura's graces kindle fierce desires,
As Henriet——For heaven's sake, not so fast.
I too, my masters, ere my teeth were cast,
Had learn'd, by rote, to rave of Della's charms,
To die of transports found in Chloe's arms,
Coy Daphne with obstreperous plaints to woo,
And curse the cruelty of—God knows who.
When Horbus, (not the power that bade thee write,
For he, dear Dapper! was a lying sprite,)
One morn, when dreams are true, approach'd my side,
And, frowning on my tuneful lumber, cried,
"Lo! every corner with soft sonnets cramm'd,
And high-born odes, 'works damn'd, or to be damn'd!'
And is *thy* active folly adding more
To this most worthless, most superfluous store?
O impotence of toil! thou mightst as well
Give sense to Este, or modesty to Bell.
Forbear, forbear:—What though thou canst not claim
The sacred honours of a POET'S name,
Due to the few alone, whom I inspire
With lofty rapture, with ethereal fire!
Yet mayst thou arrogate the humble praise
Of reason's bard, if, in thy future lays,
Plain sense and truth, and surely these are thine,
Correct thy wanderings, and thy flights confine."
Here ceased the god and vanish'd. Forth I sprang,
While in my ear the voice divine yet rang,
Seized every rag and scrap, approach'd the fire,
And saw whole Albums in the blaze expire.
Then shame ensued, and vain regret, t' have spent
So many hours (hours which I yet lament)
In thriftless industry; and year on year
Inglorious roll'd, while diffidence and fear
Repress'd my voice—unheard till Anna came,
What! throbb'st thou YET, my bosom, at the name?
And chased the oppressive doubts which round me clung,
And fired my breast, and loosen'd all my tongue.
E'en then (admire, John Bell! my simple ways)
No heaven and hell danced madly through my lays
No oaths, no execrations; all was plain:
Yet, trust me, while thy "ever-jingling train"
Chime their sonorous woes with frigid art,
And shock the reason, and revolt the heart,
My hopes and fears, in nature's language dress'd,
Awaken'd love in many a gentle breast.
How oft, O Dart! what time the faithful pair
Walk'd forth, the fragrant hour of eve to share,
On thy romantic banks have my wild strains,*
Not yet forgot amid my native plains,

---

tribute of gratitude to genius, should nearly occasion "a perdition of souls?" Yet so it was. They unfortunately roused the jealousy of Della Crusca "on the sportive banks of the Rhone." One luckless evening

"When twilight on the western edge
Had twined his hoary hair with sabling sedge,"

as he was "weeping" (for, like Master Stephen, these good creatures think it necessary to be always melancholy) at the tomb of Laura, he started, as well he might, at the accursed name of Reuben.

"Hark! (quoth he,)
What cruel sounds are these
Which float upon the languid breeze,
Which fill my soul with jealous fear?
Ha! *Reuben* is the name I hear.
For him my *faithless* Anna," &c.

It pains me to add, that the cold-blooded Bell has destroyed this beautiful fancy-scene with one stroke of his clownish pen. In a note on the above verses, Album, p. 134, he officiously informs us that Della Crusca knew "nothing of his rival, till he *read*"—detested word!—"his sonnet in the Oracle." O Bell! Bell! is it thus thou humblest the strains of the sublime? Surely we may say of thee, what was not ill said of one of thy sisters,

Sed tu insulsa male et molesta vives,
Per quam non licet esse negligentem.

¶ They pour, &c.

"——I love so well
Thy soul's deep tone, thy thought's high swell,
Thy proud, poetic fervour, known
But in thy breast's prolific zone."—*Della Crusca.*

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* Mr. Parsons is extremely angry at my "ostentatious intrusion" of the "Otium Divos" into the notes on this poem. What could I do? I ever disliked publishing my little modicums on loose pages—but I shall grow wiser by his example! and, indeed, am even now composing "one riddle, two rebusses, and one acrostic to a babe at nurse,"† which will be set forth with all convenient speed. Meanwhile I am tempted to offend once more, and subjoin the only three of my "wild strains" that now live in my recollection. I can assure Mr. Parsons that they were written on the occasions they profess to be—and the last of them at a time when I had no idea of surviving to provoke his indignation:

"——Sed Cynaræ breves
Annos fata dederunt, me
Servatura diu.

TO A TUFT OF EARLY VIOLETS.

Sweet flowers! that, from your humble beds,
Thus prematurely dare to rise,
And trust your unprotected heads
To cold Aquarius' watery skies;

Retire, retire! *These* tepid airs
Are not the genial brood of May;
That sun with light malignant glares,
And flatters only to betray.

Stern winter's reign is not yet past——
Lo! while your buds prepare to blow,
On icy pinions comes the blast,
And nips your root, and lays you low.

Alas, for such ungentle doom!
But I will shield you; and supply
A kindlier soil on which to bloom,
A nobler bed on which to die.

Come then—ere yet the morning ray
Has drunk the dew that gems your crest,
And drawn your balmiest sweets away;
O come, and grace my Anna's breast.

Ye droop, fond flowers! but, did ye know
What worth, what goodness there reside,
Your cups with liveliest tints would glow,
And spread their leaves with conscious pride.

For there has liberal nature join'd
Her riches to the stores of art,
And added to the vigorous mind
The soft, the sympathizing heart.

Come then—ere yet the morning ray
Has drunk the dew that gems your crest.
And drawn your balmiest sweets away;
O come, and grace my Anna's breast.

O! I should think,—that fragrant bed
Might I but hope with you to share,—
Years of anxiety repaid,
By one short hour of transport there.

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† See "one epigram, two sonnets, and one ode to a boy at school, by W. Parsons, Esq." The "one ode" was expressly written to show the folly and absurdity of Gray's ode to Eton College, which the "boy at school" was very properly called to attest. What the "one epigram" and the "two sonnets" were written for nobody knows.

While THOU hast sweetly gurgled down the vale,
Fill'd up the pause of love's delightful tale!
While, ever as she read, the conscious maid,
By faltering voice and downcast looks betray'd,
Would blushing on her lover's neck recline,
And with her finger—point the tenderest line.
But these are past: and, mark me, Laura! time,
Which made what then was venial, now a crime,
To more befitting cares my thoughts confined,
And drove, with youth, its follies from my mind,
Since this, while Merry and his nurslings die,
Thrill'd by the liquid peril of an eye;*
Gasp at a recollection, and drop down
At the long streamy lightning of a frown;
I soothe, as humour prompts, my idle vein,
In frolic verse, that cannot hope to gain
Admission to the Album, or be seen
In L——'s Review, or Urban's Magazine.
O, for thy spirit, Pope! Yet why, my lays,
Which wake no envy, and invite no praise,

More bless'd than me, thus shall ye live
Your little day; and, when ye die,
Sweet flowers! the grateful muse shall give
A verse; the sorrowing maid, a sigh.

While I, alas! no distant date,
Mix with the dust from whence I came,
Without a friend to weep my fate,
Without a stone to tell my name.

GREENWICH HILL. *First of May.*

Though clouds obscured the morning hour,
And keen and eager blew the blast,
And drizzling fell the cheerless shower,
As, doubtful, to the skiff we pass'd;

All soon, propitious to our prayer,
Gave promise of a brighter day:
The clouds dispersed in purer air,
The blast in zephyrs died away.

So have we, love, a day enjoy'd,
On which we both,—and yet, who knows?—
May dwell with pleasure unalloy'd
And dread no thorn beneath the rose.

How pleasant, from that dome-crown'd hill
To view the varied scene below,
Woods, ships, and spires, and, lovelier still,
The circling Thames' majestic flow!

How sweet, as indolently laid,
We overhung that long-drawn dale,
To watch the checker'd light and shade
That glanced upon the shifting sail!

And when the shadow's rapid growth
Proclaim'd the noontide hour expired,
And, though unwearied, 'nothing loath,'
We to our simple meal retired;

The sportive wile, the blameless jest,
The careless mind's spontaneous flow,
Gave to that simple meal a zest
Which richer tables may not know.—

The babe that, on the mother's breast,
Has toy'd and wanton'd for a while,
And, sinking to unconscious rest,
Looks up to catch a parting smile,

Feels less assured than thou, dear maid
When, ere thy ruby lips could part,
(As close to mine thy cheek was laid,)
Thine eyes had open'd all thy heart.

Then, then I mark'd the chasten'd joy
That lightly o'er thy features stole,
From vows repaid, (my sweet employ,)
From truth, from innocence of soul:

While every word dropp'd on my ear,
So soft, (and yet it seems to thrill,)
So sweet, that 'twas a heaven to hear,
And e'en thy pause had music still.—

And O! how like a fairy dream,
To gaze in silence on the tide,
While soft and warm the sunny gleam
Slept on the glassy surface wide!

And many a thought of fancy bred,
Wild, soothing, tender, undefined,
Play'd lightly round the heart, and shed
Delicious languor o'er the mind.

So hours like moments wing'd their flight,
Till now the boatman, on the shore,
Impatient of the waning light,
Recall'd us by the dashing oar.

Well, Anna,—many days like this
I cannot, must not hope to share;
For I have found an hour of bliss
Still follow'd by an age of care

Yet oft, when memory intervenes——
But you, dear maid, be happy still,
Nor e'er regret, 'mid fairer scenes,
The day we pass'd on Greenwich Hill.

THE GRAVE OF ANNA.

I wish I was where Anna lies,
For I am sick of lingering here;
And every hour affection cries,
Go, and partake her humble bier.

I wish I could! For when she died,
I lost my all; and life has proved,
Since that sad hour, a dreary void,
A waste unlovely and unloved.—

But who, when I am turn'd to clay,
Shall duly to her grave repair,
And pluck the ragged moss away
And weeds that have 'no business there?'

And who, with pious hand, shall bring
The flowers she cherish'd, snow-drops cold,
And violets that unheeded spring,
To scatter o'er her hallow'd mould?

And who, while memory loves to dwell
Upon her name for ever dear,
Shall feel his heart with passion swell,
And pour the bitter, bitter tear?

I *did it*: and, would fate allow,
Should visit still, should still deplore—
But health and strength have left me now,
And I, alas! can weep no more.

Take then, sweet maid, this simple strain,
The last I offer at thy shrine;
Thy grave must then undeck'd remain,
And all thy memory fade with mine.

And can thy soft, persuasive look,
Thy voice, that might with music vie,
Thy air, that every gazer took,
Thy matchless eloquence of eye;

Thy spirits, frolicsome as good,
Thy courage, by no ills dismay'd,
Thy patience, by no wrongs subdued,
Thy gay good-humour—Can they 'fade?'

Perhaps—but sorrow dims my eye:
Cold turf, which I no more must view,
Dear name, which I no more must sigh,
A long, a last, a sad adieu!

* Thrill'd, &c.

"Bid the streamy lightnings fly
In liquid peril from thy eye."—*Della Crusca.*

"Ne'er shalt thou know to sigh,
Or on a soft idea die,
Ne'er on a recollection grasp
Thy arms."—Ohe! jam satis est.—*Anna Matilda.*

Half creeping and half flying, yet suffice
To stagger impudence and ruffle vice.
An hour may come, so I delight to dream,
When slowly wandering by the sacred stream,
Majestic Thames! I leave the world behind,
And give to fancy all th' enraptured mind:
An hour may come, when I shall strike the lyre
To nobler themes; then, then the chords inspire
With thy own harmony, most sweet, most strong,
And guide my hand through all the maze of song!
Till then, enough for me, in such rude strains
As mother-wit can give, and those small pains
A vacant hour allows, to range the town,
And hunt the clamorous brood of folly down;
Force every head, in Este's despite, to wear
The cap and bells by nature planted there;
Muffle the rattle, seize the slavering sholes,
And drive them, scourged and whimpering, to their holes.

Burgoyne,* perhaps, unchill'd by creeping age,
May yet arise and vindicate the stage;
The reign of nature and of sense restore,
And be—whatever Terence was before.
And you, too, whole Menander![†] who combine
With his pure language, and his flowing line,
The SOUL of comedy, may steal an hour
From the foul chase of still escaping power;
The poet and the sage again unite,
And sweetly blend instruction with delight.

And yet Elfrida's bard, though time has shed
The snow of age too deeply round his head,
Feels the kind warmth, the fervour which inspired
His youthful breast, still glow uncheck'd, untired:
And yet though, like the bird of eve, his song
"Fit audience finds not" in the giddy throng,
The notes, though artful, wild, though numerous, chaste,
Fill with delight the sober ear of taste.

But these, and more, I could with honour name,
Too proud to stoop, like me, to vulgar game,
Subjects more worthy of their daring choose,
And leave at large th' abortions of the muse.
Proud of their privilege, the innumerous spawn,
From bogs and fens, the mire of Pindus, drawn,
New vigour feel, new confidence assume,
And swarm, like Pharaoh's frogs, in every room.

Sick of th' eternal croaks, which, ever near,
Beat like the death-watch on my tortured ear;
And sure, too sure, that many a genuine child
Of truth and nature check'd his wood-notes wild,[‡]
(Dear to the feeling heart,) in doubt to win
The vacant wanderer 'mid the unceasing din
Of this hoarse rout; I seized at length the wand;
Resolved, though small my skill, though weak my hand,
The mischief, in its progress, to arrest,
And exorcise the soil of such a pest.

HENCE! IN THE NAME—I scarce had spoke, when lo!
Reams of outrageous sonnets,* thick as snow,

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* Burgoyne.—See note *, 2d col. p. 174.

† And you, too, whole Menander, &c.—O spem fallacem! Our Menander has since "stolen an hour" (it would be injustice to suppose it more) from public pursuits, and prostituted it to the reproduction of a German scoterkin.

‡ Check'd his wood-notes wild.—Σιωπησαντων κολοιων, ασσονται κυκνοι. But this is better illustrated in a most elegant fable of Lessing, to which I despair of doing justice in a translation.

"Du zürnest, Liebling der Musen," &c. &c.

Thou art troubled, darling of the Muses, thou art troubled at the clamorous swarms of insects which infest Parnassus. O hear from me what once the nightingale heard from the shepherd.

Sing then, said he to the silent songstress, one lovely evening in the spring, sing then, sweet nightingale! Alas! said the nightingale, the frogs croak so loud, that I have not all desire to sing: dost thou not hear them? I do, indeed, replied the shepherd; but thy silence alone is the cause of it.

"There's comfort yet!"

* Reams of outrageous sonnets.—Of these I have collected a very reasonable quantity, which I purpose to prefix to some future edition of the Mæviad, under the classic head of

INSIGNIUM VIRORUM
ALIQUOT TESTIMONIA
QUI
BAV: ET MÆV: INCLYTISS: AUCTORIS
MEMINERUNT.

Meanwhile I shall present the reader with the first two which occur, as a specimen of the collection.

SONNET I.

"*To the anonymous author of the Baviad, occasioned by his scurrilous and most unmerited attack on Mr. Weston.*

"*Demon of darkness!* whose'er thou art,
That darest assume the brighter angel's form,
And o'er the peaceful vale impel the storm,
With many a sigh to rend the *honest* heart,
Force from th' *unconscious* eye the tear to start,
And with just *pride* th' indignant bosom warm;
Avaunt! to where unnumber'd spirits swarm,
Foul and malignant as thyself, depart.
Genius of Pope, descend, ye servile crew
Of imitators vile, intrude not!!! I appeal
To thee, and thee alone, from outrage base;
Tell me, though fair the forms his fancy drew,
Shouldst thou the secrets of his heart reveal,
Would fame his memory crown, or cover with dis grace?

J. M.—*Gent. Mag.* Aug. 1792.

This poor driveller, who is stupid enough to be Weston's admirer, and malignant enough to be his friend, I take to be one Morley;[1] whom I now and then observe, in the

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1 I was right. Mr. Morley, who, I understand, is a clergyman, and who, like Mr. Parsons, exults in the idea of having first attacked me, has since published a "Tale," the wit, or rather dulness of which, if I recollect right, consists in my being disappointed of a living.

Here follow a few of the introductory lines, which for poetry and pleasantry can only be exceeded by those of Mr. Parsons.

"What if a little once I did abuse thee?
Worse than thou hadst deserved I could not use thee:
For when I spied thy satyr's cloven foot,
'Tis very true I took thee for a brute;
And, marking more attentively thy manners,
I since have wish'd thy hide were at the tanner's.
But if a man thou art, as some suppose,
O! how my fingers itch to pull thy nose!
As pleased as Punch, I'd hold it in my gripe,
Till Parkinson had stuff'd thee for a snipe!!!"

It is rather singular that this still-born lump of insipidity should be introduced to the bookseller under the auspices of Dr. Parr. If that respectable name was not abused on the occasion, I can only say that politics, like misery, "bring a man acquainted with strange bedfellows!"

For the rest, I will present Mr. Morley with a couple of lines, which, if he will get them construed, and seriously reflect upon, before he next puts pen to paper, may be of more service to him than all the instruction, and all the encouragement the Doctor, apparently, ever gave him.

Cur ego laborem notas esse tam pravo,
Cum stare gratis cum silentio possim!

I find, from a letter which my publisher has received from Dr. Parr, that this note (which I have left in its original state) has given him some slight degree of uneasiness.

It is satisfactory to me to reflect that this uneasiness is founded on a misapprehension. When I remarked on the "singularity of Mr. Morley's 'Tale'

Flew round my head; yet, in my cause secure,
"Pour on," I cried, "pour on, I will endure."
What! shall I shrink, because the noble train,
Whose judgment I impugn, whose taste arraign,
Alive, and trembling for their favourite's fate,
Pursue my verse with unrelenting hate?
No: save me from their PRAISE, and I can sit
Calm, unconcern'd, the butt of Andrews' wit
And Topham's sense; perversely gay can smile,
While Este, the zany, in his motley style,
Calls barbarous names; while Bell and Boaden rave,
And Vaughan, a brother blockhead's verse to save,
Toils day by day my character to draw,
And heaps upon me every thing—but law.
But do I then (abjuring every aim)
All censure slight, and all applause disclaim?
Not so: where judgment holds the rod, I bow
My humbled neck, awed by her angry brow;
Where taste and sense approve, I feel a joy
Dear to my heart, and mix'd with no alloy.
I write not to the modish herd: my days,
Spent in the tranquil shades of letter'd ease,
Ask no admiring stare from those I meet,
No loud "that's HE!" to make their passage sweet,
Pleased to steal softly by, unmark'd, unknown,
I leave the world to Holcroft, Pratt,* and Vaughan.
Of these enough. Yet may the few I love
(For who would sing in vain?) my verse approve;
Chief THOU, my friend! who from my earliest years,
Hast shared my joys, and more than shared my cares
Sure, if our fates hang on some hidden power,
And take their colour from the natal hour,
Then, IRELAND!† the same planet on us rose,
Such the strong sympathies our lives disclose!

Gent. Mag., ushering his great prototype's doggrel into notice, with an importance truly worthy of it.

SONNET II.

"To the execrable Baviad.

"*Monster of turpitude!* who seem'st inclined
Through me to pierce wth thy *impregnate* dart,
The *fine-spun nerves* of each *full-bosom'd* mind,[1]
And rock in *apathy*—the *sensive* heart,
Tremble! for lo! *my Oracle—so famed*—
Shall *ring* each morn in thy *accursed* ear
A *gridding* pang! So—when the *Grecian Mare*[2]
Enter'd the *town*, old Pyramus exclaim'd,
I see! I see!—and *hurl'd* his *lightning* spear,
While Capaneus drew back *his* head—for fear,
And *godlike*[3] Alexander—gazing round,
Unconscious of his victories—*to come*,
Approach'd the monarch, and with *sobs* profound,
Explain'd th' *impending* wrath o'er Ilium's royal dome."
J. Bell.

being introduced under the auspices of Dr. Parr," I merely alluded to a conversation which Mr. Morley himself was said to have had with his bookseller; —and I then suspected (what I now find, from the Doctor's letter, to be the case) that this respectable name (Dr. Parr's) was abused, *i. e.* introduced upon the occasion "without his consent, or even knowledge."

If my words conveyed the idea (which I now apprehend they may) that Dr. Parr himself had recommended the "Tale," it was far from my intention, and I am sorry for it. Indeed, I am sorry that his name was mentioned at all in the Maviad. It is totally out of its place; and I can only regret, that a juster estimation both of Doctor Parr and of Mr. Morley had not changed my "suspicion" of the latter into certainty, and induced me to attribute his recommendatory story to vanity, and something else not altogether so venial.

In conclusion: though Dr. Parr gives up Mr. Morley's poetry, yet he seems to think I have undervalued his other attainments—"his Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, and his vigorous and elegant prose."—Of all these I knew nothing. When "there is no occasion for such vanity, I doubt not but Mr. Morley will take care to let them appear;" meanwhile, I must be content to judge him from what I know—his sonnets and his tale. It is but fair to add, however, that the sound and salutary advice which Dr. Parr gave this poor addle-headed man (to say nothing of the tenderness with which he speaks of him) does no less honour to his friendship, than the reprobation of his poetry does to his taste.

1 Quere, full-bottomed.—*Printer's Devil.*

2 Grecian *Mare.*—This has been *hitherto*, inaccurately enough, named the Trojan *horse*; and, indeed, I myself had nearly fallen into the unscholarlike error, when my learned friend Greathead convinced me (from Pope's emendations of Virgil, under the fantastic name of Scriblerius) that the animal in question was a *mare*—She being *there* said to be fœta armis, armed with a fœtus. Let us hear no more, therefore, of the Trojan *horse.*

The patronymic *Trojan* is still more absurd. Homer expressly declares the mare to have been produced by Pallas—Palladis arte: now Pallas was a Grecian goddess, as is sufficiently manifest from her name, which is derived from πάλλω, vibro.—*J. Bell.*

3 Godlike; that is θεοειδὴς from θεὸς, God, and εἰδος, like. Vide Hom. Translators in general (I except a late one) are too inattentive to the compound epithets of this great poet. But why does Homer call Alexander godlike, when he appears, from Curtius Quintus's tedious gazette in verse, to have had one shoulder higher than the other? My friend Vaughan thinks it was purely to pay his court to him, in hopes of getting into his will, or rather *into his mistress's.* It may be so; but 'tis strange the absurdity was never noticed before.—*J. Bell.*

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* PRATT. This gentleman lately put in practice a very notable scheme. Having scribbled himself fairly out of notice, he found it expedient to retire to the continent for a few months—to provoke the inquiries of Mr. Lane's indefatigable readers.

Mark the ingratitude of the creatures! No inquiries were made, and Mr. Pratt was forgotten before he had crossed the channel. Ibi omnis effusus labor.—But what!

"The mouse that is content with one poor hole
Can never be a mouse of any soul."

Baffled in this expedient, he had recourse to another, and, while we were dreaming of nothing less, came before us in the following paragraph:

"A few days since died, at Basle in Switzerland, the ingenious Mr. Pratt. His loss will be severely felt by the literary world, as he joined to the accomplishments of the gentleman the erudition of the scholar."

This was inserted in the London papers for several days successively. The country papers, too, "yelled out like syllables of dolour." At length, while our eyes were yet wet for the irreparable loss we had sustained, came a second paragraph:

"As no event of late has caused a more general sorrow than the supposed death of the ingenious Mr. Pratt, we are happy to have it in our power to assure his numerous admirers, that he is as well as they can wish, and (what they will be delighted to hear) busied in preparing his TRAVELS for the press."

"Laud we the gods!"

† Here, on account of its connexion with the person mentioned in the text, I shall take the liberty—extremum hunc mihi concede—of inserting the following "imitation," addressed to him several years since. It was never printed, nor, as far as I know, seen by any one but himself; and I transcribe it for the press with mingled sensations of gratitude and delight, at the favourable change of circumstances which we have *both* experienced since it was written.

TO THE
REV. JOHN IRELAND.[1]

IMITATION OF HORACE. LIB. II. ODE 16.

Otium Divos rogat, &c.

When howling winds, and lowering skies,
The light, untimber'd bark surprise
Near Orkney's boisterous seas;
The trembling crew forget to swear,
And bend the knees unused to prayer,
To ask a little ease.

For ease the Turk, ferocious, prays,
For ease the barbarous Russe——for ease,
Which Falk could ne'er obtain;
Which Bedford lack'd amid his store,
And liberal Clive, with mines of ore,
Oft bade for—but in vain.

1 Now prebendary of Westminster.

Thou know'st how soon we felt this influence bland,
And sought the brook and coppice, hand in hand,
And shaped rude bows, and uncouth whistles blew,
And paper kites (a last, great effort) flew;
And, when the day was done, retired to rest,
Sleep on our eyes, and sunshine in our breast.

For not the liveried tribes which wait
Around the mansions of the great,
Can keep, my friend, aloof,
Fear, that attacks the mind by fits,
And care that, like a raven, flits
Around the lordly roof.

"O well is he!" to whom kind heaven
A decent competence has given!
Rich is the blessing sent;
He grasps not anxiously at more,
Dreads not to use his little store,
And fattens on content.

"O well is he!" for life is lost
Amid a world of passions toss'd;
Then why, dear Jack, should man,
Magnanimous ephemera! stretch
His eager views beyond the reach
Of his contracted span?

Why should he from his country run,
In hopes beneath a foreign sun
Serener hours to find?
Was never one in this wild chase,
Who changed his nature with his place,
And left himself behind.

Lo! wing'd with all the lightning's speed,
Care climbs the bark, cars mounts the steed,
An inmate of the breast:
Nor Barca's heat, nor Zembla's cold,
Can drive from that pernicious hold
The too tenacious guest.

He whom no anxious thoughts annoys,
Grateful, the *present* hour enjoys,
Nor seeks the *next* to know;
To lighten every ill he strives,
Nor ere misfortune's hand arrives,
Anticipates the blow.

Something must ever be amiss:
Man *has* his joys; but—perfect bliss—
A phantom of the brain!
We cannot all have all we want
And Chance, unask'd, to *this* may grant
What *that* has begg'd in vain.

Wolfe rush'd on death in manhood's bloom,
Paulet crept slowly to the tomb;
Here breath, *there* fame was given;
And that wise power, who weighs our lives,
By *contras* and by *pros* contrives
To keep the balance even.

To *thee* she gave two piercing eyes,
A body——just of Tydeus' size,
A judgment sound and clear;
A mind with various science fraught,
A liberal soul, a threadbare coat,
And forty pounds a year.

To *me*, one eye not over good,
Two sides that, to their cost, have stood
A ten years' hectic cough;
Aches, stitches, all the numerous ills
Which swell the devilish doctor's bills,
And sweep poor mortals off:

A coat more bare than thine, a soul
That spurns the crowd's malign control,
A fix'd contempt of wrong;
Spirits above affliction's power,
And skill to charm the lonely hour
With no inglorious song.

In riper years, again together thrown,
Our studies, as our sports before, were one.
Together we explored the stoic page
Of the Ligurian, stern though beardless sage.
Or traced th' Aquinian through the Latine road,
And trembled at the lashes he bestow'd.
Together, too, when Greece unlock'd her stores,
We roved, in thought, o'er Troy's devoted shores,
Or follow'd, while he sought his native soil,
"That old man eloquent," from toil to toil;
Lingering, with good Alcinöus, o'er the tale,
Till the east redden'd, and the stars grew pale.

So pass'd our life, till fate, severely kind,
Tore us apart, and land and sea disjoin'd,
For many a year: Now met, to part no more,
Th' ascendant power, confess'd so strong of yore,
Stronger by absence, every thought controls,
And knits, in perfect unity, our souls.

O, IRELAND! if the verse, which thus essays
To trace our lives "e'en from our boyish days,"
Delight thy ear, the world besides may rail—
I care not—at th' uninteresting tale;
I only seek, in language void of art,
To ope my breast, and pour out all my heart;
And, boastful of thy various worth, to tell
How long we loved, and, thou canst add, HOW WELL.

Thou too, MY HOPPNER!* if my wish avail'd,
Shouldst praise the strain that but for thee had fail'd

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* Since this edition was prepared for the press, the country has been deprived of this distinguished and enlightened artist, whose hard destiny it was to struggle with many difficulties through the intermediate stages of an arduous profession, and to be snatched from the world at the moment when his "greatness was a ripening," and the full reward of his labours and his genius securely within his grasp. His art, by his untimely fate, has sustained a loss which will not easily be repaired; for he was, in all respects, a very eminent man, and, while he lived, most vigorously supported by his precept, as well as by the example of his own productions, those genuine principles of taste and nature which the genius of Reynolds first implanted among us. But though Mr. Hoppner well knew how to appreciate that extraordinary person, and entertained the highest veneration for his professional powers, he was very far from his copyist; occasionally, indeed, he imitated his manner, and formed his pictures on similar principles; but what he thus borrowed he made his own with such playful ingenuity and adorned and concealed his plagiarism with so many winning and original graces, that his pardon was sealed ere his sentence could be pronounced. The prevailing fashion of the times, together with his own narrow circumstances in early life, necessarily directed his attention, almost exclusively, to the study of portrait-painting: in a different situation, the natural bent of his genius, no less than his inclinations, would probably have led him to landscape, and the rural and familiar walks of life; for when he exercised his talents upon subjects of this nature, he did it with so much ease and pleasure to himself, and was always so eminently successful, that it furnishes matter for regret, that the severe and harassing duties of his principal occupation did not allow him more frequent opportunities of indulging his fancy in the pursuit of objects so congenial with his feelings and disposition. Of his exquisite taste in landscape, the backgrounds which he occasionally introduced in his portraits will alone afford sufficient evidence, without considering the beautiful sketches in chalk, with which he was accustomed to amuse his leisure hours. These are executed with a vigour and felicity peculiar to himself, and discover a knowledge and comprehension of landscape which would do honour to a Gainsborough. Indeed, in several

Thou know'st, when indolence possess'd me all,
How oft I roused at thy inspiring call;
Burst from the siren's fascinating power,
And gave the muse thou lovest one studious hour.
Proud of thy friendship, while the voice of fame
Pursues thy merits with a loud acclaim,
I share the triumph; not unpleased to see
Our kindred destinies:—for thou, like me,
Wast thrown too soon on the world's dangerous tide,
To sink or swim, as chance might best decide.——
Me, all too weak to gain the distant land,
The waves had whelm'd, but that an outstretch'd hand
Kindly upheld, when now with fear unnerved,
And still protects the life it then preserved.
Thee, powers untried, perhaps unfelt before,
Enabled, though with pain, to reach the shore,
While West stood by, the doubtful strife to view,
Nor lent a friendly arm to help thee through.
Nor ceased the struggle there; hate, ill-suppress'd,
Her vantage took of thy ingenuous breast,

respects, there appear to have been many points of similarity between these extraordinary men, not only in particular parts of their art, but also in their conversation, disposition, and character.

In portrait, however, Mr. Hoppner was decidedly superior, and so far outstripped Gainsborough in this department of art, that it would be the highest injustice to attempt a comparison of their powers. The distinguishing characteristic of Mr. Hoppner's style is an easy and unaffected elegance, which reigns throughout all his works: his naturally refined taste appeared to have given him almost intuitively an aversion from every thing which bordered on affectation and vulgarity; and enabled him to stamp an air of gentility and fashion on the most inveterate awkwardness and deformity. Few men ever sacrificed to the graces more liberally or with greater success: at his transforming touch, harshness and asperity dimpled into smiles, age lost its furrows and its pallid hues, and swelled on the sight in all the splendour of youthful exuberance. This power of improving what was placed before him, without annihilating resemblance, obtained him a decided preference to all the artists of his day among the fairer part of fashionable society, with whom, it is probable, even Sir Joshua himself was never so great a favourite. Reynolds was too apt to be guilty of the sin of painting *all* he saw, and now and then would maliciously exaggerate any little defect, if he could thereby increase the strength of the character which he was depicting. Mr. Hoppner pursued a different plan: he painted his beauties not always exactly as they appeared, but as they wished to appear; and to those whose charms were "falling into the sear, the yellow leaf," his pictures were the most agreeable, and consequently the truest of all mirrors. The same qualities which rendered him so highly successful in his portraits of women, did not, perhaps, afford him equal advantages in those of the other sex, in which strength and character ought to take the lead of almost every other consideration; his portraits of men were generally, if the expression be allowable, too civilized and genteel to be very striking and forcible; and in his constant wish to represent the gentleman, he sometimes failed to delineate the man. To this observation, however, it must be acknowledged, that many of his best works form very splendid exceptions; and those who have viewed and attentively examined his admirable portraits of the Archbishop of York, Lord Spencer, Dr. Pitcairn, Mr. Pitt, &c., may rather feel inclined to regret that the prevailing fashion of the day should, in this instance, have produced a misapplication of his powers, than to lament their natural deficiency.

In his portraits of children he was peculiarly fortunate: he entered completely into the infantine character, and arranged his compositions of this species with that unaffected ease and playful grace which so pleasingly mark the early periods of human life. One great charm of his pictures arises from the air of negligence and facility which pervades them; their production appears to have cost no effort, and the careless boldness of his handling, equally removed from insipidity and handicraft, stamps the hand of a master upon the most trifling of his performances. His colouring is natural, chaste, and powerful, and his tones, for the most part, mellow and deep; the texture of his flesh is uniformly excellent, and his pencilling rich and full; his carnations transparent, fresh, and distinct, yet so artfully and judiciously broken, that it requires an experienced eye to detect the delicate process by which the effect is accomplished. In the flesh of his best female portraits, in particular, there is a union of airiness with substance, of lustre with refined softness, which has rarely been surpassed, except by that great original hand, which, in the formation of its "last, best work," rendered all chance of rivalship hopeless.

The absorbing quality of his principal pursuit seldom allowed Mr. Hoppner to turn his attention practically to the more elevated departments of art, yet he had a sincere respect for the noble productions of the Italian schools, and the writer of these pages still remembers with pleasure the enthusiastic delight which he evinced upon first entering the Louvre, and viewing the wonders of that magnificent collection.—Taste in the arts and elegances of life he possessed in a very uncommon degree. It formed the distinguishing feature of his character, and shone alike conspicuously, whether his talents were exercised upon music or painting, in writing or conversation. His colloquial powers, indeed, have not often been excelled; for, in his happiest moments, there was a novelty of thought, a playful brilliancy, and a boundless fertility of invention, which affixed to all he uttered the stamp of originality and genius, and delighted every hearer.—Sometimes, indeed, he indulged in a severity of sarcasm, which, to such as are unaccustomed to make allowances for the quick perceptions and irritable feelings of genius, appeared to partake somewhat too much of bitterness and asperity; possibly, when engaged in mixed society, this notion might not be altogether void of foundation; but they who were accustomed to enjoy his company under different circumstances, amid the tranquil scenes of rural retirement, when his mind was free from the little cares and fretting incidents of the world, and his character and feelings were allowed their full scope, will ever remember, with a sensation of mingled sorrow and delight, the fancy, the enthusiasm, and the sentimental tenderness, which, on such occasions, breathed throughout his discourse. His education had been neglected: such, however, was the energy and activity of his mind, that this original defect was visible only to the few who were in habits of the closest intimacy with him. He read much, and with discrimination and judgment: the best English authors were familiar to him; and there was scarcely a topic of conversation into which he could not enter with advantage, or a subject, however remote from his ordinary pursuits, which his taste could not embellish, and his knowledge illustrate.

He died on the 23d of January, 1810, of a lingering and doubtful disease, at the age of fifty-one years. In the early progress of his complaint, he did not appear to entertain the slightest idea of its fatal termination; but a few months previously to his death, it is evident, from the following affecting incident, that he was fully sensible of his approaching dissolution. Toward the close of autumn, as he was walking on the sunny side of St James's-square, which, from its warm and sheltered situation, he was in the habit of frequenting, he was met by a near relation of the writer, who, after accompanying him for a short distance, prepared to quit him. "No; don't go yet," said he, "my good fellow; stay and take another turn or two with me. I like to walk in the decline of the last summer's sun which I shall ever live to enjoy."

Where saving wisdom yet had placed no screen,
And every word, and every thought was seen,
To darken all thy life.——'Tis past: more bright,
Through the disparting gloom, thou strikest the sight;
While baffled malice hastes thy powers to own,
And wonders at the worth so long unknown!
I too, whose voice no claims but truth's e'er moved,
Who long have seen thy merits, long have loved,
Yet loved in silence, lest the rout should say,
Too partial friendship tuned th' applausive lay,
Now, now that all conspire thy name to raise,
May join the shout of unsuspected praise.
Go then, since the long struggle now is o'er,
And envy can obstruct thy fame no more,
With ardent hand thy magic toil pursue,
And pour fresh wonders on the raptured view.—
One SUN is set, one GLORIOUS SUN, whose rays
Long gladden'd Britain with no common blaze:
O mayst THOU soon (for clouds begin to rise)
Assert his station in the eastern skies,
Glow with his fires, and give the world to see
Another REYNOLDS risen, MY FRIEND, in THEE!
But whither roves the muse? I but design'd
To note the few whose praise delights my mind;
But friendship's power has drawn the verse astray,
Wide from its aim, a long but flowery way.
Yet one remains, ONE NAME for ever dear,
With whom, conversing many a happy year,
I mark'd with secret joy the opening bloom
Of virtue, prescient of the fruits to come,
Truth, honour, rectitude.——O! while thy breast,
My BELGRAVE! of its every wish possess'd,
Swells with its recent transports, recent fears,
And tenderest titles strike yet charm thy ears,
Say, wilt thou from thy feelings pause a while,
To view my humble labours with a smile?
Thou wilt: for still 'tis thy delight to praise,
And still thy fond applause has crown'd my lays.
Here then I rest; soothed with the hope to prove
The approbation of "the few I love,"
Join'd (for ambitious thoughts will sometimes rise)
To the kind sufferance of the good and wise.
Thus happy,—I can leave, with tranquil breast,
Fashion's loud praise to Laura and the rest,
Who rhyme and rattle, innocent of thought,
Nor know that nothing can proceed from naught.
Thus happy,—I can view, unruffled, Miles
Twist into anlay-foot doggrel all St. Giles,
Edwin spi_ paragraphs with Vaughan's whole skill
Este, rapt in nonsense, gnaw his gray goose quill,
Merry in dithyrambics rave his wrongs,
And Weston, foaming from Pope's odious songs,
"Much injured Weston," vent in odes his grief,
And fly to Urban for a short relief.

ROBERT BURNS

Robert Burns, the son of William Burnes, or Burness, was born on the 25th of January, 1759, in a clay-built cottage, about two miles to the south of the town of Ayr, in Scotland. His father, who was a gardener and small farmer, appears to have been a man highly and deservedly respected, and Burns' description of him as "the saint, the father, and the husband," of the Cotter's Saturday Night, attests the affectionate reverence with which he regarded him. At the age of six years, Robert was sent to a small school at Alloway Miln, then superintended by a teacher named Campbell; but who, retiring shortly after, was succeeded by a Mr. John Murdoch. Under the tuition of this gentleman, the subject of our memoir made rapid progress in reading, spelling, and writing; and though, to use his own words, "it cost the schoolmaster some thrashings," he soon became an excellent English scholar. A love of reading and a thirst for general knowledge were observable at an early age; and before he had attained his seventeenth year, he had read Salmon's and Guthrie's Geographical Grammars, the Lives of Hannibal and Wallace, The Spectator, Pope's Works, some of Shakspeare's Plays, Tull and Dickson on Agriculture, Tooke's Pantheon, Locke's Essay on the Understanding, Stackhouse's History of the Bible, The British Gardener's Directory, Boyle's Lectures, Allan Ramsay's Works, Taylor's Scripture Doctrine of Original Sin, Hervey's Meditations, and a Collection of Songs. These works formed the whole of his collection, as mentioned by himself in a letter to Dr. Moore; but his brother Gilbert adds to this list Derham's Physico and Astro-Theology, and a few other works. Of this varied assortment, "the Collection of Songs," says the poet himself, "was my *vade-mecum*. I pored over them, driving my cart, or walking to labour, song by song, verse by verse; carefully noticing the true tender and sublime, from affectation or fustian; and I am convinced I owe to this practice much of my critic-craft, such as it is."

With Mr. Murdoch, Burns remained for about two years, during the last few weeks of which the preceptor himself took lessons in the French language, and communicated the instructions he received to his pupil, who, in a short time, obtained a sufficient knowledge of French to enable him to read and understand any prose author in that language. The facility with which he acquired the French induced him to commence the rudiments of Latin, but whether from want of diligence or of time, or that he found the task more irksome than he anticipated, he soon abandoned his design of acquiring a knowledge of the language of the Romans.

Mr. Murdoch having been compelled to leave Ayr, in consequence of some inadvertent expressions directed against Dr. Dalrymple, the elder Burns himself undertook, for a time, the tuition of his family. When Robert, however, was about fourteen years of age, his father sent him and Gilbert, "week about, during the summer quarter," to a parish school, by which means they alternately improved themselves in writing, and assisted their parents in the labours of a small farm. According to our poet's own account, he, as he says, first committed the sin of rhyme a little before he had attained his sixteenth year. The inspirer of his muse was love, the object of which he describes as a "bonnie, sweet, sonsie lass," whose charms he was anxious to celebrate in verse. "I was not so presumptuous," he says, "as to imagine that I could make verses like printed ones, composed by men who had Greek and Latin; but my girl sung a song which was said to be composed by a small country laird's son, on one of his father's maids, with whom he was in love; and I saw no reason why I might not rhyme as well as he: for, excepting that he could shear sheep, and cast peats, his father living in the moorlands, he had no more scholar-craft than myself. Thus with me began love and poetry."

The production alluded to is the little ballad commencing—

O! once I loved a bonnie lass,

which Burns himself characterized as "a very puerile and silly performance;" yet, adds Mr. Lockhart, it contains, here and there, lines of which he need hardly have been ashamed at any period of his life. "In my seventeenth year," says Burns, "to give my manners a brush, I went to a country dancing-school. My father had an unaccountable antipathy against these meetings, and my going was, what to this moment I repent, in opposition to his wishes." Then, referring to his views in life, he continues—"The great misfortune of my life was to want an aim. I had felt early some stirrings of ambition, but they were the blind gropings of Homer's Cyclops round the walls of his cave. The only two openings by which I could enter the temple of fortune, were the gate of niggardly economy, or the path of little chicaning bargain-making. The first is so contracted an aperture, I never could squeeze myself into it: the last I always hated—there was contamination in the very entrance. Thus abandoned to no view or aim in life, with a strong appetite for sociability, as well from native hilarity as from a pride of observation and remark; a constitutional melancholy, or hypocondriacism, that made me fly from solitude; add to these incentives to

social life, my reputation for bookish knowledge, a certain wild logical talent, and a strength of thought something like the rudiments of good sense; and it will not seem surprising that I was generally a welcome guest where I visited, or any great wonder that always, where two or three met together, there was I among them." In this state of mind he entered recklessly upon a dissipated career, giving loose to his passions, and indulging his taste for literature with as much irregularity and skill as he applied himself to the plough, the scythe, and the reaping-hook. To use his own expression, "Vive l'amour, et vive la bagatelle," were his sole principles of action. In his nineteenth year, he passed some time at a school, where he learnt mensuration, surveying, &c., and also improved himself in other respects, particularly in composition; which he attributes chiefly to a perusal of a collection of letters, by the wits of Queen Anne's reign.

In his twenty-third year, partly, as he says, through whim, and partly that he wished to set about doing something in life, he entered the service of a flax-dresser, at Irvine, for the purpose of learning his trade; but an accidental fire, which burnt down the shop, put an end to his speculations. After his father's death, which occurred in February, 1784, he took the farm of Mossgiel, in conjunction with his brother Gilbert. "I entered on it," says Burns, "with a firm resolution, 'Come, go to, I will be wise!' I read farming books; I calculated crops; I attended markets; and, in short, in spite of 'the devil, the world, and the flesh,' I believe I should have been a wise man; but, the first year, from unfortunately buying bad seed,—the second, from a late harvest, we lost half our crops. This overset all my wisdom, and I returned 'like the dog to his vomit, and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.'" In other words, he resigned the share of the farm to his brother, and returned to habits of intemperance and irregularity. It was during his occupation of the farm of Mossgiel, that Burns first became acquainted with Jane Armour, his future wife. This lady was the daughter of a respectable mason, in the village of Mouchline, where she was at the time the reigning toast. The consequence of this acquaintance, which quickly ripened into mutual love, was soon such that the connexion could no longer be concealed; and, though the details of this story are, perhaps, as yet but imperfectly known, it seems, at least, certain, that Burns was anxious to shield the partner of his imprudence to the utmost in his power. It was, therefore, agreed between them, that he should give her a written acknowledgment of marriage, and then immediately sail for Jamaica, and push his fortune there, and that she should remain with her father until her plighted husband had the means of supporting a family. This arrangement, however, did not satisfy the lady's father; who, having but a very indifferent opinion of Burns's general character, was not to be appeased, and prevailed on his daughter to destroy the document, which was the only evidence of her marriage. Under these circumstances, Jane Armour became the mother of twins, and the poet was summoned by the parish officers to find security for the maintenance of children which he had thus been prevented from legitimatizing according to the Scottish law.

In a state of mind bordering closely on insanity Burns now resolved to fly the country; and, after some trouble, he agreed with Dr. Douglas, who had an estate in Jamaica, to go thither as overseer. Before sailing, however, he was advised, by his friends, to publish his poems by subscription, in order to provide him with necessaries for the voyage, and he consented to this expedient, as an experiment which could not injure, and might essentially benefit him. Subscribers' names were obtained for about three hundred and fifty copies, and six hundred were printed. The collection was very favourably received by the public, and the author realised, all expenses deducted, a profit of about twenty pounds. "This sum," says he, "came very seasonably; as I was thinking of indenting myself, for want of money to procure my passage. As soon as I was master of nine guineas, the price that was to waft me to the torrid zone, I took a steerage passage in the first ship that was to sail from the Clyde; for

"'Hungry ruin had me in the wind.'

"I had been some days skulking from covert to covert, under all the terrors of a jail; as some illadvised people had uncoupled the merciless pack of the law at my heels. I had taken the last farewell of my few friends; my chest was on the road to Greenock; I had composed the last song I should ever measure in Caledonia—The Gloomy Night is Gathering Fast; when a letter from Dr. Blacklock to a friend of mine overthrew all my schemes, by opening new prospects to my poetic ambition." This was a recommendation to him to proceed to Edinburgh, to superintend the publication of a second edition of his poems; and he accordingly turned his course to the Scotch metropolis, which he reached in September, 1786. He had already been noticed with much kindness by the Earl of Glencairn, the celebrated Professor Stewart and his lady, Dr. Hugh Blair, and others; and his personal appearance and demeanour exceeding the expectation that had been formed of them, he soon became an object of general curiosity and interest, and was an acceptable guest in the gayest and highest circles. He also received, from the literati of the day, every tribute of praise which the most sanguine author could desire.

Edinburgh, says Dr. Currie, contained, at this period, many men of considerable talents, who were not the most conspicuous for temperance and regularity. Burns entered into several parties of this description with the usual vehemence of his character. His generous affection, and brilliant imagination, fitted him to be the idol of such associations; and, by indulging himself in these festive recreations, he gradually lost a great portion of his relish for the purer pleasures to be found in the circles of taste, elegance, and literature. He saw his danger, and, at times, formed resolutions to guard against it; but he had embarked on the tide of dissipation, and was borne along its stream.

After having sojourned for nearly a year in the Scottish metropolis, and acquired a sum of money

more than sufficient for his present demands, he determined to gratify a desire he had long entertained of visiting some of the most interesting districts of his native country. For this purpose he left Edinburgh on the 6th of May, 1787; and after visiting various places celebrated in the rural songs of Scotland, he returned to his family in Mossgiel, where he arrived about the 8th of July. The reception he met with at home was enthusiastic; and among those who were now willing to renew his acquaintance, was the family of Jane Armour, with whom Burns was speedily reconciled. After remaining for a few days only at Mossgiel, he made a short tour to Inverary, and afterward to the highlands, whence he returned to Edinburgh, and remained there during the greater part of the winter of 1787-8, again entering freely into society and dissipation. Having settled with his publisher, in February, 1788, he was delighted to find there was a balance due to him, as the actual profit of his poems, of nearly 500*l*. At this juncture, he was confined to the house "with a bruised limb, extended on a cushion;" but as soon as he was able to bear the journey, he rode to Mossgiel, advanced his brother Gilbert (who was struggling with many difficulties) the sum of 200*l*., married Jane Armour, and, with the remainder of his capital, took the farm of Ellieland, on the banks of the Nith, six miles above Dumfries.

A short time previously to this, it should be mentioned, that Burns had obtained, through a friend, an appointment in the excise; but with no intention of making use of his commission except on some reverse of fortune. He now took possession of his farm; but as the house required rebuilding, Mrs. Burns could not, for some time, remove thither, a circumstance peculiarly unfortunate, as it caused him to lead a very irregular and unsettled life. The determination, which he had formed, of abandoning his dissipated pursuits was broken in upon, and his industry was frequently interrupted by visiting his family in Ayrshire. As the distance was too great for a single day's journey, he generally spent a night at an inn on the road, and on such occasions, falling into company, all his resolutions were forgotten. Temptation also awaited him nearer home: he was received at the tables of the neighbouring gentry with kindness and respect, and these social parties too often seduced him from the labours of his farm, and his domestic duties, in which the happiness and welfare of his family were now involved. Mrs. Burns joined her husband at Ellieland, in November, 1788; and as she had, during the autumn, lain-in of twins, they had now five children—four boys and a girl. On this occasion, Burns resumed, at times, the occupation of a labourer, and found neither his strength nor his skill impaired. Sentiments of independence cheered his mind,—pictures of domestic content and peace rose on his imagination,—and a few "golden days" passed away,—the happiest, perhaps, which he had ever experienced. But these were not long to last: the farming speculation was soon looked on with despondence, and neglected; and the excise became the only resource. In this capacity, in reference to which beggarly provision for their bard, Mr. Coleridge indignantly calls upon his friend Lamb, to gather a wreath of "henbane-nettles and nightshade,"

"——To twine
The illustrious brow of Scotch nobility,"

poor Burns was necessarily brought into contact with low associates, and intemperance soon became his tyrant. Unable to reconcile the two occupations his farm was in a great measure abandoned to his servants, and agriculture but seldom occupied his thoughts. Meantime, there were seldom wanting persons to lead him to a tavern; to applaud the sallies of his wit; and to witness at once the strength and degradation of his genius. The consequences may be easily imagined: at the expiration of about three years, he was compelled to relinquish his lease, and to rely upon his income of 70*l*. per annum, as an exciseman, till he should obtain promotion. With this intention, he removed to a small house in Dumfries, about the end of the year 1791. In 1792, he contributed to Thomson's collection of Scottish songs; and, about the same time, formed a sort of book society in his neighbourhood. In the mean time, he appears to have given offence to the board of excise, by some intemperate conduct and expressions relative to the French revolution, particularly in attempting to send a captured smuggler as a present to the French convention; and an inquiry was in consequence instituted into his conduct. The result was, upon the whole, favourable; but an impression, injurious to Burns, was still left upon the minds of the commissioners, and he was told that his promotion, which was deferred, must depend on his future behaviour. This seems to have mortified him keenly, and to have made him feel his dependent situation as a degradation to his future fame. "Often," he says, in a letter to a gentleman, giving an account of the above circumstances, "in blasting anticipation, have I listened to some future hackney scribbler, with heavy malice of savage stupidity, exultingly asserting that Burns, notwithstanding the fanfaronade of independence to be found in his works, and after having been held up to public view and to public estimation as a man of some genius, yet quite destitute of resources within himself to support his borrowed dignity, dwindled into a paltry exciseman; and slunk out the rest of his insignificant existence in the meanest of pursuits, and among the lowest of mankind."

It seems, however, that the board of excise did not altogether neglect Burns, who was, the year previous to his death, permitted to act as a supervisor. From October, 1795, to the January following, illness confined him to his house; but, going out a few days after, he imprudently dined at a tavern, and returned home about three o'clock in a very cold morning, benumbed and intoxicated. This occasioned a severe relapse, and he soon himself became sensible that his constitution was sinking, and his death approaching. He, however, repaired to Brow, in Annandale, to try the effects of sea-bathing; which, though it relieved his rheumatic pains, was succeeded by a fresh accession of fever, and he was brought back to his own house in Dumfries, on the 18th of July, 1796. He remained for three days in a state of feebleness, accompanied by occasional delirium, and expired on the 21st of

July, in the thirty-eighth year of his age. He was interred, with military honours, by the Dumfries volunteers, to which body he belonged, and his remains were followed to the grave by nearly ten thousand spectators. He left a widow and four sons, for whom the inhabitants of Dumfries opened a subscription, which, in itself considerable, was augmented by the profits of the edition of his works, in four volumes, octavo, published in 1800, by Dr. Currie, with a life of the poet.

Burns was within two inches of six feet in height, with a robust, yet agile frame; a finely formed face, and an uncommonly interesting countenance. His well-raised forehead indicated great intellect, and his eyes are described as having been large, dark, and full of ardour and animation. His conversation was rich in wit and humour, and occasionally displayed profound thought, and reflections equally serious and sensible; for no one possessed a finer discrimination between right and wrong. Though his moral aberrations, for which he felt the keenest remorse, have been exaggerated, the latter years of his life were undoubtedly disgraceful, both to the man and to the poet; yet, amid his career of intemperance, he preserved a warmth and generosity of heart, and an independence of mind not less surprising or peculiar than his genius.

Mr. Lockhart, in his life of Burns, gives several instances, which show that "he shrunk with horror and loathing from all sense of pecuniary obligation, no matter to whom." In answer to a letter from Mr. Thomson, enclosing him 5*l.* for some of his songs, he says, "I assure you, my dear sir, that you truly hurt me with your pecuniary parcel. It degrades me in my own eyes. However, to return it would savour of affectation; but, as to any more traffic of that debtor and creditor kind, I swear, by that honour which crowns the upright statue of Robert Burns's integrity—on the least motion of it, I will indignantly spurn the by-past transaction, and from that moment commence entire stranger to you."—The following anecdote is told of him in his character of exciseman, by a writer in the Edinburgh Literary Journal, who saw him at Thornhill fair. "An information," he says, "had been lodged against a poor widow woman, of the name of Kate Wilson, who had ventured to serve a few of her old country friends with a draught of unlicensed ale, and a lacing of whisky, on this village jubilee. I saw him enter her door, and anticipated nothing short of an immediate seizure of a certain gray beard and barrel, which, to my personal knowledge, contained the contraband commodities our bard was in quest of. A nod, accompanied by a significant movement of the forefinger, brought Kate to the doorway or trance, and I was near enough to hear the following words distinctly uttered:—'Kate, are ye mad? D'ye no ken that the supervisor and me will be in upon you in the course of forty minutes? Guid-by to ye at present.' Burns was in the street, and in the midst of the crowd in an instant; and I had reason to know that his friendly hint was not neglected. It saved a poor widow woman from a fine of several pounds."—Though totally free from presumption, in the presence of the superior circles of society to which he was admitted, he did not hesitate to express his opinions strongly and boldly. A certain well-known provincial bore, as Mr. Lockhart describes him, having left a tavern-party, of which Burns was one, he, the bard, immediately demanded a bumper, and, addressing himself to the chair, said, "I give you the health, gentlemen all, of the waiter that called my Lord —— out of the room." He was no mean extemporizer; and the following verse is said to have been introduced by him, in a song, in allusion to one of the company who had been boasting, somewhat preposterously, of his aristocratic acquaintances:

"Of lordly acquaintance you boast,
And the dukes that you dined wi' yestreen,
Yet an insect's an insect at most,
Though it crawl on the curl of a queen."

The poetry of Burns, who has acquired almost equal fame by his prose, is now too universally acknowledged and appreciated, to require further analysis or criticism. "Fight, who will, about words and forms," says Byron, "Burns's rank is in the first class of his art;" but, as Mr. Lockhart observes, "to accumulate all that has been said of Burns, even by men like himself, of the first order, would fill a volume." We shall conclude, therefore, with an observation of Mr. Campbell, that "viewing him merely as a poet, there is scarcely another regret connected with his name, than that his productions, with all their merit, fall short of the talents which he possessed."

Burns's character is, upon the whole, honestly drawn by his own pen, in the serio-comic epitaph, written on himself, concluding with the following verse:—

"Reader, attend—whether thy soul
Soars fancy's flights beyond the pole,
Or darkling grubs this earthly hole,
In low pursuit;
Know, prudent, cautious self-control,
Is wisdom's root."

THE TWA DOGS,

A TALE.

'Twas in that place o' Scotland's isle,
That bears the name o' Auld King coil,
Upon a bonnie day in June,
When wearing through the afternoon,
Twa dogs that were na thrang at hame,
Forgather'd ance upon a time.

The first I'll name, they ca'd him Cæsar,
Was keepit for his honour's pleasure:
His hair, his size, his mouth, his luge,
Show'd he was nane o' Scotland's dogs;
But whalpit some place far abroad,
Where sailors gang to fish for cod.

His locked, letter'd, braw brass collar,
Show'd him the gentleman and scholar;
But though he was o' high degree,
The fient a pride, na pride had he;
But wad hae spent an hour caressin,
E'en wi' a tinkler-gypsey's messin.
At kirk or market, mill or smiddie,
Nae tawted tyke, though e'er sae duddie,
But he wad stawn't, as glad to see him,
And stroan't on stanes an' hillocks wi' him.

The tither was a ploughman's collie,
A rhyming, ranting, raving billie,
Wha for his friend an' comrade had him,
And in his freaks had Luath ca'd him,
After some dog in Highland sang,*
Was made lang syne—Lord knows how lang.

He was a gash an' faithfu' tyke,
As ever lap a sheugh or dyke.
His honest, sonsie, baws'nt face,
Aye gat him friends in ilka place.
His breast was white, his towzie back
Weel clad wi' coat o' glossy black;
His gawcie tail, wi' upward curl,
Hung o'er his hurdies wi' a swurl.

Nae doubt but they were fain o' ither,
An' unco pack an' thick thegither;
Wi' social nose whyles snuff'd and snowkit,
Whyles mice an' moudieworts they howkit;
Whyles scour'd awa' in lang excursion,
An' worry'd ither in diversion;
Until wi' daffin weary grown,
Upon a knowe they sat them down,
And there began a lang digression
About the lords o' the creation.

CÆSAR.

I've aften wonder'd, honest Luath
What sort o' life poor dogs like you have;
An' when the gentry's life I saw
What way poor bodies liv'd ava.

Our laird gets in his racked rents,
His coals, his kain, and a' his stents;
He rises when he likes himsel;
His flunkies answer at the bell;
He ca's his coach, he ca's his horse;
He draws a bonnie silken purse
As lang's my tail, whare, through the steeks,
The yellow letter'd Geordie keeks.

Frae morn to e'en it's naught but toiling,
At baking, roasting, frying, boiling;
An' though the gentry first are stechin,
Yet e'en the ha' folk fill their pechan
Wi' sauce, ragouts, and sicklike trashtrie,
That's little short o' downright wastrie.
Our whipper-in, wee blastit wonner,
Poor worthless elf, it eats a dinner,
Better than ony tenant man
His honour has in a' the lan':
An' what poor cot-folk pit their painch in,
I own it's past my comprehension.

LUATH.

Trowth, Cæsar, whyles they're fash't enough;
A cottar howkin in a sheugh,
Wi' dirty stanes biggin a dyke,
Baring a quarry, and sic like,
Himself, a wife, he thus sustains,
A smytrie o' wee duddie weans,
An' naught but his han' darg, to keep
Them right and tight in thack an' rape.

An' when they meet wi' sair disasters,
Like loss o' health, or want o' masters,
Ye maist wad think, a wee touch langer,
An' they maun starve o' cauld an' hunger;
But, how it comes, I never kenn'd yet,
They're maistly wonderfu' contented;
An' buirdly chiels, an' clever hizzies,
Are bred in sic a way as this is.

CÆSAR.

But then to see how ye're neglected,
How huff'd, and cuff'd, and disrespeckit!
L—d, man, our gentry care as little
For delvers, ditchers, an' sic cattle;
They gang as saucy by poor fo'k,
As I wad by a stinking brock.

I've noticed on our laird's court-day,
An' mony a time my heart's been wae,
Poor tenant bodies scant o' cash,
How they maun thole a factor's snash:
He'll stamp an' threaten, curse an' swear,
He'll apprehend them, poind their gear;
While they maun staun', wi' aspect humble,
An' hear it a', an' fear an' tremble.
I see how folk live that hae riches;
But surely poor folk maun be wretches?

LUATH.

They're nae sae wretched's ane wad think;
Though constantly on poortith's brink:
They're sae accustom'd wi' the sight,
The view o't gies them little fright.

Then chance an' fortune are sae guided,
They're aye in less or mair provided;
An' though fatigued wi' close employment,
A blink o' rest's a sweet enjoyment.

* Cuchullin's dog in Ossian's Fingal.

The dearest comfort o' their lives,
Their grushie weans an' faithfu' wives;
The prattling things are just their pride,
That sweetens a' their fire side.

An' whyles twalpennie worth o' nappy
Can mak the bodies unco happy;
They lay aside their private cares,
To mend the kirk and state affairs;
They'll talk o' patronage and priests,
Wi' kindling fury in their breasts,
Or tell what new taxation's coming,
An' ferlie at the folk in Lon'on.

As bleak-faced Hallowmass returns,
They get the jovial, ranting kirns,
When rural life, o' ev'ry station,
Unite in common recreation;
Love blinks, Wit slaps, an' social Mirth,
Forgets there's care upo' the earth.

That merry day the year begins,
They bar the door on frosty winds;
The nappy reeks wi' mantling ream,
An' sheds a heart-inspiring steam;
The luntin pipe, an' sneeshin mill,
Are handed round wi' richt guid will;
The cantie auld folks crackin crouse,
The young anes rantin through the house,—
My heart has been sae fain to see them,
That I for joy hae barkit wi' them.

Still it's owre true that ye hae said,
Sic game is now owre often play'd.
There's monie a creditable stock,
O' decent, honest, fawsont fo'k,
Are riven out baith root and branch,
Some rascal's pridefu' greed to quench,
Wha thinks to knit himsel the faster
In favour wi' some gentle master,
Wha, aiblins, thrang a-parliamentin,
For Britain's guid his saul indentin—

CÆSAR.

Haith, lad, ye little ken about it;
For Britain's guid! guid faith! I doubt it,
Say rather, gaun as premiers lead him,
An' saying ay or no's they bid him,
At operas an' plays parading,
Mortgaging, gambling, masquerading;
Or may be, in a frolic daft,
To Hague or Calais takes a waft,
To make a tour, an' tak a whirl,
To learn *bon ton*, an' see the warl'.

There, at Vienna or Versailles
He rives his father's auld entails;
Or by Madrid he takes the rout,
To thrum guitars, and fecht wi' nowt;
Or down Italian vista startles,
Wh-re-hunting among groves o' myrtles;
Then bouses drumly German water,
To mak himsel look fair and fatter,
An' clear the consequential sorrows,
Love-gifts of carnival signoras.
For Britain's guid! for her destruction!
Wi' dissipation, feud, an' faction.

LUATH.

Hech man! dear sirs! is that the gate
They waste sae mony a braw estate!
Are we sae foughten an' harass'd
For gear to gang that gate at last!

O would they stay aback frae courts,
An' please themsels wi' kintra sports,
It wa'd for every ane be better,
The laird, the tenant, and the cotter!
For thae frank, rantin, ramblin billies,
Fient haet o' them's ill-hearted fellows;
Except for breakin o' their timmer,
Or speakin lightly o' their limmer,
Or shootin o' a hare or moor-cock,
The ne'er a bit they're ill to poor fo'k.

But will ye tell me, Master Cæsar,
Sure great folk's life's a life o' pleasure?
Nae cauld nor hunger e'er can steer them,
The vera thought o't need na fear them.

CÆSAR.

L—d, man, were ye but whyles where I am,
The gentles ye wad ne'er envy 'em.

It's true they need na starve or sweat,
Through winter's cauld, or simmer's heat;
They've nae sair wark to craze their banes,
An' fill auld age wi' gripes an' granes:
But human bodies are sic fools,
For a' their colleges and schools,
That when nae real ills perplex them,
They make enow themselves to vex them;
An' aye the less they hae to sturt them,
In like proportion less will hurt them.
A country fellow at the pleugh,
His acres till'd, he's right eneugh;
A kintra lassie at her wheel,
Her dizzens done, she's unco weel:
But gentlemen, an' ladies warst,
Wi' ev'ndown want o' wark are curst.
They loiter, lounging, lank, an' lazy;
Though deil haet ails them, yet uneasy;
Their days, insipid, dull, an' tasteless;
Their nights unquiet, lang, an' restless;
An' e'en their sports, their balls an' races,
Their galloping through public places.
There's sic parade, sic pomp, an' art,
The joy can scarcely reach the heart.
The men cast out in party matches,
Then sowther a' in deep debauches;
Ae night they're mad wi' drink an' wh-ring,
Niest day their life is past enduring.
The ladies arm-in-arm in clusters,
As great and gracious a' as sisters;
But hear their absent thoughts o' ither,
They're a' run deils an' jads thegither.
Whyles o'er the wee bit cup an' platie,
They sip the scandal portion pretty;
Or lee-lang nights, wi' crabbit leuks
Pore owre the devil's pictured beuks;
Stake on a chance a farmer's stackyard,
An' cheat like onie unhang'd blackguard.
There's some exception, man an' woman;
But this is gentry's life in common.

By this, the sun was out o' sight,
An' darker gloaming brought the night!
The bum-clock humm'd wi' lazy drone;
The kye stood rowtin i' the loan;
When up they gat, and shook their lugs,
Rejoiced they were na men but dogs;
An' each took aff his several way,
Resolved to meet some ither day.

DEATH AND DR. HORNBOOK.

A TRUE STORY.

Some books are lies frae end to end,
And some great lies were never penn'd,
E'en ministers, they hae been kenn'd
In holy rapture,
A rousing whid, at times to vend,
And nail't wi' Scripture.

But this that I am gaun to tell,
Which lately on a night befell,
Is just as true's the deil's in h-ll
Or Dublin city:
That e'er he nearer comes oursel
'S a muckle pity.

The Clachan yill had made me canty,
I was na fou, but just had plenty;
I stacher'd whyles, but yet took tent aye
To free the ditches;
An' hillocks, stanes, an' bushes, kenn'd aye
Frae ghaists an' witches.

The rising moon began to glow'r
The distant Cumnock hills out-owre:
To count her horns, wi' a' my power,
I set mysel;
But whether she had three or four,
I cou'd na tell.

I was come round about the hill,
And toddlin down on Willie's mill,
Setting my staff wi' a' my skill,
To keep me sicker:
Though leeward whyles, against my will,
I took a bicker.

I there wi' something did forgather,
That put me in an eerie swither;
An awfu' sithe, out-owre ae showther,
Clear-dangling, hang;
A three-tae'd leister on the ither
Lay, large an' lang.

Its stature seem'd lang Scotch ells twa,
The queerest shape that e'er I saw,
For fient a wame it had ava!
And then, its shanks,
They were as thin, as sharp an' sma'
As cheeks o' branks.

"Guid-e'en," quo' I; "Friend! hae ye been mawin,
When ither folk are busy sawin?"*
It seem'd to mak a kind o' stan',
But naething spak;
At length, says I, "Friend, whare ye gaun,
Will ye go back?"

It spak right howe,—"My name is Death,
But be na fley'd."—Quoth I, "Guid faith,
Ye're may be come to stap my breath;
But tent me, billie:
I red ye weel, tak care o' skaith,
See, there's a gully!"

"Guidman," quo' he, "put up your whittle,
I'm no design'd to try its mettle;
But if I did, I wad be kittle
To be mislear'd,
I wad na mind it, no, that spittle
Out-owre my beard."

"Well, weel!" says I, "a bargain be't;
Come, gies your hand, an' sae we're gree't;
We'll ease our shanks; an' tak a seat,
Come, gies your news;
This while* ye hae been monie a gate
At monie a house.'

"Ay, ay!" quo' he, an' shook his head,
"It's e'en a lang, lang time indeed
Sin' I began to nick the thread,
An' choke the breath:
Folk maun do something for their bread,
An' sae maun Death.

"Sax thousand years are near hand fled
Sin' I was to the butching bred,
An' monie a scheme in vain's been laid,
To stap or scar me;
Till ane Hornbook's† ta'en up the trade,
An' faith, he'll waur me.

"Ye ken Jock Hornbook i' the Clachan,
Deil mak his king's-hood in a spleuchan!
He's grown sae well acquaint wi' Buchan‡
An' ither chaps,
That weans haud out their fingers laughin
And pouk my hips.

"See, here's a sithe, and there's a dart,
They hae pierced mony a gallant heart;
But Doctor Hornbook, wi' his art,
And cursed skill,
Has made them baith not worth a f—t,
Damn'd haet they'll kill.

"'Twas but yestreen, nae further gaen,
I threw a noble throw at ane;
Wi' less, I'm sure, I've hundreds slain;
But deil-ma-care,
It just play'd dirl on the bane,
But did nae mair.

"Hornbook was by, wi' ready art,
And had sae fortified the part,
That when I looked to my dart,
It was sae blunt,
Fient haet o't wad hae pierced the heart
Of a kail-runt.

* This rencounter happened in seed-time, 1785.

* An epidemical fever was then raging in that country.

† This gentleman, Dr. Hornbook, is professionally, a brother of the sovereign order of the ferula; but, by intuition and inspiration, is at once an apothecary, surgeon, and physician.

‡ Buchan's Domestic Medicine.

'I drew my sithe in sic a fury,
I nearhand cowpit wi' my hurry;
But yet the bauld apothecary
Withstood the shock;
I might as weel hae try'd a quarry
O' hard whin rock.

"E'en them he canna get attended,
Alto' their face he ne'er had kend it,
Just —— in a kail-blade, and send it,
As soon he smells't,
Baith their disease, and what will mend it
At once he tells't.

"And then a' doctors' saws and whittles,
Of a' dimensions, shapes, an' mettles,
A' kinds o' boxes, mugs, an' bottles,
He's sure to hae;
Their Latin names as fast he rattles
As A B C.

"Calces o' fossils, earth, and trees;
True Sal-marinum o' the seas;
The Farina of beans and pease,
He has't in plenty;
Aqua-fortis, what you please,
He can content ye.

"Forbye some new, uncommon weapons,
Urinus Spiritus of capons;
Or mite-horn shavings, filings, scrapings,
Distill'd *per se*;
Sal-alkali o' midge-tail-clippings,
And monie mae."

"Waes me for Johnny Ged's Hole* now,"
Quo' I, "if that the news be true!
His braw calf-ward whare gowans grew,
Sae white and bonnie,
Nae doubt they'll rive it wi' the plew;
They'll ruin Johnie!"

The creature grain'd an eldrich laugh,
And says, "Ye need na yoke the pleugh,
Kirkyards will soon be till'd eneugh,
Tak ye nae fear:
They'll a' be trench'd wi' monie a sheugh
In twa-three year.

"Whare I killed ane a fair strae-death,
By loss o' blood or want o' breath,
This night I'm free to tak my aith,
That Hornbook's skill
Has clad a score i' their last claith,
By drap an' pill.

"An honest wabster to his trade,
Whase wife's twa nieves were scarce wee bred,
Gat tippence-worth to mend her head
When it was sair;
The wife slade cannie to her bed,
But ne'er spak mair.

"A kintra laird had ta'en the batts,
Or some curmurring in his guts,
His only son for Hornbook sets,
An' pays him well.
The lad, for twa guid gimmer pets,
Was laird himsel.

"A bonnie lass, ye kend her name,
Some ill-brewn drink had hoved her wame:
She trusts hersel, to hide the shame,
In Hornbook's care;
Horn sent her aff, to her lang hame,
To hide it there.

"That's just a swatch o' Hornbook's way;
Thus goes he on from day to day,
Thus does he poison, kill, an' slay,
An's weel paid for't;
Yet stops me o' my lawfu' prey,
Wi' his d—mn'd dirt:

"But, hark! I'll tell you of a plot,
Though dinna ye be speaking o't;
I'll nail the self-conceited Scot
As dead's a herrin:
Niest time we meet, I'll wad a groat,
He gets his fairin!"

But just as he began to tell,
The auld kirk hammer strak the bell
Some wee short hour ayont the twal,
Which raised us baith:
I took the way that pleased mysel,
And sae did Death.

* The grave-digger.

THE BRIGS OF AYR,

A POEM.

INSCRIBED TO J. B**********, ESQ., AYR.

THE simple bard, rough at the rustic plough,
Learning his tuneful trade from every bough,
The chanting linnet, or the mellow thrush,
Hailing the setting sun, sweet, in the green thorn bush;
The soaring lark, the perching red-breast shrill,
Or deep-toned plovers gray, wild-whistling o'er the hill;
Shall he, nurst in the peasant's lowly shed,
To hardy independence bravely bred,
By early poverty to hardship steel'd,
And train'd to arms in stern misfortune's field,
Shall he be guilty of their hireling crimes,
The servile, mercenary Swiss of rhymes?
Or labour hard the panegyric close,
With all the venal soul of dedicating prose?
No! though his artless strains he rudely sings,
And throws his hand uncouthly o'er the strings,
He glows with all the spirit of the bard,
Fame, honest fame, his great, his dear reward.
Still, if some patron's generous care he trace,
Skill'd in the secret, to bestow with grace;
When B********** befriends his humble name,
And hands the rustic stranger up to fame,
With heartfelt throes his grateful bosom swells,
The godlike bliss, to give, alone excels.

* * * * *

'Twas when the stacks get on their winter-hap,
And thack and rape secure the toil-won crap;
Potato-bings are snugged up frae skaith
Of coming winter's biting, frosty breath;

The bees, rejoicing o'er their summer toils,
Unnumber'd buds' an' flowers' delicious spoils,
Seal'd up with frugal care in massive waxen piles,
Are doom'd by man, that tyrant o'er the weak,
The death o' devils smoor'd wi' brimstone reek:
The thundering guns are heard on every side,
The wounded coveys, reeling, scatter wide;
The feather'd field-mates, bound by nature's tie,
Sires, mothers, children, in one carnage lie:
(What warm, poetic heart, but inly bleeds,
And execrates man's savage, ruthless deeds!)
Nae mair the flower in field or meadow springs;
Nae mair the grove with airy concert rings,
Except, perhaps, the robin's whistling glee,
Proud o' the height o' some bit half-lang tree:
The hoary morns precede the sunny days,
Mild, calm, serene, wide spreads the noontide blaze,
While thick the gossamer waves wanton in the rays.
'Twas in that season, when a simple bard,
Unknown and poor, simplicity's reward:
Ae night, within the ancient brugh of Ayr,
By whim inspired, or haply prest wi' care;
He left his bed, and took his wayward route,
And down by Simpson's* wheel'd the left about:
(Whether impell'd by all-directing fate,
To witness what I after shall narrate;
Or whether, rapt in meditation high,
He wander'd out, he knew not where nor why;)
The drowsy dungeon-clock† had number'd two,
And Wallace tower† had sworn the fact was true:
The tide-swoln Firth with sullen sounding roar,
Through the still night dash'd hoarse along the shore:
All else was hush'd as nature's closed e'e;
The silent moon shone high o'er tower and tree:
The chilly frost, beneath the silver beam,
Crept, gently crusting, o'er the glittering stream.—

When, lo! on either hand the listening bard,
The clanging sugh of whistling wings is heard;
Two dusky forms dart through the midnight air,
Swift as the gos‡ drives on the wheeling hare;
Ane on th' auld brig his airy shape uprears,
The ither flutters o'er the rising piers:
Our warlock rhymer instantly descried
The sprites that owre the brigs of Ayr preside.
(That bards are second-sighted is nae joke,
And ken the lingo of the spiritual fo'k;
Fays, spunkies, kelpies, a', they can explain them,
And e'en the very deils they brawly ken them.)
Auld Brig appear'd of ancient Pictish race,
The vera wrinkles Gothic in his face:
He seem'd as he wi' time had warstled lang,
Yet teughly doure, he bade an unco bang.
New Brig was buskit in a braw new coat,
That he, at Lon'on, frae ane Adams got:
In's hand five taper staves as smooth's a bead,
Wi' virls and whirlygigums at the head.
The Goth was stalking round with anxious search,
Spying the time-worn flaws in every arch;
It chanced his new-come neebor took his e'e,
And e'en a vex'd and angry heart had he!
Wi' thieveless sneer to see his modish mien,
He, down the water, gies him this guideen:—

* A noted tavern at the auld brig end.
† The two steeples. ‡ The gos-hawk, or falcon.

AULD BRIG.

I doubt na, frien', ye'll think ye're nae sheep shank
Ance ye were streekit o'er frae bank to bank;
But gin ye be a brig as auld as me,
Though faith that day, I doubt, ye'll never see,
There'll be, if that date come, I'll wad a boddle,
Some fewer whigmeleeries in your noddle.

NEW BRIG.

Auld Vandal, ye but show your little mense,
Just much about it wi' your scanty sense;
Will your poor, narrow footpath of a street,
Where twa wheelbarrows tremble when they meet,
Your ruin'd, formless bulk o' stane an' lime,
Compare wi' bonnie brigs o' modern time?
There's men o' taste would tak the Ducat-stream,*
Though they should cast the very sark an' swim,
Ere they would grate their feelings wi' the view
Of sic an ugly Gothic hulk as you.

AULD BRIG.

Conceited gowk! puff'd up wi' windy pride!
This monie a year I've stood the flood an' tide;
And though wi' crazy eild I'm sair forfairn,
I'll be a brig when ye're a shapeless cairn!
As yet ye little ken about the matter,
But twa-three winters will inform you better,
When heavy, dark, continued, a'-day rains,
Wi' deepening deluges o'erflow the plains;
When from the hills where springs the brawling Coil,
Or stately Lugar's mossy fountains boil,
Or where the Greenock winds his moorland course,
Or haunted Garpal† draws his feeble source,
Aroused by blustering winds an' spotting thowes,
In mony a torrent down his sna-broo rowes;
While crashing ice, borne on the roaring speat,
Sweeps dams, an' mills, an' brigs, a' to the gate;
And from Glenbuck,‡ down to the Rotton-key,§
Auld Ayr is just one lengthen'd, tumbling sea;
Then down ye hurl, deil nor ye never rise!
And dash the gumlie jaups up to the pouring skies
A lesson sadly teaching, to your cost,
That architecture's noble art is lost!

NEW BRIG.

Fine architecture! trowth, I needs must say't o't,
The L—d be thankit that we've tint the gate o't!
Gaunt, ghastly, ghaist-alluring edifices,
Hanging with threatening jut, like precipices,
O'er arching, mouldy, gloom-inspiring coves,
Supporting roofs fantastic, stony groves:
Windows and doors, in nameless sculpture drest,
With order, symmetry, or taste unblest;
Forms like some bedlam statuary's dream,
The crazed creations of misguided whim;
Forms might be worshipp'd on the bended knee,
And still the *second dread command* be free;
Their likeness is not found on earth, in air, or sea

* A noted ford, just above the auld brig.
† The banks of Garpal Water is one of the few places in the west of Scotland, where those fancy-scaring beings, known by the name of ghaists, still continue pertina clously to inhabit.
‡ The source of the river Ayr.
§ A small landing place above the large key.

Mansions that would disgrace the building taste
Of any mason, reptile, bird, or beast;
Fit only for a doited monkish race,
Or frosty maids forsworn the dear embrace,
Or cuifs of later times, wha held the notion
That sullen gloom was sterling, true devotion;
Fancies that our guid brugh denies protection,
And soon may they expire, unblest with resurrection!

AULD BRIG.

O ye, my dear-remember'd, ancient yealings,
Were ye but here to share my wounded feelings!
Ye worthy proveses, an' mony a bailie,
Wha in the paths o' righteousness did toil aye;
Ye dainty deacons, and ye douce conveners,
To whom our moderns are but causey-cleaners;
Ye godly councils wha hae blest this town,
Ye godly brethren of the sacred gown,
Wha meekly gie your hurdies to the smiters;
And (what would now be strange) ye godly writers:
A' ye douce folk I've borne aboon the broo,
Were ye but here, what would ye say or do?
How would your spirits groan in deep vexation,
To see each melancholy alteration;
And, agonizing, curse the time and place
When ye begat the base, degenerate race!
Nae langer reverend men, their country's glory,
In plain braid Scots hold forth a plain braid story;
Nae langer thrifty citizens, an' douce,
Meet owre a pint, or in the council-house;
But staumrel, corky-headed, graceless gentry,
The herryment and ruin of the country;
Men, three parts made by tailors and by barbers,
Wha waste your well-hain'd gear on d—d new brigs and harbours!

NEW BRIG.

Now haud you there! for faith ye've said enough,
And muckle mair than ye can mak to through;
As for your priesthood, I shall say but little,
Corbies and clergy are a shot right kittle:
But under favour o' your langer beard,
Abuse o' magistrates might weel be spared:
To liken them unto your auld-warld squad,
I must needs say, comparisons are odd.
In Ayr, wag-wits nae mair can hae a handle
To mouth "a citizen" a term o' scandal:
Nae mair the council waddles down the street,
In all the pomp of ignorant conceit;
Men wha grew wise priggin owre hops an' raisins,
Or gather'd liberal views in bonds and seisins.
If haply knowledge, on a random tramp,
Had shored them with a glimmer of his lamp,
And would to common sense for once betray'd them,
Plain, dull stupidity stept kindly in to aid them.

* * * * * *

What farther clishmaclaver might been said,
What bloody wars, if sprites had blood to shed,
No man can tell: but, all before their sight,
A fairy train appear'd in order bright:
Adown the glittering stream they featly danced,
Bright to the moon their various dresses glanced;
They footed o'er the watery glass so neat,
The infant ice scarce bent beneath their feet:
While arts of minstrelsy among them rung,
And soul-ennobling bards heroic ditties sung.
O had M'Lauchlan,* thairm-inspiring sage,
Been there to hear this heavenly band engage,
When through his dear strathspeys they bore with highland rage;
Or when they struck old Scotia's melting airs,
The lover's raptured joys or bleeding cares;
How would his highland lug been nobler fired,
And e'en his matchless hand with finer touch inspired!
No guess could tell what instrument appear'd,
But all the soul of music's self was heard;
Harmonious concert rung in every part,
While simple melody pour'd moving on the heart.

The genius of the stream in front appears,
A venerable chief advanced in years;
His hoary head with water-lilies crown'd,
His manly leg with garter tangle bound.
Next came the loveliest pair in all the ring,
Sweet female beauty hand in hand with spring;
Then, crown'd with flowery hay, came rural joy,
And summer, with his fervid-beaming eye:
All-cheering plenty, with her flowing horn,
Led yellow autumn wreathed with nodding corn;
Then winter's time-bleach'd locks did hoary show,
By hospitality with cloudless brow.
Next follow'd courage with his martial stride,
From where the feal wild-woody coverts hide;
Benevolence, with mild, benignant air,
A female form, came from the towers of Stair:
Learning and worth in equal measures trode
From simple Catrine, their long-loved abode:
Last, white-robed peace, crown'd with a hazel wreath,
To rustic agriculture did bequeath
The broken iron instruments of death,
At sight of whom our sprites forgat their kindling wrath.

THE DEATH AND DYING WORDS OF POOR MAILIE,

THE AUTHOR'S ONLY PET YOWE.

AN UNCO MOURNFU' TALE.

As Mailie an' her lambs thegither
Were ae day nibbling on the tether,
Upon her cloot she coost a hitch,
An' owre she warsl'd in the ditch.
There, groaning, dying, she did lie,
When Hughoc† he cam doytin by.

Wi' glowrin een, and lifted hans,
Poor Hughoc like a statue stans;
He saw her days were near-hand ended,
But, waes my heart! he could na mend it!
He gaped wide, but naething spak!
At length poor Mailie silence brak.

"O thou, whase lamentable face
Appears to mourn my woefu' case!
My dying words attentive hear,
An' bear them to my master dear.

* A well known performer of Scottish music on the violin.

† A neebor herd-callan.

"Tell him, if e'er again he keep,
As muckle gear as buy a sheep,
O, bid him never tie them mair
Wi' wicked strings o' hemp or hair!
But ca' them out to park or hill,
An' let them wander at their will;
So may his flock increase, an' grow
To scores o' lambs, an' packs o' woo'!

"Tell him, he was a master kin',
An' aye was guid to me and mine;
An' now my dying charge I gie him,
My helpless lambs I trust them wi' him.

"O, bid him save their harmless lives
Frae dogs, an' tods, an' butchers' knives!
But gie them guid cow-milk their fill,
Till they be fit to fend themsel:
An' tent them duly, e'en an' morn,
Wi' teats o' hay an' rips o' corn.

"An' may they never learn the gaets
Of ither vile wanrestfu' pets!
To slink through slaps, an' reave an' steal,
At stacks o' pease, or stocks o' kail.
So may they, like their great forbears,
For monie a year come through the sheers:
So wives will gie them bits o' bread,
An' bairns greet for them when they're dead.

"My poor toop-lamb, my son an' heir,
O, bid him breed him up wi' care!
An', if he live to be a beast,
To pit some havins in his breast!
An' warn him, what I winna name,
To stay content wi' yowes at hame;
An' no to rin an' wear his cloots,
Like ither menseless, graceless brutes.

"An, niest my yowie, silly thing,
Gude keep thee frae a tether string!
O, may thou ne'er forgather up
Wi' only blastit, moorland toop;
But aye keep mind to moop an' mell,
Wi' sheep o' credit like thysel!

"And now, my bairns, wi' my last breath,
I lea'e my blessin wi' you baith:
An' when you think upo' your mither,
Mind to be kin' to ane anither.

"Now, honest Hughoc, dinna fail
To tell my master a' my tale;
An' bid him burn this cursed tether,
An', for thy pains, thou'se get my blather."

This said, poor Mailie turn'd her head,
An' closed her e'en amang the dead.

POOR MAILIE'S ELEGY.

LAMENT in rhyme, lament in prose,
Wi' saut tears trickling down your nose;
Our bardie's fate is at a close,
Past a' remead;
The last sad cape-stane of his woes;
Poor Mailie's dead!

It's no the loss o' warl's gear,
That could sae bitter draw the tear
Or mak our bardie, dowie, wear
The mourning weed:
He's lost a friend and neebor dear,
In Mailie dead.

Through a' the town she trotted by him;
A lang half-mile she could descry him;
Wi' kindly bleat, when she did spy him,
She ran wi' speed:
A friend mair faithful ne'er cam nigh him,
Than Mailie dead.

I wat she was a sheep o' sense,
And could behave hersel wi' mense:
I'll say't, she never brak a fence,
Through thievish greed.
Our bardie, lanely, keeps the spense
Sin' Mailie's dead.

Or, if he wanders up the howe,
Her living image in her yowe,
Comes bleating to him, owre the knowe,
For bits o' bread;
An' down the briny pearls rowe
For Mailie dead.

She was nae get o' moorland tips,
Wi' tawted ket, an hairy hips;
For her forbears were brought in ships
Frae yont the Tweed,
A bonnier fleesh ne'er cross'd the clips
Than Mailie dead.

Wae worth the man wha first did shape
That vile, wanchancie thing—a rape!
It maks guid fellows girn an' gape,
Wi' chokin dread;
An' Robin's bonnet wave wi' crape,
For Mailie dead.

O, a' ye bards on bonnie Doon!
An' wha on Ayr your chanters tune!
Come, join the melancholious croon
O' Robin's reed!
His heart will never get aboon!
His Mailie dead.

TO J. S****.

Friendship! mysterious cement of the soul!
Sweetener of life, and solder of society!
I owe thee much.—— BLAIR.

DEAR S****, the sleest, paukie thief,
That e'er attempted stealth or rief,
Ye surely hae some warlock-breef
Owre human hearts;
For ne'er a bosom yet was prief
Against your arts.

For me, I swear by sun an' moon,
And every star that blinks aboon,
Ye've cost me twenty pair o' shoon
Just gaun to see you;
And every ither pair that's done
Mair ta'en I'm wi' you.

That auld, capricious carlin, Nature,
To mak amends for scrimpit stature,
She's turn'd you aff, a human creature
On her first plan,
And in her freaks, on every feature,
She's wrote, the Man.

Just now I've ta'en the fit o' rhyme,
My barmie noddle's working prime,
My fancy yerkit up sublime
Wi' hasty summon:
Hae ye a leisure-moment's time
To hear what's comin?

Some rhyme, a neebor's name to lash;
Some rhyme (vain thought!) for needfu' cash:
Some rhyme to court the kintra clash,
An' raise a din;
For me, an aim I never fash;
I rhyme for fun.

The star that rules my luckless lot,
Has fated me the russet coat,
An' damn'd my fortune to the groat;
But in requit,
Has bless'd me wi' a random shot
O' kintra wit.

This while my notion's ta'en a sklent,
To try my fate in guid black prent;
But still the mair I'm that way bent,
Something cries, "Hoolie!"
I red you, honest man, tak tent!
Ye'll shaw your folly.

"There's ither poets, much your betters,
Far seen in Greek, deep men o' letters,
Hae thought they had ensured their debtors,
A' future ages;
Now moths deform in shapeless tetters,
Their unknown pages."

Then farewel hopes o' laurel-boughs,
To garland my poetic brows!
Henceforth I'll rove where busy ploughs
Are whistling thrang,
An' teach the lanely heights an' howes
My rustic sang.

I'll wander on, with tentless heed
How never-halting moments speed,
Till fate shall snap the brittle thread,
Then, all unknown,
I'll lay me with the inglorious dead,
Forgot and gone!

But why o' death begin a tale?
Just now we're living sound and hale,
Then top and maintop crowd the sail,
Heave care o'er side!
And large, before enjoyment's gale,
Let's tak the tide.

This life, sae far's I understand,
Is a' enchanted, fairy land,
Where pleasure is the magic wand,
That wielded right,
Maks hours, like minutes, hand in hand,
Dance by fu' light.

The magic-wand then let us wield;
For ance that five-an'-forty's speel'd,
See crazy, weary, joyless eild,
Wi' wrinkled face,
Comes hostin, hirplin owre the field,
Wi' crepin pace.

When ance life's day draws near the gloamin
Then farewel vacant careless roamin;
An' farewel cheerfu' tankards foamin,
An' social noise;
An' farewel, dear, deluding woman,
The joy of joys!

O life! how pleasant in thy morning,
Young fancy's rays the hills adorning!
Cold-pausing caution's lesson scorning,
We frisk away,
Like school-boys, at th' expected warning,
To joy and play.

We wander there, we wander here,
We eye the rose upon the brier,
Unmindful that the thorn is near,
Among the leaves;
And though the puny wound appear,
Short while it grieves

Some, lucky, find a flowery spot,
For which they never toil'd nor swat;
They drink the sweet, and eat the fat,
But care or pain;
And, haply, eye the barren hut
With high disdain.

With steady aim, some fortune chase;
Keen hope does every sinew brace;
Through fair, through foul, they urge the race,
And seize the prey:
Then cannie, in some cozie place,
They close the day.

And others, like your humble servan',
Poor wights! nae rules nor roads observin;
To right or left, eternal swervin,
They zig-zag on;
Till curst with age, obscure an' starvin,
They aften groan.

Alas! what bitter toil an' straining—
But truce with peevish, poor complaining!
Is fortune's fickle Luna waning?
E'en let her gang!
Beneath what light she has remaining,
Let's sing our sang.

My pen I here fling to the door,
And kneel, "Ye Powers!" and warm implore,
"Though I should wander terra o'er,
In all her climes,
Grant me but this, I ask no more,
Aye rowth o' rhymes.

"Gie dreeping roasts to kintra lairds,
Till icicles hing frae their beards;
Gie fine braw claes to fine life-guards,
And maids of honour
And yill an' whisky gie to cairds,
Until they sconner.

"A title, Dempster merits it;
A garter gie to Willie Pitt;
Gie wealth to some be-ledger'd cit,
In cent. per cent.
But gie me real, sterling wit,
And I'm content.

"While ye are pleased to keep me hale
I'll sit down o'er my scanty meal,
Be't water-brose, or muslin-kail,
Wi' cheerful face,
As lang's the muses dinna fail
To say the grace."

An anxious e'e I never throws
Behint my lug, or by my nose;
I jouk beneath misfortune's blows
As weel's I may;
Sworn foe to sorrow, care, and prose,
I rhyme away.

O ye douce folk, that live by rule,
Grave, tideless-blooded, calm and cool,
Compared wi' you—O fool! fool! fool!
How much unlike!
Your hearts are just a standing pool,
Your lives, a dyke!

Hae hair-brain'd, sentimental traces
In your unletter'd, nameless faces!
In *arioso* trills and graces
Ye never stray,
But, *gravissimo*, solemn basses
Ye hum away.

Ye are sae grave, nae doubt ye're wise;
Nae ferly though ye do despise
The hairum-scarum, ram-stam boys,
The rattlin squad:
I see you upward cast your eyes—
—Ye ken the road.

Whilst I—but I shall haud me there—
Wi' you I'll scarce gang onywhere—
Then, Jamie, I shall say nae mair,
But quat my sang
Content wi' you to mak a pair,
Whare'er I gang

A DREAM.

Thoughts, words, and deeds, the statute blames with reason;
But surely *dreams* were ne'er indicted treason.

[On reading, in the public papers, the Laureat's Ode, with the other parade of June 4, 1786, the author was no sooner dropped asleep, than he imagined himself to the birth-day levee; and in his dreaming fancy made the following address.]

I.

GUID-MORNING to your majesty!
May heaven augment your blisses,
On every new birth-day ye see,
An humble poet wishes!
My bardship here, at your levee,
On sic a day as this is,
Is sure an uncouth sight to see,
Amang the birth-day dresses
Sae fine this day.

II.

I see ye're complimented thrang,
By monie a lord and lady;
"God save the king!" 's a cuckoo sang
That's unco easy said aye;
The poets, too, a venal gang,
Wi' rhymes weel turn'd and ready,
Wad gar you trow ye ne'er do wrang,
But aye unerring steady,
On sic a day.

III.

For me, before a monarch's face,
E'en there I winna flatter;
For neither pension, post, nor place,
Am I your humble debtor:
So, nae reflection on your grace,
Your kingship to bespatter;
There's monie waur been o' the race,
And aiblins ane been better
Than you this day.

IV.

'Tis very true, my sovereign king,
My skill may weel be doubted:
But facts are chiels that winna ding,
An' downa be disputed:
Your royal nest, beneath your wing,
Is e'en right left an' clouted,
And now the third part of the string,
An' less, will gang about it
Than did ae day.

V.

Far be't frae me that I aspire
To blame your legislation,
Or say, ye wisdom want, or fire,
To rule this mighty nation!
But, faith, I muckle doubt, my sire,
Ye've trusted ministration
To chaps wha in a barn or byre
Wad better fill their station
Than courts yon day.

VI.

And now ye've gien auld Britain peace,
Her broken shins to plaster,
Your sair taxation does her fleece,
Till she has scarce a tester;
For me, thank God, my life's a lease,
Nae bargain wearing faster,
Or, faith! I fear, that wi' the geese,
I shortly boost to pasture
I' the craft some day.

VII.

I'm no mistrusting Willie Pitt,
When taxes he enlarges,
(An' Will's a true guid fallow's get,
A name not envy spairges,)

Biblioteca Nacional

THE VISION.

IX.

XI.

XII.

That he intends to pay your debt,
An' lessen a' your charges;
But, G–d-sake! let nae saving-fit
Abridge your bonnie barges
An' boats this day.

VIII.

Adieu, my liege! may freedom geck
Beneath your high protection;
An' may ye rax corruption's neck,
And gie her for dissection!
But since I'm here, I'll no neglect,
In loyal, true affection,
To pay your queen, with due respect,
My fealty an' subjection
This great birth-day.

IX.

Hail, majesty most excellent!
While nobles strive to please ye,
Will ye accept a compliment
A simple poet gies ye?
Thae bonnie bairntime, heaven has lent,
Still higher may they heeze ye
In bliss, till fate some day is sent,
For ever to release ye
Frae care that day.

X.

For you, young potentate o' W****,
I tell your highness fairly,
Down pleasure's stream, wi' swelling sails,
I'm tauld ye're driving rarely;
But some day ye may gnaw your nails,
An' curse your folly sairly,
That e'er ye brak Diana's pales,
Or rattled dice wi' Charlie,
By night or day.

XI.

Yet aft a ragged cowte's been known
To make a noble aiver;
So ye may doucely fill a throne,
For a' their clishmaclaver:
There, him* at Agincourt wha shone,
Few better were or braver;
And yet, wi' funny, queer Sir John,† [1]
He was an unco shaver
For monie a day.

XII.

For you, right reverend O*******,
Nane sets the lawn-sleeve sweeter,
Although a riband at your lug
Wad been a dress completer:
As ye disown yon paughty dog
That bears the keys of Peter,
Then, swith! an' get a wife to hug,
Or, trouth! ye'll stain the mitre
Some luckless day.

* King Henry V.
† Sir John Falstaff: *vide* Shakspeare.

XIII

Young, royal tarry breeks, I learn,
Ye've lately come athwart her;
A glorious galley,* stem an' stern,
Well rigg'd for Venus' barter;
But first hang out, that she'll discern
Your hymeneal charter,
Then heave aboard your grapple airn,
An', large upo' her quarter,
Come full that day.

XIV.

Ye, lastly, bonnie blossoms a',
Ye royal lasses dainty,
Heaven make you guid as weel as braw,
An' gie you lads a-plenty:
But sneer nae British boys awa',
For kings are unco scant aye;
An' German gentles are but sma',
They're better just than want aye,
On onie day.

XV.

God bless you a'! consider now,
Ye're unco muckle dautet;
But, ere the course o' life be through,
It may be bitter sautet:
An' I hae seen their coggie fou,
That yet hae tarrow't at it;
But or the day was done, I trow,
The laggen they hae clautet
Fu' clean that day.

THE VISION.

DUAN FIRST.†

The sun had closed the winter day,
The curlers quat their roaring play,
An' hunger'd maukin ta'en her way
To kail-yards green,
While faithless snaws ilk step betray
Whare she has been.

The thresher's weary flingin-tree,
The lee-lang day had tired me;
And when the day had closed his e'e,
Far i' the west,
Ben i' the spence, right pensivelie,
I gaed to rest.

There, lanely, by the ingle cheek,
I sat and eyed the spewing reek,
That fill'd, wi' hoast-provoking smeek,
The auld clay biggin;
An' heard the restless rattons squeak
About the riggin.

* Alluding to the newspaper account of a certain royal sailor's amour.

† Duan, a term of Ossian's for the different divisions of a digressive poem. See his Cath-Loda, vol. ii. of M'Pherson's translation.

All in this mottie, misty clime,
I backward mused on wasted time,
How I had spent my youthfu' time,
And done naething,
But stringin blethers up in rhyme,
For fools to sing.

Had I to guid advice but harkit,
I might, by this, hae led a market,
Or strutted in a bank an' clarkit
My cash account:
While here, half mad, half fed, half sarkit,
Is a' th' amount.

I started, muttering, blockhead! coof!
And heaved on high my waukit loof,
To swear by a' yon starry roof,
Or some rash aith,
That I, henceforth, would be rhyme-proof
Till my last breath—

When click! the strink the snick did draw;
And jee! the door gaed to the wa';
An' by my ingle-lowe I saw,
Now bleezin bright,
A tight, outlandish hizzie, braw,
Come full in sight.

Ye need na doubt, I held my whisht;
The infant aith, half-form'd, was crusht;
I glowr'd as eerie's I'd been dusht
In some wild glen;
When sweet, like modest worth, she blusht,
And stepped ben.

Green, slender, leaf-clad holly-boughs
Were twisted, gracefu', round her brows;
I took her for some Scottish muse,
By that same token;
An' come to stop those reckless vows,
Wou'd soon been broken.

A "hair-brain'd, sentimental trace,"
Was strongly marked in her face;
A wildly-witty, rustic grace
Shone full upon her;
Her eye, e'en turn'd on empty space,
Beam'd keen with honour.

Down flow'd her robe, a tartan sheen;
Till half a leg was scrimply seen;
And such a leg! my bonnie Jean
Could only peer it;
Sae straught, sae taper, tight, and clean,
Nane else came near it.

Her mantle large, of greenish hue,
My gazing wonder chiefly drew;
Deep lights and shades, bold-mingling threw,
A lustre grand;
And seem'd, to my astonish'd view,
A well known land.

Here, rivers in the sea were lost;
There, mountains to the skies were tost:
Here, tumbling billows mark'd the coast,
With surging foam;
There, distant shone art's lofty boast,
The lordly dome.

Here, Doon pour'd down his far-fetch'd floods;
There, well-fed Irwine stately thuds:
Auld hermit Ayr staw through his woods,
On to the shore;
And many a lesser torrent scuds,
With seeming roar.

Low, in a sandy valley spread,
An ancient borough rear'd her head;
Still, as in Scottish story read,
She boasts a race,
To every nobler virtue bred,
And polish'd grace.

By stately tower or palace fair,
Or ruins pendent in the air,
Bold stems of heroes, here and there,
I could discern;
Some seem'd to muse, some seem'd to dare,
With feature stern.

My heart did glowing transport feel,
To see a race* heroic wheel,
And brandish round the deep-dyed steel
In sturdy blows;
While back-recoiling seem'd to reel
Their stubborn foes.

His country's saviour,† mark him well!
Bold Richardton's‡ heroic swell;
The chief on Sark§ who glorious fell,
In high command;
And he whom ruthless fates expel
His native land.

There, where a sceptred Pictish shade,‖
Stalk'd round his ashes lowly laid,
I mark'd a martial race, portray'd
In colours strong;
Bold, soldier-featur'd, undismay'd
They strode along.

Through many a wild, romantic grove,¶
Near many a hermit-fancy'd cove,
(Fit haunts for friendship or for love,
In musing mood,
An aged judge, I saw him rove,
Dispensing good.

With deep-struck reverential awe**
The learned sire and son I saw,
To Nature's God and Nature's law
They gave their lore,
This, all its source and end to draw,
That, to adore.

---

* The Wallaces. † William Wallace.

‡ Adam Wallace, of Richardton, cousin to the immortal preserver of Scottish independence.

§ Wallace, Laird of Craigie, who was second in command, under Douglas Earl of Ormond, at the famous battle on the banks of Sark, fought anno 1448. That glorious victory was principally owing to the judicious conduct, and intrepid valour of the gallant Laird of Craigie, who died of his wounds after the action.

‖ Coilus, King of the Picts, from whom the district of Kyle is said to take its name, lies buried, as tradition says, near the family-seat of the Montgomeries of Coil's-field, where his burial-place is still shown.

¶ Barskimming the seat of the Lord Justice Clerk.

** Catrine, the seat of the late Doctor and present Professor Stewart.

Brydone's brave ward* I well could spy,
Beneath old Scotia's smiling eye;
Who call'd on fame, low standing by,
To hand him on,
Where many a patriot name on high,
And hero shone.

DUAN SECOND.

With musing-deep, astonish'd stare,
I view'd the heavenly-seeming fair;
A whispering throb did witness bear,
Of kindred sweet,
When with an elder sister's air
She did me greet.

"All hail! my own inspired bard!
In me thy native muse regard!
Nor longer mourn thy fate is hard,
Thus poorly low!
I come to give thee such reward
As we bestow.

"Know the great genius of this land
Has many a light aërial band,
Who, all beneath his high command,
Harmoniously,
As arts or arms they understand,
Their labours ply.

"They Scotia's race among them share;
Some fire the soldier on to dare;
Some rouse the patriot up to bare
Corruption's heart;
Some teach the bard, a darling care,
The tuneful art.

"'Mong swelling floods of reeking gore,
They, ardent, kindling spirits pour;
Or, 'mid the venal senate's roar,
They, sightless, stand,
To mend the honest patriot lore,
And grace the hand.

"And when the bard, or hoary sage,
Charm or instruct the future age,
They bind the wild poetic rage
In energy,
Or point the inconclusive page
Full on the eye.

"Hence Fullarton, the brave and young;
Hence Dempster's zeal-inspired tongue;
Hence sweet harmonious Beattie sung
His 'Minstrel lays;'
Or tore, with noble ardour stung,
The skeptic's bays.

"To lower orders are assign'd
The humbler ranks of human-kind,
The rustic bard, the labouring hind,
The artisan;
All choose, as various they're inclined,
The various man.

"When yellow waves the heavy grain,
The threatening storm some strongly rein,
Some teach to meliorate the plain
With tillage-skill;
And some instruct the shepherd train,
Blythe o'er the hill.

"Some hint the lover's harmless wile;
Some grace the maiden's artless smile;
Some soothe the labourer's weary toil,
For humble gains,
And make his cottage scenes beguile
His cares and pains.

"Some, bounded to a district space,
Explore at large man's infant race,
To mark the embryotic trace
Of rustic bard;
And careful note each opening grace,
A guide and guard.

"Of these am I—Coila my name;
And this district as mine I claim,
Where once the Campbells, chiefs of fame,
Held ruling power:
I mark'd thy embryo tuneful flame,
Thy natal hour.

"With future hope, I oft would gaze
Fond, on thy little early ways,
Thy rudely caroll'd chiming phrase,
In uncouth rhymes,
Fired at the simple, artless lays
Of other times.

"I saw thee seek the sounding shore,
Delighted with the dashing roar;
Or when the north his fleecy store
Drove through the sky
I saw grim nature's visage hoar
Struck thy young eye.

"Or, when the deep green-mantled earth
Warm cherish'd every floweret's birth,
And joy and music pouring forth
In every grove,
I saw thee eye the general mirth
With boundless love.

"When ripen'd fields, and azure skies,
Call'd forth the reapers' rustling noise,
I saw thee leave their evening joys,
And lonely stalk,
To vent thy bosom's swelling rise
In pensive walk.

"When youthful love, warm-blushing, strong
Keen-shivering shot thy nerves along,
Those accents, grateful to thy tongue,
Th' adored name,
I taught thee how to pour in song,
To soothe thy flame.

"I saw thy pulse's maddening play,
Wild send thee pleasure's devious way,
Misled by fancy's meteor ray,
By passion driven;
But yet the light that led astray
Was light from heaven.

"I taught thy manners-painting strains,
The loves, the ways of simple swains,
Till now, o'er all my wide domains
Thy fame extends:
And some, the pride of Coila's plains,
Become my friends.

* Colonel Fullarton.

"Thou canst not learn, nor can I show,
To paint with Thomson's landscape glow;
Or wake the bosom-melting throe,
With Shenstone's art;
Or pour, with Gray, the moving flow
Warm on the heart.

"Yet all beneath th' unrivall'd rose,
The lowly daisy sweetly blows;
Though large the forest's monarch throws
His army shade,
Yet green the juicy hawthorn grows,
Adown the glade.

"Then never murmur nor repine;
Strive in thy humble sphere to shine:
And, trust me, not Potosi's mine,
Nor kings' regard,
Can give a bliss o'ermatching thine,
A rustic bard.

"To give my counsels all in one,
Thy tuneful flame still careful fan;
Preserve the dignity of man
With soul erect;
And trust, the universal plan
Will all protect.

"*And wear thou this*"—she solemn said,
And bound the holly round my head:
The polish'd leaves, and berries red
Did rustling play;
And, like a passing thought, she fled
In light away.

ADDRESS TO THE UNCO GUID; OR, THE RIGIDLY RIGHTEOUS.

My son, these maxims make a rule,
And lump them aye thegither;
The rigid righteous is a fool,
The rigid wise anither:
The cleanest corn that e'er was dight,
May hae some pyles o' caff in;
So ne'er a fellow creature slight,
For random fits o' daffin.
Solomon.—Eccles. ch. vii. ver. 16.

I.

O YE wha are sae guid yoursel,
Sae pious and sae holy,
Ye've naught to do but mark and tell
Your neebor's faults and folly!
Whase life is like a weel-gaun mill,
Supplied wi' store o' water,
The heapet happer's ebbing still,
And still the clap plays clatter.

II.

Hear me, ye venerable core,
As counsel for poor mortals,
That frequent pass douce wisdom's door
For glaikit folly's portals;
I, for their thoughtless, careless sakes,
Would here propone defences,
Their donsie tricks, their black mistakes,
Their failings and mischances.

III.

Ye see your state wi' theirs compared,
And shudder at the niffer;
But cast a moment's fair regard,
What maks the mighty differ?
Discount what scant occasion gave,
That purity ye pride in,
And (what's aft mair than a' the lave)
Your better art o' hiding.

IV.

Think, when your castigated pulse
Gies now and then a wallop,
What ragings must his veins convulse,
That still eternal gallop;
Wi' wind and tide fair i' your tail,
Right on ye scud your sea-way;
But in the teeth o' baith to sail,
It maks an unco leeway.

V.

See social life and glee sit down,
All joyous and unthinking,
Till, quite transmugrify'd, they're grown
Debauchery and drinking:
O, would they stay to calculate
Th' eternal consequences;
Or your more dreaded hell to taste,
D-mnation of expenses!

VI.

Ye high, exalted, virtuous dames,
Tied up in godly laces,
Before ye gie poor frailty names,
Suppose a change o' cases;
A dear loved lad, convenience snug,
A treacherous inclination—
But, let me whisper i' your lug,
Ye're aiblins nae temptation.

VII.

Then gently scan your brother man,
Still gentler sister woman;
Though they may gang a kennin wrang,
To step aside is human:
One point must still be greatly dark,
The moving why they do it:
And just as lamely can ye mark,
How far perhaps they rue it.

VIII.

Who made the heart, 'tis He alone
Decidedly can try us,
He knows each chord—its various tone
Each spring, its various bias:
Then at the balance let's be mute;
We never can adjust it;
What's done we partly may compute,
But not know what's resisted.

TAM SAMSON'S ELEGY.*

An honest man's the noblest work of God.
Pope.

Has auld K********* seen the deil?
Or great M'*******† thrawn his heel?
Or R******* again grown weel,‡
To preach an' read.
"Na, waur than a'!" cries ilka chiel,
Tam Samson's dead!

K********* lang may grunt an' grane,
An' sigh, an' sab, an' greet her lane,
An' cleed her bairns, man, wife, an' wean,
In mourning weed;
To death she's dearly paid the kane,
Tam Samson's dead!

The brethren of the mystic level
May hing their head in woefu' bevel,
While by their nose the tears will revel,
Like ony bead;
Death's gien the lodge an unco devel:
Tam Samson's dead!

When winter muffles up his cloak,
And binds the mire like a rock;
When to the loughs the curlers flock,
Wi' gleesome speed,
Wha will they station at the cock?
Tam Samson's dead!

He was the king o' a' the core,
To guard, or draw, or wick a bore,
Or up the rink like Jehu roar
In time of need;
But now he lags on death's hog-score,
Tam Samson's dead!

Now safe the stately sawmont sail,
And trouts bedropp'd wi' crimson hail,
And eels weel kenn'd for souple tail,
And geds for greed,
Since dark in death's fish-creel we wail
Tam Samson dead!

Rejoice, ye birring paitricks a';
Ye cootie moorcocks, crousely craw;
Ye maukins, cock your fud fu' braw,
Withouten dread;
Your mortal fae is now awa',
Tam Samson's dead!

That woefu' morn be ever mourn'd,
Saw him in shootin graith adorn'd,
While pointers round impatient burn'd,
Frae couples freed;
But, och! he gaed and ne'er return'd!
Tam Samson's dead!

In vain auld age his body batters;
In vain the gout his ankles fetters;
In vain the burns came down like waters,
An acre braid!
Now every auld wife, greetin, clatters,
Tam Samson's dead!

Owre many a weary hag he limpit,
An' aye the tither shot he thumpit,
Till coward death behind him jumpit,
Wi' deadly feide;
Now he proclaims, wi' tout o' trumpet,
Tam Samson's dead!

When at his heart he felt the dagger,
He reel'd his wonted bottle swagger,
But yet he drew the mortal trigger
Wi' weel aim'd heed;
"L—d, five!" he cried, and owre did stagger;
Tam Samson's dead!

Ilk hoary hunter mourn'd a brither;
Ilk sportsman youth bemoan'd a father;
Yon auld gray stane, amang the heather,
Marks out his head,
Whare Burns has wrote, in rhyming blether
Tam Samson's dead!

There low he lies, in lasting rest;
Perhaps upon his mouldering breast
Some spitefu' muirfowl bigs her nest,
To hatch an' breed;
Alas! nae mair he'll them molest!
Tam Samson's dead!

When August winds the heather wave,
And sportsmen wander by yon grave,
Three volleys let his memory crave,
O' pouther an' lead,
Till echo answer frae her cave,
Tam Samson's dead!

Heaven rest his saul, whare'er he be!
Is th' wish o' monie mae than me;
He had twa faults, or may be three,
Yet what remead?
Ae social, honest man want we:
Tam Samson's dead!

THE EPITAPH.

Tam Samson's weel-worn clay here lies,
Ye canting zealots, spare him!
If honest worth in heaven rise,
Ye'll mend or ye win near him.

PER CONTRA.

Go, fame, and canter like a filly,
Through a' the streets an' neuks o' Killie,*
Tell every social, honest billie
To cease his grievin,
For yet, unskaith'd by death's gleg gullie,
Tam Samson's livin.

* When this worthy old sportsman went out last muirfowl season, he supposed it was to be, in Ossian's phrase, "the last of his fields;" and expressed an ardent wish to lie and be buried in the muirs. On this hint the author composed his elegy and epitaph.

† A certain preacher, a great favourite with the million. *Vide* the Ordination, stanza ii.

‡ Another preacher, an equal favourite with the few, who was at that time ailing. For him, see also the Ordination, stanza ix.

* Killie is a phrase the country folks sometimes use for Kilmarnock.

HALLOWEEN.*

The following poem will, by many readers, be well enough understood; but for the sake of those who are unacquainted with the manners and traditions of the country where the scene is cast, notes are added, to give some account of the principal charms and spells of that night, so big with prophecy to the peasantry in the west of Scotland. The passion of prying into futurity makes a striking part of the history of human nature in its rude state, in all ages and nations: and it may be some entertainment to a philosophic mind, if any such should honour the author with a perusal, to see the remains of it among the more unenlightened in our own.

Yes! let the rich deride, the proud disdain,
The simple pleasures of the lowly train;
To me more dear, congenial to my heart,
One native charm, than all the gloss of art
GOLDSMITH.

I.

Upon that night, when fairies light,
On Cassilis Downans† dance,
Or owre the lays, in splendid blaze,
On sprightly coursers prance;
Or for Colean the route is ta'en,
Beneath the moon's pale beams;
There, up the cove,‡ to stray an' rove
Amang the rocks and streams,
To sport that night.

II.

Amang the bonnie winding banks,
Where Doon rins, wimpling clear,
Where Bruce§ ance ruled the martial ranks,
An' shook his Carrick spear,
Some merry, friendly countra folks,
Together did convene,
To burn their nits, an' pou their stocks,
An' haud their Halloween
Fu' blythe that night.

III.

The lasses feat, an' cleanly neat,
Mair braw than when they're fine;
Their faces blythe, fu' sweetly kythe,
Hearts leal, an' warm, an' kin':
The lads sae trig, wi' wooer-babs,
Weel knotted on their garten,
Some unco blate, an' some wi' gabs,
Gar lasses hearts gang startin
Whyles fast at night.

IV.

Then first and foremost, through the kail,
Their *stocks** maun a' be sought ance;
They steek their e'en, an' graip an' wale,
For muckle anes an' straught anes.
Poor hav'rel Will fell aff the drift,
An' wander'd through the *bow-kail*,
An pow't for want o' better shift,
A *runt* was like a sow-tail,
Sae bow't that night.

V.

Then, straught or crooked, yird or nane,
They roar and cry a' throu'ther:
The vera wee things, todlin, rin,
Wi' stocks out-owre their shouther;
An' gif the *custoc's* sweet or sour,
Wi' joctelegs they taste them;
Syne coziely, aboon the door,
Wi' cannie care they place them
To lie that night.

VI.

The lasses staw frae 'mang them a',
To pou their *stalks o' corn*;†
But Rab slips out, an' jinks about,
Behint the muckle thorn:
He grippet Nelly hard an' fast;
Loud skirl'd a' the lasses;
But her *tap-pickle* maist was lost,
When kiuttlin in the fause-house‡
Wi' him that night.

VII.

The auld guidwife's weel hoordet nits§
Are round an' round divided,
An' monie lads' an' lasses' fates
Are there that night decided:
Some kindle, couthie, side by side
An' burn thegither trimly;

* Is thought to be a night when witches, devils, and other mischief-making beings, are all abroad on their baneful, midnight errands; particularly those aërial people the fairies, are said on that night to hold a grand anniversary.

† Certain little, romantic, rocky, green hills, in the neighbourhood of the ancient seat of the Earls of Cassilis.

‡ A noted cavern near Colean house, called the Cove of Colean: which, as Cassilis Downans, is famed in country story for being a favourite haunt of fairies.

§ The famous family of that name, the ancestors of Robert, the great deliverer of his country, were Earls of Carrick.

* The first ceremony of Halloween is, pulling each a *stock*, or plant of kail. They must go out, hand in hand, with eyes shut, and pull the first they meet with: its being big or little, straight or crooked, is prophetic of the size and shape of the grand object of all their spells—the husband or wife. If any *yird*, or earth, stick to the root, that is *tocher*, or fortune; and the taste of the *custoc*, that is, the heart of the stem, is indicative of the natural temper and disposition. Lastly, the stems, or, to give them their ordinary appellation, the *runts*, are placed somewhere above the head of the door: and the Christian names of the people whom chance brings into the house, are, according to the priority of placing the *runts*, the names in question.

† They go to the barn-yard and pull each, at three several times, a stalk of oats. If the third stalk wants the *top-pickle*, that is, the grain at the top of the stalk, the party in question will come to the marriage bed any thing but a maid.

‡ When the corn is in a doubtful state, by being too green, or wet, the stack-builder, by means of old timber, &c., makes a large apartment in his stack, with an opening in the side which is fairest exposed to the wind: this he calls a *fause-house*.

§ Burning the nuts is a famous charm. They name the lad and lass to each particular nut, as they lay them in the fire, and accordingly as they burn quietly together, or start from beside one another, the course and issue of the courtship will be.

Some start awa wi' saucie pride,
And jump out-owre the chimlie
Fu' high that night.

VIII.

Jean slips in twa, wi' tentie e'e;
Wha 'twas she wadna tell;
But this is Jock, an' this is me,
She says in to hersel:
He bleezed owre her, an' she owre him,
As they wad never mair part;
Till fuff! he started up the lum,
And Jean had e'en a sair heart
To see't that night.

IX.

Poor Willie, wi' his *bow-kail runt*,
Was brunt wi' primsie Mallie;
An' Mallie, nae doubt, took the drunt,
To be compared to Willie:
Mall's nit lap out wi' pridefu' fling,
An' her ain fit it burnt it;
While Willie lap, and swoor by jing,
'Twas just the way he wanted
To be that night.

X.

Nell had the fause-house in her min',
She pits hersel an' Rob in;
In loving bleeze they sweetly join,
Till white in ase they're sobbin:
Nell's heart was dancin at the view,
She whisper'd Rob to look for't:
Rob, stowlins, prie'd her bonnie mou,
Fu' cozie in the neuk for't,
Unseen that night.

XI.

But Merran sat behint their backs,
Her thoughts on Andrew Bell;
She lea'es them gashin at their cracks,
And slips out by hersel:
She through the yard the nearest taks,
An' to the kiln she goes then,
An' darklins grapit for the bauks,
And in the *blue-clue** throws then,
Right fear't that night.

XII.

An' aye she wint, an' aye she swat,
I wat she made nae jaukin;
Till something held within the pat,
Guid L—d! but she was quakin!
But whether 'twas the deil himsel,
Or whether 'twas a bauken,
Or whether it was Andrew Bell,
She did na wait on talkin
To spier that night.

* Whoever would, with success, try this spell, must strictly observe these directions: Steal out, all alone, to the kiln, and, darkling, throw into the pot a clue of blue yarn; wind it in a new clue off the old one; and, towards the latter end, something will hold the thread; demand *wha hauds?* i. e. who holds? an answer will be returned from the kiln-pot, by naming the Christian and surname of your future spouse.

XIII.

Wee Jenny to her grannie says,
"Will ye go wi' me, grannie?
I'll eat the apple* at the glass,
I gat frae uncle Johnie;"
She fuff't her pipe wi' sic a lunt,
In wrath she was sae vap'rin,
She noticed na, an azle brunt
Her braw new worset apron
Out through that night.

XIV.

"Ye little skelpie-limmer's face!
How daur you try sic sportin,
As seek the foul thief ony place,
For him to spae your fortune?
Nae doubt but ye may get a sight!
Great cause ye hae to fear it;
For monie a ane has gotten a fright,
An' lived an' died deleerit
On sic a night.

XV.

"Ae hairst afore the Sherra-moor,
I mind't as weel' yestreen,
I was a gilpey then, I'm sure
I was na past fyfteen:
The simmer had been cauld an' wat,
An' stuff was unco green;
An' aye a rantin kirn we gat,
An' just on Hallowe'en
It fell that night.

XVI.

"Our stibble-rig was Rab M'Graen,
A clever, sturdy fallow;
He's sin got Eppie Sim wi' wean,
That lived in Achmacalla:
He gat hemp-seed,† I mind it weel,
An' he made unco light o't;
But monie a day was by himsel,
He was sae sairly frighted
That vera night."

XVII.

Then up gat fechtin Jamie Fleck,
An' he swoor by his conscience,
That he could saw hemp-seed a peck;
For it was a' but nonsense;
The auld guidman raught down the pock,
An' out a handful gied him;
Syne bad him slip frae 'mang the folk,
Sometimes when nae ane seed him:
An' try't that night.

* Take a candle, and go alone to a looking-glass; eat an apple before it, and some traditions say, you should comb your hair, all the time; the face of your conjugal companion, *to be*, will be seen in the glass, as if peeping over your shoulder.

† Steal out unperceived, and sow a handful of hemp-seed; harrowing it with any thing you can conveniently draw after you. Repeat now and then, "Hemp-seed, I saw thee, hemp-seed, I saw thee; and him (or her) that is to be my true love, come after me and pou thee." Look over your left shoulder, and you will see the appearance of the person invoked, in the attitude of pulling hemp. Some traditions say, "come after me, and shaw thee," that is, show thyself: in which case it simply appears. Others omit the harrowing, and say, "come after me, and harrow thee."

XVIII.

He marches through amang the stacks,
Though he was something sturtin;
The graip he for a harrow taks,
An' haurls at his curpin:
An' every now an' then he says,
"Hemp-seed, I saw thee,
An' her that is to be my lass,
Come after me and draw thee,
As fast this night."

XIX.

He whistled up Lord Lenox' march
To keep his courage cheerie;
Although his hair began to arch,
He was sae fley'd an' eerie:
Till presently he hears a squeak,
An' then a grane an' gruntle;
He by his shouther gae a keek,
An' tumbled wi' a wintle
Out-owre that night.

XX.

He roar'd a horrid murder-shout,
In dreadfu' desperation!
An' young an' auld came rinnin out,
To hear the sad narration:
He swoor 'twas hilchin Jean M'Craw,
Or crouchie Morran Humphie,
Till stop! she trotted through them a';
An' wha was it but Grumphie
Asteer that night!

XXI.

Meg fain wad to the barn gaen,
To win three wechts o' naething;*
But for to meet the deil her lane,
She pat but little faith in:
She gies the herd a pickle nits,
An' twa red cheekit apples,
To watch, while for the barn she sets,
In hopes to see Tam Kipples
That vera night.

XXII.

She turns the key wi' cannie thraw
An' owre the threshold ventures
But first on Sawnie gies a ca',
Syne bauldly in she enters;
A ratton rattled up the wa',
An' she cried L—d preserve her,
An' ran through midden-hole an' a',
An' pray'd wi' zeal an' fervour,
Fu' fast that night.

XXIII.

They hoy't out Will, wi' sair advice:
They hecht him some fine braw ane;
It chanced the stack he faddom'd thrice,*
Was timmer propt for thrawin:
He taks a swirlie, auld moss-oak,
For some black, grousome carlin;
An' loot a winze, an' drew a stroke,
Till skin in blypes came haurlin
Aff's nieves that night.

XXIV.

A wanton widow Leezie was,
As canty as a kittlen;
But och! that night, amang the shaws,
She got a fearfu' settlin!
She through the whins, an' by the cairn,
An' owre the hill gaed scrievin,
Whare three lairds' lands met at a burn†
To dip her left sark sleeve in,
Was bent that night.

XXV.

Whyles owre a linn the burnie plays,
As through the glen it wimplet:
Whyles round a rocky scar it strays;
Whyles in a wiel it dimplet;
Whyles glitter'd to the nightly rays,
Wi' bickering, dancing dazzle;
Whyles cookit underneath the braes,
Below the spreading hazel,
Unseen that night.

XXVI.

Amang the brachens, on the brae,
Between her an' the moon,
The deil, or else an outler quey,
Gat up an' gae a croon:
Poor Leezie's heart maist lap the hool;
Neer lav'rock height she jumpit,
But mist a fit, an' in the pool
Out-owre the lugs she plumpit,
Wi' a plunge that night.

XXVII.

In order, on the clean hearth-stane,
The luggies three‡ are ranged,

* This charm must likewise be performed unperceived, and alone. You go to the barn, and open both doors, taking them off the hinges, if possible; for there is danger that the being, about to appear, may shut the doors, and do you some mischief. Then take that instrument used in winnowing the corn, which, in our country dialect, we call a *wecht*; and go through all the attitudes of letting down corn against the wind. Repeat it three times; and the third time an apparition will pass through the barn, in at the windy door, and out at the other, having both the figure in question, and the appearance or retinue, marking the employment or station in life.

* Take an opportunity of going, unnoticed, to a Bear stack, and fathom it three times round. The last fathom of the last time, you will catch in your arms the appearance of your future conjugal yoke-fellow.

† You go out, one or more, for this is a social spell, to a south running spring or rivulet, where "three lairds' lands meet," and dip your left shirt sleeve. Go to bed in sight of a fire, and hang your wet sleeve before it to dry. Lie awake; and some time near midnight, an apparition, having the exact figure of the grand object in question, will come and turn the sleeve, as if to dry the other side of it.

‡ Take three dishes; put clean water in one, foul water in another, leave the third empty: blindfold a person, and lead him to the hearth where the dishes are ranged: he (or she) dips the left hand: if by chance in the clean water, the future husband or wife will come to the bar of matrimony a maid; if in the foul, a widow; if in the empty dish, it foretells, with equal certainty, no marriage at all. It is repeated three times, and every time the arrangement of the dishes is altered

And every time great care is ta'en,
To see them duly changed:
Auld uncle John, wha wedlock's joys
Sin Mar's year did desire,
Because he gat the toom-dish thrice,
He heaved them on the fire
In wrath that night.

XXVIII.

Wi' merry sangs, and friendly cracks,
I wat they dinna weary;
An' unco tales, an' funnie jokes,
Their sports were cheap an' cheery,
Till butter'd so'ns,* wi' fragrant lunt,
Set a' their gabs a-steerin;
Syne, wi' a social glass o' strunt,
They parted aff careerin
Fu' blythe that night.

THE AULD FARMER'S NEW-YEAR MORNING SALUTATION TO HIS AULD MARE MAGGIE,

ON GIVING HER ACCUSTOMED RIPP OF CORN TO HANSEL IN THE NEW-YEAR.

A guid new-year I wish thee, Maggie!
Hae, there's a rip to thy auld baggie:
Though thou's howe-backit, now, an' knaggie,
I've seen the day,
Thou could hae gaen like ony staggie
Out-owre the lay.

Though now thou's dowie, stiff, an' crazy,
An' thy auld hide's as white's a daisy,
I've seen thee dappl't, sleek, and glaizie,
A bonnie gray:
He should been tight that daur't to raize thee,
Ance in a day.

Thou ance was i' the foremost rank,
A filly buirdly, steeve, an' swank,
An' set weel down a shapely shank,
As e'er tread yird;
An' could hae flown out-owre a stank,
Like ony bird.

It's now some nine an' twenty year,
Sin' thou was my good father's meere;
He gied me thee, o' tocher clear,
An' fifty mark;
Though it was sma', 'twas weel-won gear,
An' thou was stark.

When first I gaed to woo my Jenny,
Ye then was trottin wi' your minnie:
Though ye was trickie, slee, an' funnie,
Ye ne'er was donsie;
But hamely, tawie, quiet, an' cannie,
An' unco sonsie.

That day, ye pranced wi' muckle pride,
When ye bure hame my bonnie bride;
An' sweet, an' gracefu' she did ride,
Wi' maiden air!
Kyle Stewart I could bragged wide,
For sic a pair.

Though now ye dow but hoyte an' hobble
An' wintle like a saumont-coble,
That day ye was a jinker noble
For heels an' win'!
An' ran them till they a' did wauble,
Far, far behin'.

When thou an' I were young an' skeigh,
An' stable-meals at fairs were dreigh,
How thou wad prance, an' snore, an' skreigh,
An' tak the road!
Town's bodies ran, and stood abeigh,
An' ca't thee mad.

When thou was corn't, an' I was mellow,
We took the road aye like a swallow:
At brooses thou had ne'er a fellow,
For pith an' speed:
But every tail thou pay't them hollow,
Where'er thou gaed.

The sma', droop-rumpl't, hunter cattle,
Might aiblins waur't thee for a brattle;
But sax Scotch miles thou try't their mettle,
An' gar't them whaizle:
Nae whip nor spur, but just a wattle
O' saugh or hazel.

Thou was a noble fittie-lan,
As e'er in tug or tow was drawn!
Aft thee an' I, in aught hours gaun,
On guid March weather,
Hae turn'd sax rood beside our han',
For days thegither.

Thou never braindg't, an' fetch't, an' fliskit,
But thy auld tail thou wad hae whiskit,
An' spread abreed thy weel-fill'd brisket,
Wi' pith, an' pow'r,
Till spritty knowes wad rair't and risket,
An' slypet owre.

When frosts lay lang, an' snows were deep,
An' threaten'd labour back to keep,
I gied thy cog a wee-bit heap
Aboon the timmer;
I kenn'd my Maggie wad na sleep
For that, or simmer.

The cart or car thou never restit;
The steyest brae thou wad hae fac't it:
Thou never lap, and sten't, and breastit,
Then stood to blaw;
But just thy step a wee thing hastit,
Thou snoov't awa.

My pleugh is now thy bairn-time a':
Four gallant brutes as e'er did draw:
Forbye sax mae, I've sell't awa.
That thou hast nurst:
They drew me threttteen pund an' twa,
The vera warst.

Monie a sair daurk we twa hae wrought
An' wi' the weary warl' fought!
And monie an anxious day, I thought
We wad be beat!
Yet here to crazy age we're brought,
Wi' something yet.

* Sowens, with butter instead of milk to them, is always the Halloween supper.

And think na, my auld trusty servan',
That now perhaps thou's less deservin,
An' thy auld days may end in starvin,
For my last fou,
A heapit stimpart, I'll reserve ane
Laid by for you.

We've worn to crazy years thegither;
We'll toyte about wi' ane anither:
Wi' tentie care, I'll fit thy tether,
To some hain'd rig,
Where ye may nobly rax your leather,
Wi' sma' fatigue,

TO A MOUSE.

ON TURNING HER UP IN HER NEST WITH THE PLOUGH, NOVEMBER, 1785.

Wee, sleekit, cow'rin, timorous beastie,
O, what a panic's in thy breastie!
Thou need na start awa sae hasty,
Wi' bickering brattle!
I wad be laith to rin an' chase thee,
Wi' murdering pattle!

I'm truly sorry man's dominion
Has broken nature's social union,
An' justifies that ill opinion,
Which maks thee startle
At me, thy poor earth-born companion,
An' fellow mortal.

I doubt na, whyles, but thou may thieve;
What then? poor beastie, thou maun live!
A daimen-icker in a thrave
'Sa sma request;
I'll get a blessin wi' the lave,
And never miss't!

Thy wee bit housie, too, in ruin!
Its silly wa's the winds are strewin!
An' naething, now, to big a new ane,
O' foggage green!
An' bleak December's winds ensuin,
Baith snell and keen!

Thou saw the fields laid bare an' waste,
An' weary winter comin' fast,
An' cozie here, beneath the blast,
Thou thought to dwell,
Till crash! the cruel coulter past
Out through thy cell.

That wee bit heap o' leaves an' stibble,
Has cost thee monie a weary nibble!
Now thou's turn'd out, for a' thy trouble,
But house or hald,
To thole the winter's sleety dribble,
An' cranreuch cauld!

But, mousie, thou art no thy lane,
In proving foresight may be vain:
The best laid schemes o' mice an' men,
Gang aft a-gley,
An' lea'e us naught but grief an' pain,
For promised joy.

Still thou art blest, compared wi' me!
The present only toucheth thee:
But, och! I backward cast my e'e,
On prospects drear;
An' forward, though I canna see,
I guess an' fear.

A WINTER'S NIGHT

Poor, naked wretches, wheresoe'er you are,
That bide the pelting of this pitiless storm!
How shall your houseless heads, and unfed sides,
Your loop'd and window'd raggedness, defend you
From seasons such as these?——

SHAKSPEARE

When biting Boreas, fell and doure,
Sharp shivers through the leafless bower;
When Phœbus gies a short-lived glower
Far south the lift,
Dim-darkening through the flaky shower,
Or whirling drift:

Ae night the storm the steeples rock'd,
Poor labour sweet in sleep was lock'd,
While burns, wi' snawy wreeths up-chock'd,
Wild-eddying swirl,
Or through the mining outlet bock'd,
Down headlong hurl.

Listening, the doors an' winnocks rattle,
I thought me on the ourie cattle,
Or silly sheep, wha bide this brattle
O' winter war,
And through the drift, deep-lairing sprattle,
Beneath a scar.

Ilk happing bird, wee, helpless thing,
That, in the merry months o' spring,
Delighted me to hear thee sing,
What comes o' thee?
Whare wilt thou cower thy chittering wing,
An' close thy e'e?

E'en you on murdering errands toil'd,
Lone from your savage homes exiled,
The blood-stain'd roost, and sheep-cote spoil'd,
My heart forgets,
While pitiless the tempest wild
Sore on you beats.

Now Phœbe, in her midnight reign
Dark muffled, view'd the dreary plain;
Still crowding thoughts, a pensive train,
Rose in my soul,
When on my ear this plaintive strain,
Slow, solemn, stole—

"Blow, blow, ye winds, with heavier gust!
And freeze, thou bitter-biting frost!
Descend, ye chilly, smothering snows!
Not all your rage, as now united, shows
More hard unkindness, unrelenting,
Vengeful malice, unrepenting,
Than heaven illumined man on brother man bestows!

See stern oppression's iron grip,
Or mad ambition's gory hand,
Sending, like blood-hounds from the slip,
Wo, want, and murder, o'er a land!
E'en in the peaceful, rural vale,
Truth, weeping, tells the mournful tale,
How pamper'd luxury, flattery by her side,
The parasite empoisoning her ear,
With all the servile wretches in the rear,
Looks o'er proud property, extended wide;
And eyes the simple rustic hind,
Whose toil upholds the glittering show,
A creature of another kind,
Some coarser substance, unrefined,
Placed for her lordly use, thus far, thus vile, below;
Where, where is love's fond, tender throe,
With lordly honour's lofty brow,
The powers you proudly own?
Is there beneath love's noble name,
Can harbour, dark, the selfish aim,
To bless himself alone?
Mark maiden innocence a prey
To love-pretending snares,
This boasted honour turns away,
Shunning soft pity's rising sway,
Regardless of the tears, and unavailing prayers!
Perhaps, this hour, in misery's squalid nest,
She strains your infant to her joyless breast,
And with a mother's fears shrinks at the rocking blast!

"O ye! who, sunk in beds of down,
Feel not a want but what yourselves create,
Think, for a moment, on his wretched fate,
Whom friends and fortune quite disown!
Ill satisfied keen nature's clamorous call,
Stretch'd on his straw he lays himself to sleep,
While through the ragged roof and chinky wall,
Chill o'er his slumbers piles the drifty heap!
Think on the dungeon's grim confine,
Where guilt and poor misfortune pine!
Guilt, erring man, relenting view!
But shall thy legal rage pursue
The wretch, already crushed low
By cruel fortune's undeserved blow?
Affliction's sons are brothers in distress,
A brother to relieve, how exquisite the bliss!"

I heard nae mair, for chanticleer
Shook off the pouthery snaw,
And hail'd the morning with a cheer,
A cottage-rousing craw.

But deep this truth impress'd my mind—
Through all his works abroad,
The heart benevolent and kind
The most resembles God.

DESPONDENCY.

AN ODE.

I.

Oppress'd with grief, oppress'd with care,
A burden more than I can bear,
I sit me down and sigh:
O life! thou art a galling load,
Along a rough, a weary road,
To wretches such as I!
Dim backward as I cast my view,
What sickening scenes appear!
What sorrows yet may pierce me through,
Too justly I may fear!
Still caring, despairing,
Must be my bitter doom;
My woes here shall close ne'er,
But with the closing tomb!

II.

Happy, ye sons of busy life,
Who, equal to the bustling strife,
No other view regard!
E'en when the wished end's denied,
Yet while the busy means are plied,
They bring their own reward:
Whilst I, a hope-abandon'd wight,
Unfitted with an aim,
Meet every sad returning night,
And joyless morn the same;
You, bustling, and justling,
Forget each grief and pain:
I, listless, yet restless,
Find every prospect vain

III.

How blest the solitary's lot,
Who, all-forgetting, all-forgot,
Within his humble cell,
The cavern wild with tangling roots,
Sits o'er his newly-gather'd fruits,
Beside his crystal well!
Or, haply, to his evening thought,
By unfrequented stream,
The ways of men are distant brought,
A faint collected dream:
While praising and raising
His thoughts to heaven on high,
As wandering, meandering,
He views the solemn sky.

IV.

Than I, no lonely hermit placed
Where never human footstep traced,
Less fit to play the part;
The lucky moment to improve,
And just to stop, and just to move,
With self-respecting art:
But ah! those pleasures, loves, and joys
Which I too keenly taste,
The solitary can despise,
Can want, and yet be blest!
He needs not, he heeds not,
Or human love or hate,
Whilst I here must cry here,
At perfidy ingrate!

V.

O! enviable, early days,
When dancing thoughtless pleasure's maze
To care, to guilt unknown!
How ill exchanged for riper times,
To feel the follies, or the crimes,
Of others, or my own!

Ye tiny elves that guiltless sport,
Like linnets in the bush,
Ye little know the ills ye court,
When manhood is your wish.
The losses, the crosses,
That active man engage!
The fears all, the tears all,
Of dim-declining age.

WINTER.

A DIRGE.

I.

The wintry west extends his blast,
And hail and rain does blaw;
Or, the stormy north sends driving forth
The blinding sleet and snaw:
While tumbling brown, the burn comes down,
And roars frae bank to brae;
And bird and beast in covert rest,
And pass the heartless day.

II.

"The sweeping blast, the sky o'ercast,"*
The joyless winter day,
Let others fear, to me more dear
Than all the pride of May:
The tempest's howl, it soothes my soul,
My griefs it seems to join,
The leafless trees my fancy please,
Their fate resembles mine.

III.

Thou Power Supreme, whose mighty scheme
These woes of mine fulfil,
Here, firm, I rest, they must be best,
Because they are thy will!
Then all I want, (O, do thou grant
This one request of mine!)
Since to enjoy thou dost deny,
Assist me to resign.

THE COTTER'S SATURDAY NIGHT.

INSCRIBED TO R. A****, ESQ.

Let not ambition mock their useful toil,
Their homely joys, and destiny obscure;
Nor grandeur hear, with a disdainful smile,
The short but simple annals of the poor.
GRAY.

I.

My loved, my honour'd, much respected friend!
No mercenary bard his homage pays;
With honest pride I scorn each selfish end;
My dearest meed a friend's esteem and praise;
To you I sing, in simple Scottish lays,
The lowly train in life's sequester'd scene;
The native feelings strong, the guileless ways:
What A**** in a cottage would have been;
Ah! though his worth unknown, far happier there,
I ween.

II.

November chill blaws loud wi' angry sugh;
The shortening winter day is near a close;
The miry beasts retreating frae the pleugh,
The blackening trains o' craws to their repose
The toil-worn cotter frae his labour goes,
This night his weekly moil is at an end,
Collects his spades, his mattocks, and his hoes,
Hoping the morn in ease and rest to spend,
And weary, o'er the moor, his course does hameward bend.

III.

At length his lonely cot appears in view,
Beneath the shelter of an aged tree;
Th' expectant wee things, toddlin, stacher through
To meet their dad, wi' flichterin noise an' glee.
His wee bit ingle, blinkin bonnily,
His clean hearth-stane, his thrifty wifie's smile,
The lisping infant prattling on his knee,
Does a' his weary, carking cares beguile,
An' makes him quite forget his labour an' his toil.

IV.

Belyve the elder bairns come drapping in,
At service out, amang the farmers roun':
Some ca' the pleugh, some herd, some tentie rin
A cannie errand to a neebor town:
Their eldest hope, their Jenny, woman grown,
In youthfu' bloom, love sparkling in her e'e,
Comes hame, perhaps, to show a braw new gown,
Or deposit her sair-won penny-fee,
To help her parents dear, if they in hardship be.

V.

Wi' joy unfeign'd, brothers and sisters meet,
An' each for others' weelfare kindly spiers:
The social hours, swift-wing'd, unnoticed fleet;
Each tells the uncos that he sees or hears;
The parents, partial, eye their hopeful years;
Anticipation forward points the view.
The mother, wi' her needle an' her sheers,
Gars auld claes look amaist as weel's the new
The father mixes a' wi' admonition due.

VI.

Their master's an' their mistress's command,
The younkers a' are warned to obey;
"An' mind their labours wi' an eydent hand,
An' ne'er, though out o' sight, to jauk or play:
An' O! be sure to fear the Lord alway!
An' mind your duty, duly, morn an' night!
Lest in temptation's path ye gang astray,
Implore his counsel and assisting might:
They never sought in vain that sought the Lord aright!"

VII.

But hark! a rap comes gently to the door;
Jenny, wha kens the meaning o' the same,
Tells how a neebor lad cam o'er the moor,
To do some errands, and convoy her hame.
The wily mother sees the conscious flame
Sparkle in Jenny's e'e, and flush her cheek;
With heart-struck, anxious care, inquires his name,
While Jenny hafflins is afraid to speak;
Weel pleased the mother hears, it's nae wild, worthless rake.

* Dr. Young.

VIII.

Wi' kindly welcome Jenny brings him ben;
A strappan youth; he taks the mother's eye;
Blythe Jenny sees the visit's no ill ta'en;
The father cracks of horses, pleughs, and kye.
The youngster's artless heart o'erflows wi' joy.
But blathe and laithfu', scarce can weel behave;
The mother, wi' a woman's wiles, can spy
What makes the youth sae bashfu' an' sae grave;
Weel pleased to think her bairn's respected like
the lave.

IX.

O happy love! where love like this is found!
O heartfelt raptures! bliss beyond compare!
I've paced much this weary mortal round,
And sage experience bids me this declare—
"If heaven a draught of heavenly pleasure spare,
One cordial in this melancholy vale,
'Tis when a youthful, loving, modest pair,
In other's arms breathe out the tender tale,
Beneath the milk-white thorn that scents the evening gale."

X.

Is there, in human form, that bears a heart—
A wretch! a villain! lost to love and truth!
That can, with studied, sly, insnaring art,
Betray sweet Jenny's unsuspecting youth?
Curse on his perjured arts! dissembling smooth!
Are honour, virtue, conscience, all exiled?
Is there no pity, no relenting truth,
Points to the parents fondling o'er their child?
Then paints the ruin'd maid, and their distraction wild?

XI.

But now the supper crowns their simple board,
The halesome parritch, chief o' Scotia's food:
The soupe their only hawkie does afford,
That 'yont the hallan snugly chows her cood:
The dame brings forth in complimental mood,
To grace the lad, her weel-hain'd kebbuck, fell,
An' aft he's prest, an' aft he ca's it guid;
The frugal wifie, garrulous, will tell,
How 'twas a towmond auld, sin' lint was i' the bell.

XII.

The cheerfu' supper done, wi' serious face,
They round the ingle form a circle wide;
The sire turns o'er, wi' patriarchal grace,
The big ha' Bible, ance his father's pride:
His bonnet reverently is laid aside,
His lyart haffets wearing thin an' bare;
Those strains that once did sweet in Zion glide,
He wales a portion with judicious care;
And "Let us worship God!" he says, with solemn air.

XIII.

They chant their artless notes in simple guise;
They tune their hearts, by far the noblest aim:
Perhaps Dundee's wild warbling measures rise,
Or plaintive Martyrs, worthy of the name:
Or noble Elgin beets the heavenward flame,
The sweetest far of Scotia's holy lays:
Compared with these, Italian trills are tame;
The tickled ears no heartfelt raptures raise;
Nae unison hae they with our Creator's praise.

XIV.

The priest-like father reads the sacred page,
How Abram was the friend of God on high;
Or, Moses bade eternal warfare wage
With Amalek's ungracious progeny;
Or how the royal bard did groaning lie
Beneath the stroke of Heaven's avenging ire;
Or, Job's pathetic plaint, and wailing cry;
Or rapt Isaiah's wild, seraphic fire;
Or other holy seers that tune the sacred lyre.

XV.

Perhaps the Christian volume is the theme,
How guiltless blood for guilty man was shed;
How He, who bore in heaven the second name,
Had not on earth whereon to lay his head:
How his first followers and servants sped;
The precepts sage they wrote to many a land:
How he, who lone in Patmos banished,
Saw in the sun a mighty angel stand;
And heard great Babylon's doom pronounced by Heaven's command.

XVI.

Then kneeling down, to Heaven's Eternal King
The saint, the father, and the husband prays:
Hope "springs exulting on triumphant wing,"*
That thus they all shall meet in future days:
There ever bask in uncreated rays,
No more to sigh, or shed the bitter tear,
Together hymning their Creator's praise,
In such society, yet still more dear;
While circling time moves round in an eternal sphere.

XVII.

Compared with this, how poor religion's pride,
In all the pomp of method, and of art,
When men display, to congregations wide,
Devotion's every grace, except the heart!
The Power, incensed, the pageant will desert,
The pompous strain, the sacerdotal stole;
But haply, in some cottage far apart,
May hear, well pleased, the language of the soul;
And in his book of life the inmates poor enrol.

XVIII.

Then homeward all take off their several way;
The youngling cottagers retire to rest:
The parent pair their secret homage pay,
And proffer up to Heaven the warm request
That He who stills the raven's clamorous nest,
And decks the lily fair in flowery pride,
Would, in the way his wisdom sees the best,
For them and for their little ones provide;
But chiefly, in their hearts with grace divine preside.

XIX.

From scenes like these old Scotia's grandeur springs,
That makes her loved at home, revered abroad:
Princes and lords are but the breath of kings,
"An honest man's the noblest work of God:"
And certes, in fair virtue's heavenly road,
The cottage leaves the palace far behind;
What is a lordling's pomp? a cumbrous load,
Disguising oft the wretch of human kind,
Studied in arts of hell, in wickedness refined!

* Pope's Windsor Forest.

XX.

O Scotia! my dear, my native soil!
For whom my warmest wish to Heaven is sent!
Long may thy hardy sons of rustic toil
Be bless'd with health and peace, and sweet content!
And O may Heaven their simple lives prevent
From luxury's contagion, weak and vile!
Then, howe'er crowns and coronets be rent,
A virtuous populace may rise the while,
And stand a wall of fire around their much loved isle.

XXI.

O Thou! who pour'd the patriotic tide
That stream'd through Wallace's undaunted heart;
Who dared to nobly stem tyrannic pride,
Or nobly die, the second glorious part,
(The patriot's God, peculiarly thou art,
His friend, inspirer, guardian, and reward!)
O never, never, Scotia's realm desert:
But still the patriot, and the patriot bard,
In bright succession raise, her ornament and guard!

MAN WAS MADE TO MOURN.

A DIRGE.

I.

When chill November's surly blast
Made fields and forests bare,
One evening, as I wander'd forth
Along the banks of Ayr,
I spied a man, whose aged step
Seem'd weary, worn with care;
His face was furrow'd o'er with years,
And hoary was his hair.

II.

"Young stranger, whither wanderest thou?"
Began the reverend sage;
"Does thirst of wealth thy step constrain,
Or youthful pleasure's rage;
Or haply, press'd with cares and woes,
Too soon thou hast began
To wander forth, with me, to mourn
The miseries of man!

III.

"The sun that overhangs yon moors,
Out-spreading far and wide,
Where hundreds labour to support
A haughty lordling's pride;
I've seen yon weary winter sun
Twice forty times return;
And every time has added proofs,
That man was made to mourn.

IV.

"O man! while in thy early years,
How prodigal of time!
Mispending all thy precious hours,
Thy glorious youthful prime!
Alternate follies take the sway;
Licentious passions burn;
Which tenfold force gives nature's law,
That man was made to mourn.

V.

"Look not alone on youthful prime,
Or manhood's active might;
Man then is useful to his kind,
Supported is his right:
But see him on the edge of life,
With cares and sorrows worn,
Then age and want, O ill match'd pair!
Show man was made to mourn.

VI.

"A few seem favourites of fate,
In pleasure's lap carest;
Yet, think, not all the rich and great
Are likewise truly blest.
But, O! what crowds in every land
Are wretched and forlorn;
Through weary life this lesson learn,
That man was made to mourn.

VII.

"Many and sharp the numerous ills
Inwoven with our frame!
More pointed still we make ourselves,
Regret, remorse, and shame!
And man, whose heaven-erected face
The smiles of love adorn,
Man's inhumanity to man
Makes countless thousands mourn!

VIII.

"See yonder poor, o'erlabour'd wight,
So abject, mean, and vile,
Who begs a brother of the earth
To give him leave to toil;
And see his lordly fellow worm
The poor petition spurn,
Unmindful, though a weeping wife
And helpless offspring mourn.

IX.

"If I'm design'd yon lordling's slave,—
By nature's law design'd,—
Why was an independent wish
E'er planted in my mind?
If not, why am I subject to
His cruelty or scorn?
Or why has man the will and power
To make his fellow mourn?

X.

"Yet let not this too much, my son,
Disturb thy youthful breast:
This partial view of human kind
Is surely not the last!
The poor, oppressed, honest man,
Had never, sure, been born,
Had there not been some recompense
To comfort those that mourn!

XI.

"O death! the poor man's dearest friend,
The kindest and the best!
Welcome the hour my aged limbs
Are laid with thee at rest!
The great, the wealthy, fear thy blow,
From pomp and pleasure torn;
But O! a bless'd relief to those
That weary-laden mourn!"

A PRAYER IN THE PROSPECT OF DEATH.

I.

O THOU unknown, Almighty Cause
Of all my hope and fear!
In whose dread presence, ere an hour,
Perhaps I must appear!

II.

If I have wander'd in those paths
Of life I ought to shun,
As something, loudly, in my breast,
Remonstrates I have done;

III.

Thou know'st that thou hast formed me
With passions wild and strong;
And listening to their witching voice
Has often led me wrong.

IV.

Where human weakness has come short,
Or frailty stept aside,
Do thou, All-Good! for such thou art,
In shades of darkness hide.

V.

Where with intention I have err'd,
No other plea I have,
But thou art good; and goodness still
Delighteth to forgive.

STANZAS ON THE SAME OCCASION.

WHY am I loath to leave this earthly scene?
Have I so found it full of pleasing charms?
Some drops of joy with draughts of ill between:
Some gleams of sunshine 'mid renewing storms:
Is it departing pangs my soul alarms?
Or death's unlovely, dreary, dark abode?
For guilt, for guilt, my terrors are in arms;
I tremble to approach an angry God,
And justly smart beneath his sin-avenging rod.

Fain would I say, "Forgive my foul offence!"
Fain promise never more to disobey;
But, should my Author health again dispense,
Again I might desert fair virtue's way;
Again in folly's path might go astray;
Again exalt the brute and sink the man;
Then how should I for heavenly mercy pray,
Who act so counter heavenly mercy's plan?
Who sin so oft have mourn'd, yet to temptation ran?

O thou, great Governor of all below!
If I may dare a lifted eye to thee,
Thy nod can make the tempest cease to blow,
Or still the tumult of the raging sea:
With what controlling power assist e'en me,
Those headlong, furious passions to confine;
For all unfit I feel my powers to be,
To rule their torrent in th' allowed line;
O aid me with thy help, Omnipotence Divine!

LYING AT A REVEREND FRIEND'S HOUSE ONE NIGHT, THE AUTHOR LEFT

THE FOLLOWING VERSES IN THE ROOM WHERE HE SLEPT.

I.

O THOU dread Power, who reign'st above!
I know thou wilt me hear:
When for this scene of peace and love,
I make my prayer sincere.

II.

The hoary sire—the mortal stroke,
Long, long be pleased to spare!
To bless his little filial flock,
And show what good men are.

III.

She, who her lovely offspring eyes
With tender hopes and fears,
O bless her with a mother's joys,
But spare a mother's tears!

VI.

Their hope, their stay, their darling youth,
In manhood's dawning blush;
Bless him, thou God of love and truth,
Up to a parent's wish!

V.

The beauteous, seraph sister band,
With earnest tears I pray,
Thou know'st the snares on every hand,
Guide thou their steps alway!

VI.

When soon or late they reach that coast,
O'er life's rough ocean driven,
May they rejoice, no wanderer lost,
A family in heaven!

THE FIRST PSALM.

THE man, in life wherever placed,
Hath happiness in store,
Who walks not in the wicked's way
Nor learns their guilty lore!

Nor from the seat of scornful pride
Casts forth his eyes abroad,
But with humility and awe
Still walks before his God.

That man shall flourish like the trees
Which by the streamlets grow;
The fruitful top is spread on high,
And firm the root below.

But he whose blossom buds in guilt
Shall to the ground be cast,
And, like the rootless stubble, tost
Before the sweeping blast.

For why? that God the good adore
Hath given them peace and rest,
But hath decreed that wicked men
Shall ne'er be truly blest.

A PRAYER

UNDER THE PRESSURE OF VIOLENT ANGUISH.

O THOU Great Being! what thou art
Surpasses me to know:
Yet sure I am, that known to thee
Are all thy works below.

Thy creature here before thee stands,
All wretched and distrest;
Yet sure those ills that wring my soul,
Obey thy high behest.

Sure thou, Almighty, canst not act
From cruelty or wrath!
O free my weary eyes from tears,
Or close them fast in death!

But if I must afflicted be,
To suit some wise design;
Then man my soul with firm resolves
To bear and not repine!

THE FIRST SIX VERSES OF THE NINETIETH PSALM.

O THOU, the first, the greatest Friend
Of all the human race!
Whose strong right hand has ever been
Their stay and dwelling place!

Before the mountains heaved their heads
Beneath thy forming hand,
Before this ponderous globe itself
Arose at thy command:

That power which raised and still upholds
This universal frame,
From countless, unbeginning time
Was ever still the same.

Those mighty periods of years
Which seem to us so vast,
Appear no more before thy sight
Than yesterday that's past.

Thou givest the word: Thy creature, man,
Is to existence brought:
Again thou say'st, "Ye sons of men,
Return ye into naught!"

Thou layest them, with all their cares,
In everlasting sleep;
As with a flood thou takest them off
With overwhelming sweep.

They flourish like the morning flower,
In beauty's pride array'd;
But long ere night cut down it lies
All wither'd and decay'd.

TO A MOUNTAIN DAISY,

ON TURNING ONE DOWN WITH THE PLOUGH IN APRIL, 1786.

WEE, modest, crimson-tipped flower,
Thou's met me in an evil hour;
For I maun crush amang the stoure
Thy slender stem;
To spare thee now is past my power,
Thou bonnie gem.

Alas! it's no thy neebor sweet,
The bonnie lark, companion meet!
Bending thee 'mang the dewy weet!
Wi' spreckled breast,
When upward-springing, blythe to greet
The purpling east.

Cauld blew the bitter-biting north
Upon thy early, humble birth;
Yet cheerfully thou glinted forth
Amid the storm,
Scarce rear'd above the parent earth
Thy tender form.

The flaunting flowers our gardens yield,
High sheltering woods and wa's maun shield
But thou beneath the random bield
O' clod or stane,
Adorns the histie stibble-field,
Unseen, alane.

There, in thy scanty mantle clad,
Thy snawy bosom sun-ward spread,
Thou lifts thy unassuming head
In humble guise;
But now the share uptears thy bed,
And low thou lies!

Such is the fate of artless maid,
Sweet floweret of the rural shade!
By love's simplicity betray'd,
And guileless trust,
Till she, like thee, all soil'd is laid
Low i' the dust.

Such is the fate of simple bard,
On life's rough ocean luckless starr'd!
Unskilful he to note the card
Of prudent lore,
Till billows rage, and gales blow hard,
And whelm him o'er!

Such fate of suffering worth is given,
Who long with wants and woes has striven
By human pride or cunning driven,
To misery's brink,
Till wrench'd of every stay but Heaven,
He, ruin'd, sink!

E'en thou who mourn'st the daisy's fate
That fate is thine—no distant date;
Stern ruin's ploughshare drives, elate,
Full on thy bloom,
Till crush'd beneath the furrow's weight
Shall be thy doom!

TO RUIN.

I.

ALL hail! inexorable lord!
At whose destruction-breathing word,
The mightiest empires fall!
Thy cruel wo-delighted train,
The ministers of grief and pain,
A sullen welcome, all!
With stern-resolved, despairing eye,
I see each aimed dart;
For one has cut my dearest tie,
And quivers in my heart.

Then lowering, and pouring,
The storm no more I dread;
Though thickening and blackening
Round my devoted head.

II.

And, thou grim power, by life abhorr'd,
While life a pleasure can afford,
O! hear a wretch's prayer!
No more I shrink appall'd, afraid;
I court, I beg thy friendly aid,
To close this scene of care!
When shall my soul, in silent peace,
Resign life's joyless day;
My weary heart its throbbing cease,
Cold mouldering in the clay?
No fear more, no tear more,
To stain my lifeless face;
Enclasped, and grasped
Within thy cold embrace!

TO MISS L—,

WITH BEATTIE'S POEMS AS A NEW-YEAR'S GIFT, JANUARY 1, 1787.

Again the silent wheels of time
Their annual round have driven,
And you, though scarce in maiden prime,
Are so much nearer heaven.

No gifts have I from Indian coasts
The infant year to hail;
I send you more than India boasts,
In Edwin's simple tale.

Our sex with guile and faithless love
Is charged, perhaps, too true;
But may, dear maid, each lover prove
An Edwin still to you!

EPISTLE TO A YOUNG FRIEND.

MAY, 1786.

I.

I lang hae thought, my youthfu' friend,
A something to have sent you,
Though it should serve nae other end
Than just a kind memento;
But how the subject theme may gang
Let time and chance determine;
Perhaps it may turn out a sang,
Perhaps turn out a sermon.

II.

Ye'll try the world soon, my lad,
And, Andrew dear, believe me,
Ye'll find mankind an unco squad,
And muckle they may grieve ye.
For care and trouble set your thought,
E'en when your end's attained;
And a' your views may come to naught,
Where every nerve is strained.

III.

I'll no say, men are villains a';
The real, harden'd wicked,
Wha hae nae check but human law,
Are to a few restricked:
But och! mankind are unco weak,
An' little to be trusted;
If self the wavering balance shake,
It's rarely right adjusted!

IV.

Yet they wha fa' in fortune's strife,
Their fate we should nae censure,
For still th' important end of life
They equally may answer;
A man may hae an honest heart,
Though poortith hourly stare him;
A man may tak a neebor's part,
Yet hae nae cash to spare him.

V.

Aye free, aff han' your story tell,
When wi' a bosom crony;
But still keep something to yoursel
Ye scarcely tell to ony.
Conceal yoursel as weel's ye can
Frae critical dissection;
But keek through every other man,
Wi' sharpen'd, slee inspection.

VI.

The sacred lowe o' weel-placed love
Luxuriantly indulge it;
But never tempt th' illicit rove,
Though naething should divulge it!
I wave the quantum o' the sin,
The hazard of concealing;
But och! it hardens a' within,
And petrifies the feeling!

VII.

To catch dame Fortune's golden smile,
Assiduous wait upon her;
And gather gear by every wile
That's justified by honour;
Not for to hide it in a hedge,
Not for a train-attendant;
But for the glorious privilege
Of being independent.

VIII.

The fear o' hell's a hangman's whip,
To haud the wretch in order;
But where ye feel your honour grip,
Let that aye be your border;
Its slightest touches, instant pause—
Debar a' side pretences;
And resolutely keep its laws,
Uncaring consequences.

IX.

The great Creator to revere
Must sure become the creature;
But still the preaching cant forbear,
And e'en the rigid feature;
Yet ne'er with wits profane to range,
Be complaisance extended;
An atheist's laugh's a poor exchange
For Deity offended!

X.

When ranting round in pleasure's ring,
Religion may be blinded;
Or if she gie a random sting,
It may be little minded;
But when on life we're tempest-driven,
A conscience but a canker—
A correspondence fix'd wi' heaven
Is sure a noble anchor!

XI.

Adieu, dear, amiable youth!
Your heart can ne'er be wanting:
May prudence, fortitude, and truth
Erect your brow undaunting!
In ploughman phrase, "God send you speed,"
Still daily to grow wiser:
And may you better reck the rede
Than ever did th' adviser.

ON A SCOTCH BARD GONE TO THE WEST INDIES.

A' ye wha live by soups o' drink,
A' ye wha live by crambo-clink,
A' ye wha live and never think,
Come mourn wi' me!
Our billie's gien us a' a jink,
An' owre the sea.

Lament him, a' ye rantin core,
Wha dearly like a random-splore,
Nae mair he'll join the merry-roar,
In social key;
For now he's ta'en anither shore,
An' owre the sea.

The bonnie lasses weel may wiss him,
And in their dear petitions place him;
The widows, wives, an' a' may bless him,
Wi' tearfu' e'e;
For weel I wat they'll sairly miss him
That's owre the sea.

O fortune, they hae room to grumble!
Hadst thou ta'en aff some drowsy bummle,
Wha can do naught but fyke and fumble,
'Twad been nae plea;
But he was gleg as ony wumble,
That's owre the sea.

Auld, cantie Kyle may weepers wear,
An' stain them wi' the saut, saut tear;
'Twill mak her poor auld heart, I fear,
In flinders flee;
He was her laureate monie a year,
That's owre the sea.

He saw misfortune's cauld nor-west
Lang mustering up a bitter blast;
A jillet brak his heart at last,
Ill may she be!
So took a birth afore the mast,
An' owre the sea.

To tremble under fortune's cummock,
On scarce a bellyfu' o' drummock,
Wi' his proud, independent stomach
Could ill agree;
So row't his hurdies in a hammock,
An' owre the sea.

He ne'er was gien to great misguiding,
Yet coin his pouches wad nae bide in;
Wi' him it ne'er was under hiding;
He dealt it free:
The muse was a' that he took pride in,
That's owre the sea.

Jamaica bodies, use him weel,
An' hap him in a cozie biel;
Ye'll find him aye a dainty chiel,
And fu' o' glee;
He wad na wrang'd the vera diel,
That's owre the sea.

Fareweel, my rhyme-composing billie!
Your native soil was right ill-willie;
But may ye flourish like a lily,
Now bonnilie!
I'll toast ye in my hindmost gillie,
Though owre the sea.

TO A HAGGIS.

Fair fa' your honest, sonsie face,
Great chieftain o' the puddin race!
Aboon them a' ye tak your place,
Painch, tripe, or thairm:
Weel are ye wordy of a grace
As lang's my arm.

The groaning trencher there ye fill,
Your hurdies like a distant hill,
Your pin wad help to mend a mill
In time o' need,
While through your pores the dews distil
Like amber bead.

His knife see rustic labour dight,
An' cut you up with ready slight,
Trenching your gushing entrails bright
Like onie ditch;
And then, O what a glorious sight,
Warm-reekin, rich!

Then horn for horn they stretch an' strive
Deil tak the hindmost, on they drive,
Till a' their weel-swall'd kytes belyve
Are bent like drums;
Then auld guidman, maist like to ryve,
Bethankit hums.

Is there that o'er his French ragout,
Or olio that would staw a sow,
Or fricasee wad make her spew
Wi' perfect sconner,
Looks down wi' sneering, scornfu' view
On sic a dinner?

Poor devil! see him owre his trash,
As feckless as a wither'd rash,
His spindle shank a guid whip lash,
His nieve a nit;
Through bloody flood or field to dash,
O how unfit!

But mark the rustic, haggis-fed,
The trembling earth resounds his tread,
Clap in his walie nieve a blade,
He'll mak it whissle;
An' legs, an' arms, an' heads will sned,
Like taps o' thrissle.

Ye pôwers, wha mak mankind your care,
And dish them out their bill o' fare,
Auld Scotland wants nae skinking ware
That jaups in luggies;
But, if ye wish her gratefu' prayer,
Gie her a haggis!

A DEDICATION TO GAVIN HAMILTON, ESQ.

Expect na, sir, in this narration,
A fleechin, fleth'rin dedication,
To roose you up, an' ca' you guid,
An' sprung o' great an' noble bluid,
Because ye're surnamed like his grace,
Perhaps related to the race;
Then when I'm tired—and sae are ye,
Wi' mony a fulsome, sinfu' lie,
Set up a face, how I stop short,
For fear your modesty be hurt.

This may do—maun do, sir, wi' them wha
Maun please the great folk for a wamefou;
For me! sae laigh I need na bow,
For, Lord be thankit, I can plough;
And when I downa yoke a naig,
Then, Lord be thankit, I can beg;
Sae I shall say, an' that's nae flatterin,
It's just sic poet, an' sic patron.

The poet, some guid angel help him,
Or else, I fear, some ill ane skelp him,
He may do weel for a' he's done yet,
But only he's no just begun yet.

The patron, (sir, ye maun forgie me,
I winna lie, come what will o' me,)
On every hand it will allow'd be,
He's just—nae better than he should be.

I readily and freely grant,
He dow a see a poor man want;
What's gi'o his ain he winna tak it,
What ance he says, he winna break it;
Aught he can lend he'll no refuse't,
Till aft his guidness is abused:
And rascals whyles that do him wrang,
E'en that, he does na mind it lang:
As master, landlord, husband, father,
He does na fail his part in either.

But then, na thanks to him for a' that;
Nae godly symptom ye can ca' that;
It's naething but a milder feature
Of our poor, sinfu', corrupt nature!
Ye'll get the best o' moral works
'Mang black Gentoos and pagan Turks,
Or hunters wild on Ponotaxi,
Wha never heard of orthodoxy.
That he's the poor man's friend in need,
The gentleman in word and deed,
It's no through terror of d—mn—tion;
It's just a carnal inclination.

Morality, thou deadly bane,
Thy tens o' thousands thou hast slain!
Vain is his hope, whose stay and trust is
In moral mercy, truth, and justice!

No—stretch a point to catch a plack;
Abuse a brother to his back;
Steal through a winnock frae a wh—re,
But point the rake that taks the door:
Be to the poor like onie whunstane,
And haud their noses to the grunstane,
Ply every art o' legal thieving;
No matter, stick to sound believing.

Learn three-mile prayers, and half-mile graces,
Wi' wee-spread looves, an' lang wry faces;
Grunt up a solemn, lengthen'd groan,
And damn a' parties but your own;
I'll warrant then, ye're nae deceiver,
A steady, sturdy, staunch believer.

O ye wha leave the springs of C—lv—n,
For gumlie dubs of your ain delvin!
Ye sons of heresy and error,
Ye'll some day squeel in quaking terror!
When vengeance draws the sword in wrath,
And in the fire throws the sheath;
When ruin, with his sweeping besom,
Just frets till Heaven commission gies him:
While o'er the harp pale misery moans,
And strikes the ever deepening tones,
Still louder shrieks, and heavier groans!

Your pardon, sir, for this digression,
I maist forgat my dedication;
But when divinity comes cross me,
My readers still are sure to lose me.

So, sir, ye see 'twas nae daft vapour,
But I maturely thought it proper,
When a' my work I did review,
To dedicate them, sir, to you:
Because (ye need na tak it ill)
I thought them something like yoursel.

Then patronize them wi' your favour,
And your petitioner shall ever—
I had amaist said, ever pray,
But that's a word I need na say:
For prayin I hae little skill o't;
I'm baith dead-sweer, an' wretched ill o't
But I'se repeat each poor man's prayer,
That kens or hears about you, sir—

"May ne'er misfortune's gowling bark
Howl through the dwelling o' the clerk!
May ne'er his generous, honest heart,
For that same generous spirit smart!
May K*******'s far honour'd name
Lang beet his hymeneal flame,
Till H********s, at least a dizen,
Are frae their nuptial labours risen:
Five bonnie lasses round their table,
And seven braw fellows, stout an' able

To serve their king and country weel,
By word, or pen, or pointed steel!
May health and peace, with mutual rays,
Shine on the evening o' his days;
Till his wee curlie John's ier-oe,
When ebbing life nae mair shall flow,
The last, sad, mournful rites bestow!"

I will not wind a lang conclusion,
Wi' complimentary effusion:
But whilst your wishes and endeavours
Are blest with fortune's smiles and favours,
I am, dear sir, with zeal most fervent,
Your much indebted, humble servant.

But if (which powers above prevent!)
That iron-hearted carl, want,
Attended in his grim advances
By sad mistakes, and black mischances,
While hopes, and joys, and pleasures fly him,
Make you as poor a dog as I am,
Your humble servant then no more;
For who would humbly serve the poor?
But by a poor man's hopes in heaven!
While recollection's power is given,
If, in the vale of humble life,
The victim sad of fortune's strife,
I, through the tender gushing tear,
Should recognise my master dear,
If friendless, low, we meet together,
Then, sir, your hand—my friend and brother!

TO A LOUSE.

ON SEEING ONE ON A LADY'S BONNET AT CHURCH.

Ha! whare ye gaun, ye crowlin ferlie?
Your impudence protects you sairly:
I canna say but ye strunt rarely
Owre gauze and lace;
Though faith, I fear ye dine but sparely
On sic a place.

Ye ugly, creepin, blastit wonner,
Detested, shunn'd by saunt and sinner,
How dare ye set your fit upon her,
Sae fine a lady?
Gae somewhere else, and seek your dinner,
On some poor body.

Swith, in some beggar's haffet squattle;
Where ye may creep, and sprawl, and sprattle
Wi' ither kindred, jumpin cattle,
In shoals and nations;
Whare horn or bane ne'er dare unsettle
Your thick plantations.

Now haud ye there, ye're out o' sight,
Below the fatt'rils, snug an' tight;
Na, faith ye yet! ye'll no be right
Till ye've got on it,
The very topmost, towering height
O' miss's bonnet.

My sooth! right bauld ye set your nose out,
As plump and gray as onie grozet;
O for some rank, mercurial rozet,
Or fell, red smeddum,
I'd gie you sic a hearty doze o't,
Wad dress your droddum!

I wad na been surprised to spy
You on an auld wife's flainen toy;
Or aiblins some bit duddie boy,
On's wylie coat;
But miss's fine Lunardi! fie,
How dare ye do't?

O Jenny, dinna toss your head,
An' set your beauties a' abread!
Ye little ken what cursed speed
The blastie's makin!
Thae winks and finger-ends, I dread,
Are notice takin!

O wad some power the giftie gie us,
To see oursels as others see us!
It wad frae monie a blunder free us
And foolish notion;
What airs in dress and gait wad lea'e us
And e'en devotion!

ADDRESS TO EDINBURGH.

I.

Edina! Scotia's darling seat!
All hail thy palaces and towers,
Where once beneath a monarch's feet
Sat legislation's sovereign powers!
From marking wildly-scatter'd flowers
As on the banks of Ayr I stray'd,
And singing, lone, the lingering hours,
I shelter in thy honour'd shade.

II.

Here wealth still swells the golden tide,
As busy trade his labours plies;
There architecture's noble pride
Bids elegance and splendour rise;
Here justice, from her native skies,
High wields her balance and her rod;
There learning, with his eagle eyes,
Seeks science in her coy abode.

III.

Thy sons, Edina, social, kind,
With open arms the stranger hail;
Their views enlarged, their liberal mind,
Above the narrow, rural vale;
Attentive still to sorrow's wail,
Or modest merit's silent claim;
And never may their sources fail!
And never envy blot their name!

IV.

Thy daughters bright thy walks adorn!
Gay as the gilded summer sky,
Sweet as the dewy milk-white thorn,
Dear as the raptured thrill of joy!
Fair B—— strikes th' adoring eye,
Heaven's beauties on my fancy shine;
I see the sire of love on high,
And own his work indeed divine!

V.

There, watching high the least alarms,
Thy rough, rude fortress gleams afar;

Like some bold veteran, gray in arms,
And mark'd with many a seamy scar;
The ponderous walls and massy bar,
Grim rising o'er the rugged rock;
Have oft withstood assailing war,
And oft repell'd th' invader's shock.

VI.

With awe-struck thought, and pitying tears,
I view that noble, stately dome,
Where Scotia's kings of other years,
Famed heroes! had their royal home:
Alas! how changed the times to come!
Their royal name low in the dust!
Their hapless race wild-wandering roam!
Though rigid law cries out, 'Twas just!

VII.

Wild beats my heart to trace your steps,
Whose ancestors, in days of yore,
Through hostile ranks and ruin'd gaps
Old Scotia's bloody lion bore:
E'en I who sing in rustic lore,
Haply my sires have left their shed,
And faced grim danger's loudest roar,
Bold following where your fathers led!

VIII.

Edina! Scotia's darling seat!
All hail thy palaces and towers,
Where once beneath a monarch's feet
Sat legislation's sovereign powers!
From marking wildly-scatter'd flowers,
As on the banks of Ayr I stray'd,
And singing, lone, the lingering hours,
I shelter in thy honour'd shade.

EPISTLE TO J. LAPRAIK,

AN OLD SCOTTISH BARD.—APRIL 1st, 1785.

While briers and woodbines budding green,
An' paitricks scraichin loud at e'en,
An' morning poussie whiddin seen,
Inspire my muse,
This freedom in an unknown frien',
I pray excuse.

On fasten-een we had a rockin,
To ca' the crack and weave our stockin;
And there was muckle fun an' jokin,
Ye need na doubt;
At length we had a hearty yokin
At sang about.

There was ae sang, amang the rest,
Aboon them a' it pleased me best,
That some kind husband had addrest
To some sweet wife:
It thrill'd the heart-strings through the breast,
A' to the life.

I've scarce heard aught describes sae weel,
What generous, manly bosoms feel;
Thought I, "Can this be Pope, or Steele,
Or Beattie's wark!"
They tauld me 'twas an odd kind chiel
About Muirkirk.

It pat me fidgin-fain to hear't,
And sae about him there I spier't;
Then a' that ken't him round declared
He had ingine,
That nane excell'd it, few cam near't,
It was sae fine.

That set him to a pint of ale,
An' either douce or merry tale,
Or rhymes an' sangs he'd made himsel,
Or witty catches,
'Tween Inverness and Tiviotdale,
He had few matches.

Then up I gat, an' swoor an' aith,
Though I should pawn my pleugh and graith,
Or die a cadger pownie's death,
At some dyke-back,
A pint an' gill I'd gie them baith
To hear your crack.

But, first an' foremost, I should tell,
Amaist as soon as I could spell,
I to the crambo-jingle fell,
Though rude an' rough,
Yet crooning to a body's sel,
Does well eneugh.

I am nae poet, in a sense,
But just a rhymer, like, by chance,
An' hae to learning nae pretence,
Yet, what the matter?
Whene'er my muse does on me glance,
I jingle at her.

Your critic folk may cock their nose,
And say, "How can you e'er propose,
You wha ken hardly verse frae prose,
To mak a sang?"
But, by your leaves, my learned foes,
Ye're may be wrang.

What's a' your jargon o' your schools,
Your Latin names for horns an' stools;
If honest nature made you fools,
What sairs your grammars:
Ye'd better ta'en up spades and shools,
Or knappin hammers.

A set o' dull conceited hashes,
Confuse their brains in college classes!
They gang in stirks, and come out asses,
Plain truth to speak;
An' syne they think to climb Parnassus
By dint o' Greek!

Gie me ae spark o' nature's fire,
That's a' the learning I desire;
Then though I drudge through dub an' mire
At pleugh or cart,
My muse, though hamely in attire,
May touch the heart.

O for a spunk o' Allan's glee,
Or Fergusson's, the bauld and slee,
Or bright Lapraik's my friend to be,
If I can hit it!
That would be lear eneugh for me,
If I could get it.

Now, sir, if ye hae friends enow,
Though real friends, I b'lieve, are few,
Yet, if your catalogue be fu',
I'se no insist,
But gif ye want ae friend that's true,
I'm on your list.

I winna blaw about mysel;
As ill I like my fauts to tell;
But friends, and folk that wish me well,
They sometimes roose me,
Though I maun own, as monie still
As far abuse me.

There's ae wee faut they whyles lay to me,
I like the lasses—Gude forgie me!
For monie a plack they wheedle frae me,
At dance or fair;
May be some ither thing they gie me
They weel can spare.

But Mauchline race, or Mauchline fair,
I should be proud to meet you there;
We'se gie ae night's discharge to care,
If we forgather,
An' hae a swap o' rhymin-ware
Wi' ane anither.

The four-gill chap, we'se gar him clatter,
An' kirsen him wi' reekin water;
Syne we'll sit down an' tak our whitter,
To cheer our heart;
An' faith we'se be acquainted better
Before we part.

Awa, ye selfish warly race,
Wha think that havins, sense, an' grace,
E'en love an' friendship, should give place
To catch-the-plack!
I dinna like to see your face,
Nor hear you crack.

But ye whom social pleasure charms,
Whose heart the tide of kindness warms,
Who hold your being on the terms,
Each aid the others',
Come to my bowl, come to my arms,
My friends, my brothers!

But to conclude my lang epistle,
As my auld pen's worn to the grissle
Twa lines frae you wad gar me fissle,
Who am, most fervent,
While I can either sing or whissle,
Your friend and servant.

TO THE SAME.

APRIL 21st, 1785.

WHILE new-ca'd kye rout at the stake,
An' pownies reek in pleugh or braik,
This hour on e'enin's edge I take,
To own I'm debtor
To honest-hearted, auld Lapraik,
For his kind letter.

Forjesket sair, with weary legs,
Rattlin' the corn out-owre the rigs,
Or dealing through amang the naigs
Their ten-hours' bite,
My awkart muse sair pleads and begs
I would na write.

The tapeless ramfeezl'd hizzie,
She's saft at best, and something lazy,
Quo' she, "Ye ken, we've been sae busy,
This month an' mair,
That trouth my head is grown right dizzie
An' something sair."

Her dowff excuses pat me mad;
"Conscience," says I, "ye thowless jad!
I'll write, an' that a hearty blaud,
This vera night;
So dinna ye affront your trade,
But rhyme it right.

"Shall bauld Lapraik, the king o' hearts,
Though mankind were a pack o' cartes,
Roose you sae weel for your deserts,
In terms so friendly;
Yet ye'll neglect to shaw your parts,
An' thank him kindly!"

Sae I gat paper in a blink,
An' down gaed stumpie in the ink:
Quoth I, "Before I sleep a wink,
I vow I'll close it;
An' if ye winna mak it clink,
By Jove I'll prose it!"

Sae I've begun to scrawl, but whether
In rhyme or prose, or baith thegither,
Or some hotch-potch that's rightly neither,
Let time mak proof;
But I shall scribble down some blether
Just clean aff-loof.

My worthy friend, ne'er grudge an' carp,
Though fortune use you hard an' sharp;
Come, kittle up your moorland harp
Wi' gleesome touch!
Ne'er mind how fortune waft an' warp:
She's but a b-tch.

She's gien me monie a jirt an' fleg,
Sin' I could striddle owre a rig;
But, by the L—d, though I should beg
Wi' lyart pow,
I'll laugh, an' sing, and shake my leg,
As lang's I dow!

Now comes the sax an' twentieth simmer
I've seen the bud upo' the timmer,
Still persecuted by the limmer
Frae year to year;
But yet, despite the kittle kimmer,
I, Rob, am here.

Do ye envy the city gent,
Behint a kist to lie and sklent,
Or purse-proud, big wi' cent. per cent.
And muckle wame,
In some bit brugh to represent
A bailie's name?

Or is't the paughty, feudal thane,
Wi' ruffled sark an' glancin' cane,
Wha thinks himsel nae sheep-shank bane,
But lordly stalks,
While caps and bonnets aff are ta'en,
As by he walks?

"O Thou wha gies us each guid gift!
Gie me o' wit an' sense a lift,
Then turn me, if Thou please, adrift,
Through Scotland wide;
Wi' cits nor lairds I wadna shift,
In a' their pride!"

Were this the charter of our state,
"On pain o' hell be rich an' great,"
Damnation then would be our fate
Beyond remead;
But, thanks to heaven! that's no the gate
We learn our creed.

For thus the royal mandate ran,
When first the human race began,
"The social, friendly, honest man,
Whate'er he be,
'Tis he fulfils great nature's plan,
An' none but he!"

O mandate glorious and divine!
The ragged followers of the nine,
Poor, thoughtless devils! yet may shine
In glorious light,
While sordid sons of Mammon's line
Are dark as night.

Though here they scrape, an' squeeze, an' growl,
Their worthless nievefu' of a soul
May in some future carcass howl,
The forest's fright;
Or in some day-detesting owl
May shun the light.

Then may Lapraik and Burns arise,
To reach their native, kindred skies,
And sing their pleasures, hopes, an' joys,
In some mild sphere,
Still closer knit in friendship's tie
Each passing year.

TO W. S*****N,

OCHILTREE.

May, 1785.

I GAT your letter, winsome Willie;
Wi' gratefu' heart I thank you brawlie;
Though I maun say't, I wad be silly,
An' unco vain,
Should I believe, my coaxin' billie,
Your flatterin strain.

But I'se believe ye kindly meant it,
I sud be laith to think ye hinted
Ironic satire, sidelin's sklented
On my poor musie;
Though in sic phrasin' terms ye've penn'd it,
I scarce excuse ye.

My senses wad be in a creel
Should I but dare a hope to speel
Wi' Allan, or wi' Gilbertfield,
The braes o' fame;
Or Fergusson, the writer-chiel,
A deathless name.

(O Fergusson! thy glorious parts
Ill suited law's dry, musty arts!
My curse upon your whunstane hearts,
Ye Enbrugh gentry!
The tithe o' what ye waste at cartes,
Wad stow'd his pantry!)

Yet when a tale comes i' my head,
Or lasses gie my heart a screed,
As whyles they're like to be my deed,
(O sad disease!)
I kittle up my rustic reed;
It gies me ease.

Auld Coila now may fidge fu' fain,
She's gotten poets o' her ain,
Chiels wha their chanters winna hain,
But tune their lays,
Till echoes a' resound again
Her weel-sung praise.

Nae poet thought her worth his while,
To set her name in measured style;
She lay like some unkenn'd-of isle
Beside New Holland,
Or whare wild-meeting oceans boil
Besouth Magellan.

Ramsay an' famous Fergusson
Gied Forth an' Tay a lift aboon;
Yarrow an' Tweed to monie a tune,
Owre Scotland rings,
While Irwin, Lugar, Ayr, an' Doon,
Naebody sings.

Th' Illyssus, Tiber, Thames, an' Seine,
Glide sweet in monie a tunefu' line!
But, Willie, set your fit to mine,
An' cock your crest,
We'll gar our streams and burnies shine
Up wi' the best.

We'll sing auld Coila's plains an' fells,
Her moors red-brown with heather bells,
Her banks an' braes, her dens and dells,
Where glorious Wallace
Aft bure the gree, as story tells,
Frae southron billies.

At Wallace' name what Scottish blood
But boils up in a spring-tide flood!
Oft have our fearless fathers strode
By Wallace' side,
Still pressing onward, red-wat-shod,
Or glorious dyed.

O, sweet are Coila's haughs an' woods,
When lintwhites chant amang the buds,
And jinkin hares, in amorous whids,
Their loves enjoy,
While through the braes the cushat croods
With wailfu' cry!

E'en winter bleak has charms for me,
When winds rave through the naked tree;
Or frosts on hills of Ochiltree
Are hoary gray;
Or blinding drifts wild-furious flee,
Darkening the day!

O nature! a' thy shows an' forms
To feeling, pensive hearts hae charms!
Whether the simmer kindly warms
Wi' life an' light,
Or winter howls, in gusty storms,
The lang, dark night!

The muse, nae poet ever fand her,
Till by himsel he learn'd to wander,
Adown some trotting burn's meander,
An' no think lang;
O sweet! to stray, an' pensive ponder
A heartfelt sang!

The warly race may drudge an' drive,
Hog-shouther, jundie, stretch, an' strive,
Let me fair nature's face descrive,
And I, wi' pleasure,
Shall let the busy, grumbling hive,
Bum owre their treasure.

Fareweel, "my rhyme-composing brither!"
We've been owre lang unkenn'd to ither:
Now let us lay our heads thegither,
In love fraternal:
May envy wallop in a tether,
Black fiend, infernal!

While highlandmen hate tolls and taxes;
While moorlan' herds like guid fat braxies:
While terra firma, on her axis,
Diurnal turns,
Count on a friend, in faith an' practice,
In Robert Burns.

POSTSCRIPT.

My memory's no worth a preen;
I had amaist forgotten clean,
Ye bade me write you what they mean
By this "new-light,"*
'Bout which our herds sae aft hae been
Maist like to fight.

In days when mankind were but callans
At grammar, logic, an' sic talents,
They took nae pains their speech to balance,
Or rules to gie,
But spak their thoughts in plain, braid lallans,
Like you or me.

In thae auld times, they thought the moon,
Just like a sark, or pair o' shoon,
Wore by degrees, till her last roon,
Gaed past their viewing,
An' shortly after she was done,
They gat a new one.

This past for certain, undisputed;
It ne'er cam i' their heads to doubt it,
Till chiels gat up an' wad confute it,
An' ca'd it wrang;
An' muckle din there was about it,
Baith loud and lang.

Some herds, weel learn'd upo' the beuk,
Wad threap auld folk the thing mistcuk;
For 'twas the auld moon turn'd a neuk,
An' out o' sight,
An' backlins-comin, to the leuk,
She grew mair bright.

This was denied, it was affirm'd;
The herds an' hissels were alarm'd:
The reverend gray-beards raved an' storm'd,
That beardless laddies
Should think they better were inform'd
Than their auld daddies.

Frae less to mair it gaed to sticks;
Frae words an' aiths to clours an' nicks;
An' monie a fallow gat his licks,
Wi' hearty crunt;
An' some, to learn them for their tricks,
Were hang'd an' burnt.

This game was play'd in monie lands,
An' auld-light caddies bure sic hands,
That faith the youngsters took the sands
Wi' nimble shanks,
The lairds forbade, by strict commands,
Sic bluidy pranks.

But new-light herds gat sic a cowe,
Folk thought them ruin'd stick-an'-stowe,
Till now amaist on every knowe,
Ye'll find ane placed;
An' some, their new-light fair avow,
Just quite barefaced.

Nae doubt the auld-light flocks are bleatin;
Their zealous herds are vex'd an' sweatin;
Mysel, I've even seen them greetin
Wi' girnin spite,
To hear the moon sae sadly lie'd on
By word an' write.

But shortly they will cowe the louns!
Some auld-light herds in neebor towns
Are mind't in things they ca' balloons,
To tak a flight,
An' stay a month amang the moons
An' see them right.

Guid observation they will gie them;
An' when the auld moon's gaun to leave them,
The hindmost shaird, they'll fetch it wi' them,
Just i' their pouch,
An' when the new-light billies see them,
I think they'll crouch!

Sae, ye observe that a' this clatter
Is naething but a "moonshine matter;"
But though dull prose-folk Latin splatter
In logic tulzie,
I hope, we bardies ken some better,
Than mind sic brulzie.

---

* "New-light" is a cant phrase in the west of Scotland, for those religious opinions which Dr. Taylor of Norwich has defended so strenuously.

EPISTLE TO J. R******

ENCLOSING SOME POEMS.

O ROUGH, rude, ready-witted R******,
The wale o' cocks for fun an' drinkin!
There's mony godly folks are thinkin,
Your dreams* an' tricks
Will send you, Korah-like, a-sinkin,
Straught to auld Nick's.

Ye hae sae monie cracks an' canta,
And in your wicked druncken rants,
Ye mak a devil o' the saunts,
An' fill them fou;
And then their failings, flaws, an' wants,
Are a' seen through.

Hypocrisy, in mercy spare it!
That holy robe, O dinna tear it!
Spare 't for their sakes wha aften wear it,
The lads in black!
But your curst wit, when it comes near it,
Rives 't aff their back.

Think, wicked sinner, wha ye're skaithing
Its just the blue-gown badge an' claithing
O' saunts; tak that, ye lea'e them naething
To ken them by,
Frae ony unregenerate heathen
Like you or I.

I've sent you home some rhyming ware,
A' that I bargain'd for, an' mair;
Sae, when ye hae an hour to spare,
I will expect
Yon sang,† ye'll sen't wi' cannie care,
And no neglect.

Though faith, sma' heart hae I to sing!
My muse dow scarcely spread her wing!
I've play'd mysel a bonnie spring,
An' danced my fill!
I'd better gane an' sair't the king,
At Bunker's Hill.

'Twas ae night lately in my fun,
I gaed a roving wi' the gun,
An' brought a paitrick to the grun,
A bonnie hen,
And, as the twilight was begun,
Thought nane wad ken.

The poor wee thing was little hurt;
I straikit it a wee for sport,
Ne'er thinkin they wad fash me for't;
But, deil-ma-care!
Somebody tells the poacher-court
The hale affair.

Some auld used hands had ta'en a note,
That sic a hen had got a shot;
I was suspected for the plot;
I scorn'd to lie;
So gat the whizzle o' my groat,
An' pay't the fee.

But, by my gun, o' guns the wale,
An' by my pouther an' my hail,
An' by my hen, an' by her tail,
I vow an' swear!
The game shall pay o'er moor an' dale,
For this, niest year.

As soon's the clockin-time is by,
An' the wee pouts begun to cry,
L—d, I'se hae sportin by an' by,
For my gowd guinea:
Though I should herd the buckskin kye
For't in Virginia.

Trowth, they had muckle for to blame:
'Twas neither broken wing nor limb,
But twa-three draps about the wame
Scarce through the feathers;
An' baith a yellow George to claim,
An' thole their blethers!

It pits me aye as mad's a hare;
So I can rhyme nor write nae mair;
But pennyworth's again is fair,
When time's expedient:
Meanwhile I am, respected sir,
Your most obedient.

* A certain humorous dream of his was then making a noise in the country side.

† A song he had promised the author.

TAM O'SHANTER.

A TALE.

Of brownyis and of bogillis full is this buke.
GAWIN DOUGLAS

WHEN chapman billies leave the street,
And drouthy neebors neebors meet,
As market-days are wearing late,
An' folk begin to tak the gate;
While we sit bousing at the nappy,
An' gettin fou and unco happy,
We think na on the lang Scots miles,
The mosses, waters, slaps, and stiles,
That lie between us and our hame,
Whare sits our sulky, sullen dame,
Gathering her brows like gathering storm,
Nursing her wrath to keep it warm.

This truth fand honest Tam O'Shanter,
As he frae Ayr ae night did canter,
(Auld Ayr, whom ne'er a town surpasses,
For honest men and bonny lasses.)

O Tam! hadst thou but been sae wise,
As ta'en thy ain wife Kate's advice!
She tauld thee weel thou was a skellum,
A blethering, blustering, drunken blellum;
That frae November till October,
Ae market-day thou was nae sober;
That ilka melder, wi' the miller,
Thou sat as lang as thou had siller;
That every naig was ca'd a shoe on,
The smith and thee gat roaring fou on;
That at the L—d's house, e'en on Sunday,
Thou drank wi' Kirton Jean till Monday.
She prophesied, that late or soon,
Thou would be found deep drown'd in Doon
Or catch'd wi' warlocks in the mirk,
By Alloway's auld haunted kirk.

Ah, gentle dames! it gars me greet,
To think how mony counsels sweet,
How mony lengthen'd, sage advices,
The husband frae the wife despises!

But to our tale: Ae market night,
Tam had got planted unco right;
Fast by an ingle, bleezing finely,
Wi' reaming swats, that drank divinely;
And at his elbow souter Johnny,
His ancient, trusty, drouthy crony;
Tam lo'ed him like a vera brither;
They had been fou for weeks thegither.
The night drave on wi' sangs an' clatter;
And aye the ale was growing better;
The landlady and Tam grew gracious,
Wi' favours secret, sweet, and precious:
The souter tauld his queerest stories;
The landlord's laugh was ready chorus:
The storm without might rair and rustle,
Tam did na mind the storm a whistle.

Care, mad to see a man sae happy,
E'en drown'd himself amang the nappy;
As bees flee hame wi' lades o' treasure,
The minutes wing'd their way wi' pleasure;
Kings may be blest, but Tam was glorious,
O'er a' the ills o' life victorious.

But pleasures are like poppies spread,
You seize the flower, its bloom is shed;
Or like the snow-falls in the river,
A moment white—then melts for ever;
Or like the borealis race,
That flit ere you can point their place;
Or like the rainbow's lovely form
Evanishing amid the storm.—
Nae man can tether time or tide;
The hour approaches Tam maun ride;
That hour, o' night's black arch the key-stane,
That dreary hour he mounts his beast in;
And sic a night he taks the road in,
As ne'er poor sinner was abroad in.

The wind blew as 'twad blawn its last;
The rattling showers rose on the blast;
The speedy gleams the darkness swallow'd;
Loud, deep, and lang the thunder bellow'd:
That night, a child might understand,
The deil had business on his hand.

Weel mounted on his gray mare Meg,
A better never lifted leg,
Tam skelpit on through dub and mire,
Despising wind, and rain, and fire;
Whiles holding fast his guid blue bonnet:
Whiles crooning o'er some auld Scots sonnet;
Whiles glowering round wi' prudent cares,
Lest bogles catch him unawares;
Kirk-Alloway was drawing nigh,
Whare ghaists and howlets nightly cry.—

By this time he was cross the ford,
Whare in the snaw the chapman smoor'd;
And past the birks an' meikle stane,
Whare drunken Charlie brak's neck bane;
And through the whins, and by the cairn,
Whare hunters fand the murder'd bairn;
And near the thorn, aboon the well,
Whare Mungo's mither hang'd herael.—
Before him Doon pours all his floods;
The doubling storm roars through the woods:
The lightnings flash from pole to pole;
Near and more near the thunders roll;
When, glimmering through the groaning trees,
Kirk-Alloway seem'd in a bleeze;
Through ilka bore the beams were glancing;
And loud resounded mirth and dancing.—

Inspiring bold John Barleycorn!
What dangers thou canst make us scorn!
Wi' tippenny we fear nae evil;
Wi' usquabae we'll face the devil!—
The swats sae ream'd in Tammie's noddle,
Fair play, he cared na dells a boddle.
But Maggie stood right sair astonish'd,
Till, by the heel and hand admonish'd,
She ventured forward on the light;
And, vow! Tam saw an unco sight!
Warlocks and witches in a dance;
Nae cotillon brent new frae France,
But hornpipes, jigs, strathspeys, and reels,
Put life and mettle in their heels.
A winnock-bunker in the east,
There sat auld Nick, in shape o' beast;
A towzie tyke, black, grim, and large,
To gie them music was his charge:
He screw'd the pipes, and gart them skirl,
Till roof and rafters a' did dirl.—
Coffins stood round like open presses,
That shaw'd the dead in their last dresses;
And by some devilish cantraip slight,
Each in its cauld hand held a light,—
By which heroic Tam was able
To note upon the haly table,
A murderer's banes in gibbet airns;
Twa span lang, wee, unchristen'd bairns;
A thief new cutted frae a rape,
Wi' his last gasp his gab did gape;
Five tomahawks, wi' bluid red rusted;
Five cimiters, wi' murder crusted;
A garter, which a babe had strangled;
A knife, a father's throat had mangled,
Whom his ain son o' life bereft,
The gray hairs yet stack to the heft;
Wi' mair o' horrible and awfu',
Which e'en to name wad be unlawfu'.

As Tammie glowr'd, amazed and curious,
The mirth and fun grew fast and furious:
The piper loud and louder blew;
The dancers quick and quicker flew;
They reel'd, they set, they cross'd, they cleekit
Till ilka carlin swat and reekit,
And coost her duddies to the wark,
And linket at it in her sark!

Now Tam, O Tam! had they been queans,
A' plump and strapping, in their teens;
Their sarks, instead o' creeshie flannen,
Been snaw-white seventeen hunder linen!
Thir breeks o' mine, my only pair,
That ance were plush, o' guid blue hair,
I wad hae gien them aff my hurdies
For ae blink o' the bonnie burdies.

But wither'd beldams, auld and droll,
Rigwoodie hags wad spean a foal,
Lowping an' flinging on a crummock,
I wonder didna turn thy stomach.

But Tam kenn'd what was what fu' brawlie,
There was ae winsome wench and walie,
That night enlisted in the core,
(Lang after kenn'd on Carrick shore!
For mony a beast to dead she shot,
And perish'd mony a bonnie boat,
And shook baith meikle corn and bear,
And kept the country side in fear.)
Her cuttie sark, o' Paisley harn.
That while a lassie she had worn,
In longitude though sorely scanty,
It was her best, and she was vauntie.—
Ah! little kenn'd thy reverend grannie,
That sark she coft for her wee Nannie,
Wi' twa pund Scots, ('twas a' her riches,)
Wad ever graced a dance of witches!

But here my muse her wing maun cour;
Sic flights are far beyond her power;
To sing how Nannie lap and flang,
(A souple jade she was and strang,)
And how Tam stood like ane bewitch'd,
And thought his very e'en enrich'd;
E'en Satan glowr'd, and fidged fu' fain,
And hotch'd and blew wi' might and main:
Till first ae caper, syne anither,
Tam tint his reason a' thegither,
And roars out, "Weel done, cutty-sark!"
And in an instant all was dark:
And scarcely had he Maggie rallied,
When out the hellish legion sallied.

As bees bizz out wi' angry fyke,
When plundering herds assail their byke;
As open pussie's mortal foes,
When, pop! she starts before their nose;
As eager runs the market-crowd,
When "Catch the thief!" resounds aloud;
So Maggie runs, the witches follow,
Wi' mony an eldritch skreech and hollow.

Ah, Tam! ah, Tam! thou'll get thy fairin!
In hell they'll roast thee like a herrin!
In vain thy Kate awaits thy comin!
Kate soon will be a wofu' woman!
Now do thy speedy utmost, Meg,
And win the key-stane* of the brig;
There at them thou thy tail may toss,
A running stream they dare na cross.
But ere the key-stane she could make,
The fient a tail she had to shake!
For Nannie, far before the rest,
Hard upon noble Maggie prest,
And flew at Tam wi' furious ettle;
But little wist she Maggie's mettle—

Ae spring brought off her master hale,
But left behind her ain gray tail:
The carlin claught her by the rump,
And left poor Maggie scarce a stump.

Now, wha this tale o' truth shall read,
Ilk man and mother's son, tak heed:
Whene'er to drink you are inclined,
Or cutty-sarks run in your mind,
Think, ye may buy the joys o'er dear,—
Remember Tam O'Shanter's mare.

SONGS.

THE LEA-RIG.

When o'er the hill the eastern star,
Tells bughtin-time is near, my jo;
And owsen frae the furrow'd field,
Return sae dowf and weary, O;
Down by the burn, where scented birks,
Wi' dew are hanging clear, my jo,
I'll meet thee on the lea-rig,
My ain kind dearie, O.

In mirkest glen, at midnight hour,
I'd rove and ne'er be eerie, O,
If through that glen, I gaed to thee,
My ain kind dearie, O.
Although the night were ne'er sae wild,
And I were ne'er sae wearie, O,
I'd meet thee on the lea-rig,
My ain kind dearie, O.

The hunter lo'es the morning sun,
To rouse the mountain deer, my jo,
At noon the fisher seeks the glen,
Along the burn to steer, my jo;
Gie me the hour o' gloamin gray,
It maks my heart sae cheery, O,
To meet thee on the lea-rig,
My ain kind dearie, O.

TO MARY.

Tune—"Ewe-bughts, Marion."

Will ye go to the Indies, my Mary,
And leave auld Scotia's shore?
Will ye go to the Indies, my Mary,
Across th' Atlantic's roar?

O sweet grows the lime and the orange,
And the apple on the pine;
But a' the charms o' the Indies,
Can never equal thine.

I hae sworn by the heavens to my Mary,
I hae sworn by the heavens to be true;
And sae may the heavens forget me,
When I forget my vow!

O plight me your faith, my Mary,
And plight me your lily-white hand;
O plight me your faith, my Mary,
Before I leave Scotia's strand.

* It is a well known fact that witches, or any evil spirits, have no power to follow a poor wight any farther than the middle of the next running stream.—It may be proper likewise to mention to the benighted traveller, that when he falls in with bogles, whatever danger may be in his going forward, there is much more hazard in turning back.

We hae plighted our troth, my Mary,
In mutual affection to join,
And curst be the cause that shall part us!
The hour, and the moment o' time!

MY WIFE'S A WINSOME WEE THING.

She is a winsome wee thing,
She is a handsome wee thing,
She is a bonnie wee thing,
This sweet wee wife o' mine.

I never saw a fairer,
I never lo'ed a dearer,
And niest my heart I'll wear her,
For fear my jewel tine.

She is a winsome wee thing,
She is a handsome wee thing,
She is a bonnie wee thing,
This sweet wee wife o' mine.

The warld's wrack we share o't,
The warstle and the care o't;
Wi' her I'll blithly bear it,
And think my lot divine.

BONNIE LESLEY.

O saw ye bonnie Lesley
As she gaed o'er the border?
She's gane, like Alexander,
To spread her conquests farther.

To see her is to love her,
And love but her for ever;
For nature made her what she is,
And ne'er made sic anither!

Thou art a queen, fair Lesley,
Thy subjects we, before thee;
Thou art divine, fair Lesley,
The hearts o' men adore thee.

The deil he could na scaith thee,
Or aught that wad belang thee;
He'd look into thy bonnie face,
And say, "I canna wrang thee."

The powers aboon will tent thee;
Misfortune sha'na steer thee;
Thou'rt like themselves sae lovely
That ill they'll ne'er let near thee.

Return again, fair Lesley,
Return to Caledonie!
That we may brag, we hae a lass
There's nane again sae bonnie.

HIGHLAND MARY.

Tune—"Catharine Ogie."

Ye banks, and braes, and streams around,
The castle o' Montgomery,
Green be your woods, and fair your flowers,
Your waters never drumlie!
There simmer first unfauld her robes,
And there the langest tarry;
For there I took the last fareweel
O' my sweet Highland Mary.

How sweetly bloom'd the gay green birk,
How rich the hawthorn's blossom;
As underneath their fragrant shade
I clasped her to my bosom!
The golden hours on angel wings
Flew o'er me and my dearie;
For dear to me, as light and life,
Was my sweet Highland Mary.

Wi' mony a vow, and lock'd embrace,
Our parting was fu' tender;
And pledging aft to meet again,
We tore oursels asunder;
But O! fell death's untimely frost,
That nipt my flower sae early!
Now green's the sod, and cauld's the clay,
That wraps my Highland Mary!

O pale, pale now, those rosy lips
I aft hae kiss'd sae fondly!
And closed for aye the sparkling glance
That dwelt on me sae kindly!
And mouldering now in silent dust
That heart that loved me dearly!
But still within my bosom's core
Shall live my Highland Mary.

AULD ROB MORRIS.

There's auld Rob Morris that wons in yon glen,
He's the king o' guid fellows and wale of auld men
He has gowd in his coffers, he has owsen and kine,
And ae bonnie lassie, his darling and mine.

She's fresh as the morning, the fairest in May;
She's sweet as the evening amang the new hay;
As blithe and as artless as the lambs on the lea,
And dear to my heart as the light to my e'e.

But O! she's an heiress, auld Robin's a laird,
And my daddie has naught but a cot-house and yard
A wooer like me maunna hope to come speed,
The wounds I must hide that will soon be my dead

The day comes to me, but delight brings me nane
The night comes to me, but my rest it is gane:
I wander my lane like a night-troubled ghaist,
And I sigh as my heart it would burst in my breast

O, had she been but of lower degree,
I then might hae hoped she wad smiled upon me!
O, how past describing had then been my bliss,
As now my distraction no words can express!

DUNCAN GRAY.

Duncan Gray came here to woo,
Ha, ha, the wooing o't,
On blithe yule night when we were fou,
Ha, ha, the wooing o't.
Maggie coost her head fu' high
Look'd asklent and unco skeigh,
Gart poor Duncan stand abeigh;
Ha, ha, the wooing o't.

Duncan fleech'd, and Duncan pray'd;
Ha, ha, &c.
Meg was deaf as Ailsa Craig,
Ha, ha, &c.

Duncan sigh'd baith out and in,
Grat his een baith bleer't and blin',
Spak o' lowpin owre a linn;
Ha, ha, &c.

Time and chance are but a tide,
Ha, ha, &c.
Slighted love is sair to bide,
Ha, ha, &c.
Shall I, like a fool, quoth he,
For a haughty hizzie die?
She may gae to—France for me!
Ha, ha, &c.

How it comes let doctors tell,
Ha, ha, &c.
Meg grew sick—as he grew heal.
Ha, ha, &c.
Something in her bosom wrings,
For relief a sigh she brings;
And O, her een, they spak sic things!
Ha, ha, &c.

Duncan was a lad o' grace,
Ha, ha, &c.
Maggie's was a piteous case,
Ha, ha, &c.
Duncan could na be her death,
Swelling pity smoor'd his wrath;
Now they're crouse and canty baith.
Ha, ha, &c.

SONG.

TUNE—"I had a horse."

O POORTITH cauld, and restless love,
Ye wreck my peace between ye;
Yet poortith a' I could forgive,
An' 'twere na for my Jeanie.
O why should fate sic pleasure have,
Life's dearest bands untwining?
Or why sae sweet a flower as love
Depend on fortune's shining?

This warld's wealth when I think on,
Its pride, and a' the lave o't;
Fie, fie on silly coward man,
That he should be the slave o't.
O why, &c.

Her een sae bonnie blue betray
How she repays my passion;
But prudence is her o'erword aye,
She talks of rank and fashion.
O why, &c.

O wha can prudence think upon,
And sic a lassie by him?
O wha can prudence think upon,
And sae in love as I am?
O why, &c.

How blest the humble cotter's fate!
He wooes his simple dearie;
The sillie bogles, wealth and state,
Can never make them eerie.
O why should fate sic pleasure have,
Life's dearest bands untwining?
Or why sae sweet a flower as love
Depend on fortune's shining?

GALLA WATER.

THERE'S braw, braw lads on Yarrow braes,
That wander through the blooming heather;
But Yarrow braes, nor Ettric shaws,
Can match the lads o' Galla water.

But there is ane, a secret ane,
Aboon them a' I lo'e him better;
And I'll be his, and he'll be mine,
The bonnie lad o' Galla water,

Although his daddie was nae laird,
And though I hae nae meikle tocher;
Yet rich in kindest, truest love,
We'll tent our flocks by Galla water.

It ne'er was wealth, it ne'er was wealth,
That coft contentment, peace, or pleasure,
The bands and bliss o' mutual love,
O that's the chiefest warld's treasure!

LORD GREGORY.

O MIRK, mirk is this midnight hour,
And loud the tempest's roar;
A waefu' wanderer seeks thy tower,
Lord Gregory, ope thy door.

An exile frae her father's ha',
And a' for loving thee;
At least some pity on me shaw,
If love it may na be.

Lord Gregory, mind'st thou not the grove,
By bonnie Irwine side,
Where first I own'd that virgin love
I lang, lang had denied.

How aften didst thou pledge and vow,
Thou wad for aye be mine!
And my fond heart, itsel sae true,
It ne'er mistrusted thine.

Hard is thy heart, Lord Gregory,
And flinty is thy breast:
Thou dart of heaven that flashest by,
O wilt thou give me rest!

Ye mustering thunders from above,
Your willing victim see!
But spare and pardon my fause love,
His wrangs to heaven and me!

MARY MORISON.

TUNE—"Bide ye yet."

O MARY, at thy window be,
It is the wish'd, the trysted hour!
Those smiles and glances let me see,
That make the miser's treasure poor:
How blithely wad I bide the stoure,
A weary slave frae sun to sun;
Could I the rich reward secure,
The lovely Mary Morison.

Yestreen when to the trembling string,
The dance gaed through the lighted ha',
To thee my fancy took its wing,
I sat, but neither heard or saw:

Though this was fair, and that was braw,
And yon the toast of a' the town,
I sigh'd, and said amang them a',
"Ye are na Mary Morison."

O Mary, canst thou wreck his peace,
Wha for thy sake wad gladly die?
Or canst thou break that heart of his,
Whase only fault is loving thee?
If love for love thou wilt na gie,
At least be pity to me shown!
A thought ungentle canna be
The thought o' Mary Morison.

WANDERING WILLIE.

Here awa, there awa, wandering Willie,
Here awa, there awa, haud awa hame;
Come to my bosom my ain only dearie,
Tell me thou bringst me my Willie the same.

Winter winds blew loud and cauld at our parting;
Fears for my Willie brought tears in my e'e:
Welcome now simmer, and welcome my Willie,
The simmer to nature, my Willie to me.

Rest, ye wild storms, in the cave of your slumbers,
How your dread howling a lover alarms!
Wauken, ye breezes, row gently, ye billows,
And waft my dear laddie ance mair to my arms.

But O! if he's faithless, and minds na his Nannie,
Flow still between us, thou wide-roaring main;
May I never see it, may I never trow it,
But, dying, believe that my Willie's my ain!

JESSIE.

Tune—"Bonny Dundee."

True hearted was he, the sad swain o' the Yarrow,
And fair are the maids on the banks o' the Ayr,
But by the sweet side o' the Nith's winding river,
Are lovers as faithful, and maidens as fair:
To equal young Jessie seek Scotland all over;
To equal young Jessie you seek it in vain;
Grace, beauty, and elegance fetter her lover,
And maidenly modesty fixes the chain.

O fresh is the rose in the gay, dewy morning,
And sweet is the lily at evening close;
But in the fair presence o' lovely young Jessie,
Unseen is the lily, unheeded the rose.
Love sits in her smile, a wizard insnaring;
Enthroned in her e'en he delivers his law;
And still to her charms she alone is a stranger!
Her modest demeanour's the jewel of a'.

WHEN WILD WAR'S DEADLY BLAST WAS BLAWN.

Air—"The mill mill O."

When wild war's deadly blast was blawn,
And gentle peace returning,
Wi' mony a sweet babe fatherless,
And mony a widow mourning,
I left the lines and tented field,
Where lang I'd been a lodger,
My humble knapsack a' my wealth,
A poor and honest sodger.

A leal, light heart was in my breast,
My hand unstain'd wi' plunder;
And for fair Scotia's hame again,
I cheery on did wander.
I thought upon the banks o' Coil,
I thought upon my Nancy,
I thought upon the witching smile
That caught my youthful fancy.

At length I reach'd the bonnie glen,
Where early life I sported;
I pass'd the mill and trysting thorn,
Where Nancy aft I courted:
Wha spied I but my ain dear maid,
Down by her mother's dwelling!
And turn'd me round to hide the flood
That in my e'en was swelling.

Wi' alter'd voice, quoth I, Sweet lass,
Sweet as yon hawthorn's blossom,
O! happy, happy may he be,
That's dearest to thy bosom!
My purse is light, I've far to gang,
And fain wad be thy lodger;
I've served my king and country lang,
Take pity on a sodger.

Sae wistfully she gazed on me,
And lovelier was than ever:
Quo' she, A sodger ance I lo'ed,
Forget him shall I never:
Our humble cot and hamely fare,
Ye freely shall partake it,
That gallant badge, the dear cockade,
Ye're welcome for the sake o't.

She gazed—she redden'd like a rose—
Syne pale like ony lily;
She sank within my arms, and cried,
Art thou my ain dear Willie?
By Him who made yon sun and sky—
By whom true love's regarded,
I am the man; and thus may still
True lovers be rewarded.

The wars are o'er, and I'm come hame,
And find thee still true hearted;
Though poor in gear, we're rich in love,
And mair we'se ne'er be parted.
Quo' she, My grandsire left me gowd,
A mailen plenish'd fairly;
And come, my faithfu' sodger lad,
Thou'rt welcome to it dearly!

For gold the merchant ploughs the main,
The farmer ploughs the manor;
But glory is the sodger's prize;
The sodger's wealth is honour;
The brave, poor sodger ne'er despise,
Nor count him as a stranger,
Remember he's his country's stay
In day and hour of danger.

SONG.

Tune—"Logan Water."

O Logan, sweetly didst thou glide,
That day I was my Willie's bride;
And years sinsyne has o'er us run,
Like Logan to the simmer sun.

But now thy flowery banks appear
Like drumlie winter, dark and drear,
While my dear lad maun face his foes,
Far, far frae me and Logan braes.

Again the merry month o' May
Has made our hills and valleys gay;
The birds rejoice in leafy bowers,
The bees hum round the breathing flowers:
Blithe morning lifts his rosy eye,
And evening's tears are tears of joy:
My soul, delightless, a' surveys,
While Willie's far frae Logan braes.

Within yon milk-white hawthorn bush,
Amang her nestlings sits the thrush;
Her faithfu' mate will share her toil,
Or wi' his song her cares beguile,
But I, wi' my sweet nurslings here,
Nae mate to help, nae mate to cheer,
Pass widow'd nights and joyless days,
While Willie's far frae Logan braes!

O wae upon you, men o' state,
That brethren rouse to deadly hate!
As ye make mony a fond heart mourn,
Sae may it on your heads return!
How can your flinty hearts enjoy
The widow's tears, the orphan's cry?
But soon may peace bring happy days,
And Willie hame to Logan braes!

BONNIE JEAN.

THERE was a lass, and she was fair,
At kirk and market to be seen,
When a' the fairest maids were met,
The fairest maid was bonnie Jean.

And aye she wrought her mammie's wark,
And aye she sang sae merrilie:
The blithest bird upon the bush
Had ne'er a lighter heart than she.

But hawks will rob the tender joys
That bless the little lintwhite's nest;
And frost will blight the fairest flowers,
And love will break the soundest rest.

Young Robie was the brawest lad,
The flower and pride o' a' the glen;
And he had owsen, sheep, and kye,
And wanton naigies nine or ten.

He gaed wi' Jeanie to the tryste,
He danced wi' Jeanie on the down;
And lang ere witless Jeanie wist,
Her heart was tint, her peace was stown

As in the bosom o' the stream,
The moonbeam dwells at dewy e'en;
So, trembling, pure, was tender love,
Within the breast o' bonnie Jean.

And now she works her mammie's wark,
And aye she sighs wi' care and pain;
Ye wist na what her ail might be,
Or what wad mak her weel again.

But did na Jeanie's heart loup light,
And did na joy blink in her e'e,
As Robie tauld a tale o' love,
Ae e'enin on the lily lea?

The sun was sinking in the west,
The birds sang sweet in ilka grove;
His cheek to hers he fondly prest,
And whisper'd thus his tale o' love:

O Jeanie fair, I lo'e thee dear;
O canst thou think to fancy me!
Or wilt thou leave thy mammie's cot,
And learn to tent the farms wi' me?

At barn or byre thou shalt na drudge,
Or naething else to trouble thee;
But stray amang the heather-bells,
And tent the waving corn wi' me.

Now what could artless Jeanie do?
She had nae will to say him na:
At length she blush'd a sweet consent,
And love was aye between them twa.

AULD LANG SYNE.

SHOULD auld acquaintance be forgot,
And never brought to min'?
Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
And days o' lang syne?

CHORUS.

For auld lang syne, my dear,
For auld lang syne,
We'll tak a cup o' kindness yet,
For auld lang syne.

We twa hae ran about the braes,
And pu't the gowans fine;
But we've wander'd mony a weary foot,
Sin auld lang syne.
For auld, &c.

We twa hae paidl't i' the burn,
Frae mornin sun till dine:
But seas between us braid hae roar'd,
Sin auld lang syne.
For auld, &c.

And here's a hand, my trusty fier,
And gie's a hand o' thine;
And we'll tak a right guid willie waught,
For auld lang syne.
For auld, &c.

And surely ye'll be your pint-stowp,
And surely I'll be mine;
And we'll tak a cup o' kindness yet,
For auld lang syne.
For auld, &c.

BANNOCKBURN.

ROBERT BRUCE'S ADDRESS TO HIS ARMY.

Scots, wha hae wi' Wallace bled,
Scots, wham Bruce has aften led,
Welcome to your gory bed,
Or to glorious victory.

Now's the day and now's the hour;
See the front o' battle lower;
See approach proud Edward's power;
Edward! chains and slavery!

Wha will be a traitor knave?
Wha can fill a coward's grave?
Wha sae base as be a slave?
Traitor! coward! turn and flee!

Wha for Scotland's king and law
Freedom's sword will strongly draw,
Freeman stand, or freeman fa',
Caledonian! on wi' me!

By oppression's woes and pains!
By your sons in servile chains!
We will drain our dearest veins,
But they shall be—shall be free!

Lay the proud usurpers low!
Tyrants fall in every foe!
Liberty's in every blow!
Forward! let us do, or die!

FOR A' THAT, AND A' THAT.

Is there, for honest poverty,
That hangs his head, and a' that;
The coward slave, we pass him by,
We dare be poor for a' that!
For a' that, and a' that,
Our toil's obscure and a' that,
The rank is but the guinea stamp,
The man's the gowd for a' that.

What though on hamely fare we dine,
Wear hoddin gray, and a' that;
Gie fools their silks, and knaves their wine,
A man's a man for a' that;
For a' that, and a' that,
Their tinsel show, and a' that;
The honest man, though e'er sae poor,
Is king o' men for a' that.

Ye see yon birkie, ca'd a lord,
Wha struts, and stares, and a' that;
Though hundreds worship at his word,
He's but a coof for a' that;
For a' that, and a' that,
His riband, star, and a' that,
The man of independent mind,
He looks and laughs at a' that.

A prince can mak a belted knight,
A marquis, duke, and a' that;
But an honest man's aboon his might,
Guid faith he mauna fa' that!
For a' that, and a' that,
Their dignities, and a' that,
The pith o' sense, and pride o' worth,
Are higher ranks than a' that.

Then let us pray that come it may,
As come it will for a' that,
That sense and worth, o'er a' the earth,
May bear the gree, and a' that.
For a' that, and a' that,
It's coming yet, for a' that,
That man to man, the warld o'er,
Shall brothers be for a' that.

SCOTTISH BALLAD.

TUNE—"The Lothian Lassie."

LAST May a braw wooer cam down the lang glen,
And sair wi' his love he did deave me;
I said there was nothing I hated like men;
The deuce gae wi'm, to believe me, believe me,
The deuce gae wi'm, to believe me.

He spak o' the darts in my bonnie black e'en,
And vow'd for my love he was dying;
I said he might die when he liked, for Jean;
The Lord forgie me for lying, for lying,
The Lord forgie me for lying!

A weel-stocked mailen, himsel for the laird,
And marriage aff-hand, were his proffers:
I never loot on that I kenn'd it, or cared,
But thought I might hae waur offers, waur offers,
But thought I might hae waur offers.

But what wad ye think? in a fortnight or less,
The deil tak his taste to gae near her!—
He up the lang loan to my black cousin Bess;
Guess ye how, the jad! I could bear her, could bear her,
Guess ye how, the jad! I could bear her.

But a' the niest week as I fretted wi' care,
I gaed to the tryste o' Dalgarnock,
And wha but my fine fickle lover was there,
I glowr'd as I'd seen a warlock, a warlock,
I glowr'd as I'd seen a warlock.

But owre my left shouther I gae him a blink,
Lest neebors might say I was saucy;
My wooer he caper'd as he'd been in drink,
And vow'd I was his dear lassie, dear lassie,
And vow'd I was his dear lassie.

I spier'd for my cousin fu' couthy and sweet,
Gin she had recover'd her hearin,
And how her new shoon fit her auld shachl't feet,
But, heavens! how he fell a swearin, a swearin,
But, heavens! how he fell a swearin.

He begg'd, for Gudesake! I wad be his wife,
Or else I wad kill him wi' sorrow:
So e'en to preserve the poor body in life,
I think I maun wed him to-morrow, to-morrow,
I think I maun wed him to-morrow.

SONG.

TUNE—"Here's a health to them that's awa, hinny."

CHORUS.

Here's a health to ane I lo'e dear,
Here's a health to ane I lo'e dear,
Thou art sweet as the smile when fond lovers meet
And soft as their parting tear—Jessy!

ALTHOUGH thou maun never be mine,
Although even hope is denied;
'Tis sweeter for thee despairing,
Than aught in the world beside—Jessy!
Here's a health, &c.

I mourn through the gay, gaudy day,
As, hopeless, I muse on thy charms;
But welcome the dream o' sweet slumber,
For then I am lockt in thy arms—Jessy!
Here's a health, &c.

I guess by the dear angel smile,
I guess by the love-rolling e'e;
But why urge the tender confession
'Gainst fortune's fell, cruel decree—Jessy!
Here's a health, &c.

THE BIRKS OF ABERFELDY.

Bonnie lassie, will ye go, will ye go, will ye go,
Bonnie lassie, will ye go to the birks of Aberfeldy?

Now simmer blinks on flowery braes,
And o'er the crystal streamlet plays,
Come let us spend the lightsome days
In the birks of Aberfeldy.
Bonnie lassie, &c.

While o'er their heads the hazels hing,
The little birdies blithely sing,
Or lightly flit on wanton wing
In the birks of Aberfeldy.
Bonnie lassie, &c.

The braes ascend like lofty wa's,
The foaming stream deep-roaring fa's,
O'erhung wi' fragrant spreading shaws,
The birks of Aberfeldy.
Bonnie lassie, &c.

The hoary cliffs are crown'd wi' flowers,
White o'er the linns the burnie pours,
And rising, weets wi' misty showers
The birks of Aberfeldy.
Bonnie lassie, &c.

Let fortune's gifts at random flee,
They ne'er shall draw a wish frae me,
Supremely blest wi' love and thee,
In the birks of Aberfeldy.
Bonnie lassie, &c.

I LOVE MY JEAN.

TUNE—"Miss Admiral Gordon's Strathspey."

O'er a' the airts the wind can blaw,
I dearly like the west,
For there the bonnie lassie lives,
The lassie I lo'e best:
There wild woods grow, and rivers row,
And mony a hill between;
But day and night my fancy's flight
Is ever wi' my Jean.

I see her in the dewy flowers,
I see her sweet and fair:
I hear her in the tunefu' birds,
I hear her charm the air:
There's not a bonnie flower that springs
By fountain, shaw, or green,
There's not a bonnie bird that sings,
But minds me o' my Jean.

JOHN ANDERSON MY JO.

JOHN ANDERSON my jo, John,
When we were first acquent;
Your locks were like the raven,
Your bonnie brow was brent;
But now your brow is beld, John,
Your locks are like the snaw;
But blessings on your frosty pow,
John Anderson my jo.

John Anderson my jo, John,
We clamb the hill thegither;
And mony a canty day, John,
We've had wi' ane anither:
Now we maun totter down, John,
But hand and hand we'll go,
And sleep thegither at the foot,
John Anderson my jo.

THE POSIE.

O LUVE will venture in, where it dare na weel be seen,
O luve will venture in, where wisdom ance has been;
But I will down yon river rove, amang the wood sae green,
And a' to pu' a posie to my ain dear May.

The primrose I will pu', the firstling o' the year,
And I will pu' the pink, the emblem o' my dear,
For she's the pink o' womankind, and blooms without a peer;
And a' to be a posie to my ain dear May.

I'll pu' the budding rose when Phœbus peeps in view,
For it's like a baumy kiss o' her sweet bonnie mou;
The hyacinth's for constancy wi' its unchanging blue,
And a' to be a posie to my ain dear May.

The lily it is pure, and the lily it is fair,
And in her lovely bosom I'll place the lily there;
The daisy's for simplicity and unaffected air,
And a' to be a posie to my ain dear May.

The hawthorn I will pu', wi' its locks o' siller gray,
Where, like an aged man, it stands at break o' day,
But the songster's nest within the bush I winna tak away;
And a' to be a posie to my ain dear May.

The woodbine I will pu' when the e'ening star is near,
And the diamond draps o' dew shall be her e'en sae clear:
The violet's for modesty which weel she fa's to wear,
And a' to be a posie to my ain dear May.

I'll tie the posie round wi' the silken band of luve,
And I'll place it in her breast, and I'll swear by a' above,
That to my latest draught o' life the band shall ne'er remuve,
And this will be a posie to my ain dear May.

THE BANKS O' DOON.

YE banks and braes o' bonnie Doon,
How can ye bloom sae fresh and fair;
How can ye chant, ye little birds,
And I sae weary, fu' o' care!

Thou'lt break my heart, thou warbling bird,
That wantons through the flowering thorn:
Thou minds me o' departed joys,
Departed never to return.

Oft hae I rov'd by bonnie Doon,
To see the rose and woodbine twine;
And ilka bird sang o' its luve,
And fondly sae did I o' mine.
Wi' lightsome heart I pu'd a rose,
Fu' sweet upon its thorny tree:
But my fause luver stole my rose,
But ah! he left the thorn wi' me.

SONG.

TUNE—"Catharine Ogie."

Ye flowery banks o' bonnie Doon,
How can ye blume sae fair,
How can ye chant, ye little birds,
And I sae fu' o' care!

Thou'l break my heart, thou bonnie bird
That sings upon the bough;
Thou minds me o' the happy days
When my fause luve was true.

Thou'l break my heart, thou bonnie bird
That sings beside thy mate;
For sae I sat, and sae I sang,
And wist na o' my fate.

Aft hae I roved by bonnie Doon,
To see the woodbine twine,
And ilka bird sang o' its love,
And sae did I o' mine.

Wi' lightsome heart I pu'd a rose,
Frae aff its thorny tree,
And my fause luver staw the rose,
But left the thorn wi' me.

SIC A WIFE AS WILLIE HAD.

WILLIE WASTLE dwalt on Tweed,
The spot they ca'd it Linkumdoddie,
Willie was a wabster guid,
Cou'd stown a clue wi' ony bodie;
He had a wife was dour and din,
O Tinkler Madgie was her mither;
Sic a wife as Willie had,
I wad na gie a button for her.

She has an e'e, she has but ane,
The cat has twa the very colour;
Five rusty teeth, forbye a stump,
A clapper tongue wad deave a miller;
A whisken beard about her mou,
Her nose and chin they threaten ither;
Sic a wife, &c.

She's bow-hough'd, she's hein-shinn'd,
Ae limpin leg a hand-breed shorter;
She's twisted right, she's twisted left,
To balance fair in ilka quarter:
She has a hump upon her breast,
The twin o' that upon her shouther;
Sic a wife, &c.

Auld baudrans by the ingle sits,
An' wi' her loof her face a-washin;
But Willie's wife is nae sae trig,
She dights her grunzie wi' a hushion;
Her walie nieves like midden-creels,
Her face wad fyle the Logan-Water:
Sic a wife as Willie had,
I wad na gie a button for her.

WILT THOU BE MY DEARIE?

WILT thou be my dearie?
When sorrow wrings thy gentle heart,
O wilt thou let me cheer thee?
By the treasure of my soul,
And that's the love I bear thee!
I swear and vow, that only thou
Shall ever be my dearie.
Only thou, I swear and vow,
Shall ever be my dearie.

Lassie, say thou lo'es me;
Or if thou wilt na be my ain,
Say na thou'lt refuse me:
If it winna, canna be,
Thou for thine may choose me;
Let me, lassie, quickly die,
Trusting that thou lo'es me,
Lassie, let me quickly die,
Trusting that thou lo'es me.

FOR THE SAKE OF SOMEBODY.

MY heart is sair, I dare na tell,
My heart is sair for somebody;
I could wake a winter night
For the sake o' somebody!
Oh-hon! for somebody!
Oh-hey! for somebody!
I could range the world around,
For the sake o' somebody.

Ye powers that smile on virtuous love,
O sweetly smile on somebody!
Frae ilka danger keep him free,
And send me safe my somebody
Oh-hon! for somebody!
Oh-hey! for somebody!
I wad do—what wad I not?
For the sake of somebody.

A RED, RED ROSE.

O MY luve's like a red, red rose,
That's newly sprung in June:
O my luve's like the melodie
That's sweetly play'd in tune

As fair art thou, my bonnie lass,
So deep in luve am I:
And I will luve thee still, my dear,
Till a' the seas gang dry.

Till a' the seas gang dry, my dear,
And the rocks melt wi' the sun:
I will luve thee still, my dear,
While the sands o' life shall run.

And fare thee weel, my only luve!
And fare thee weel a while!
And I will come again, my luve,
Though it were ten thousand mile.

SONG.

An fond kiss and then we sever;
Ae fareweel, alas, for ever!
Deep in heart-wrung tears I'll pledge thee,
Warring sighs and groans I'll wage thee.
Who shall say that fortune grieves him,
While the star of hope she leaves him?
Me, nae cheerfu' twinkle lights me;
Dark despair around benights me.

I'll ne'er blame my partial fancy,
Naething could resist my Nancy:
But to see her, was to love her;
Love but her, and love for ever.
Had we never loved sae kindly,
Had we never loved sae blindly,
Never met—or never parted,
We had ne'er been broken-hearted.

Fare thee weel, thou first and fairest!
Fare thee weel, thou best and dearest!
Thine be ilka joy and treasure,
Peace, enjoyment, love, and pleasure!
Ae fond kiss, and then we sever;
Ae fareweel, alas, for ever!
Deep in heart-wrung tears I pledge thee,
Warring sighs and groans I'll wage thee.

THE BONNIE LAD THAT'S FAR AWA.

O how can I be blithe and glad,
Or how can I gang brisk and braw,
When the bonnie lad that I lo'e best,
Is o'er the hills and far awa?

It's no the frosty winter wind,
It's no the driving drift and snaw:
But aye the tear comes in my e'e,
To think on him that's far awa.

My father pat me frae his door,
My friends they hae disown'd me a';
But I hae ane will tak my part,
The bonnie lad that's far awa.

A pair o' gloves he gave to me,
And silken snoods he gave me twa;
And I will wear them for his sake,
The bonnie lad that's far awa.

The weary winter soon will pass,
And spring will cleed the birken-shaw;
And my sweet babie will be born,
And he'll come hame that's far awa.

WHISTLE O'ER THE LAVE O'T.

First when Maggy was my care,
Heaven, I thought, was in her air;
Now we're married—spier nae mair—
Whistle o'er the lave o't.—
Meg was meek, and Meg was mild,
Bonnie Meg was nature's child—
—Wiser men than me's beguiled:
Whistle o'er the lave o't.

How we live, my Meg and me,
How we love and how we 'gree,
I care na by how few may see;
Whistle o'er the lave o't.—
What I wish were maggot's meat,
Dish'd up in her winding sheet,
I could write—but Meg maun see't—
Whistle o'er the lave o't.

SAMUEL ROGERS

SAMUEL ROGERS, one of the most elegant of the British poets, was the son of a banker, and himself follows that business in London, where he was born, about 1760. He received a learned education, which he completed by travelling through most of the countries of Europe, including France, Switzerland, Italy, Germany, &c. He has been all his life master of an ample fortune, and not subject, therefore, to the common reverses of an author, in which character he first appeared in 1787, when he published a spirited Ode to Superstition, with other poems. These were succeeded, after an interval of five years, by the Pleasures of Memory; a work which at once established his fame as a first-rate poet. In 1798, he published his Epistle to a Friend, with other poems; and did not again come forward, as a poet, till 1814, when he added to a collected edition of his works, his somewhat irregular poem of the Vision of Columbus. In the same year came out his Jaqueline, a tale, in company with Lord Byron's Lara; and, in 1819, his Human Life. In 1822, was published his first part of Italy, which has since been completed, in three volumes, duodecimo; and of which, a recent edition has been given to the world, accompanied with numerous engravings. This poem is his last and greatest, but by no means his best, performance; though an eminent writer in the New Monthly Magazine calls it "perfect as a whole." There are certainly many very beautiful descriptive passages to be found in it; and it is totally free from meretriciousness: but we think the author has too often mistaken commonplace for simplicity, to render it of much value to his reputation, as a whole. It is as the author of the Pleasures of Memory, that he will be chiefly known to posterity, though, at the same time, some of his minor poems are among the most pure and exquisite fragments of verse, which the poets of this age have produced. In society, few men are said to be more agreeable in manners and conversation than the venerable subject of our memoir; and his benevolence is said to be on a par with his taste and accomplishments. Lord Byron must have thought highly of his poetry, if he were sincere in saying, "We are all wrong, excepting Rogers, Crabbe, and Campbell."

THE PLEASURES OF MEMORY.

IN TWO PARTS.

. . . . Hoc est
Vivere bis, vita posse priore frui.—*Mart.*

O COULD my mind, unfolded in my page,
Enlighten climes and mould a future age;
There as it glow'd, with noblest frenzy fraught,
Dispense the treasures of exalted thought;
To virtue wake the pulses of the heart,
And bid the tear of emulation start!
O could it still, through each succeeding year,
My life, my manners, and my name endear;
And, when the poet sleeps in silent dust,
Still hold communion with the wise and just!—
Yet should this verse, my leisure's best resource,
When through the world it steals its secret course,
Revive but once a generous wish suppress,
Chase but a sigh, or charm a care to rest;
In one good deed a fleeting hour employ,
Or flush one faded cheek with honest joy;
Blest were my lines, though limited their sphere,
Though short their date, as his who traced them here. 1793.

PART I.

Dolce sentier,
Colle, che mi piacesti, . .
Ov' ancor per usanza Amor mi mena;
Ben riconosco in voi l'usate forme,
Non, lasso, in me. *Petrarch.*

ANALYSIS.

THE poem begins with the description of an obscure village, and of the pleasing melancholy which it excites on being revisited after a long absence. This mixed sensation is an effect of the memory. From an effect we naturally ascend to the cause; and the subject proposed is then unfolded, with an investigation of the nature and leading principles of this faculty.

It is evident that our ideas flow in continual succession, and introduce each other with a certain degree of regularity. They are sometimes excited by sensible objects, and sometimes by an internal operation of the mind. Of the former species is most probably the memory of brutes; and its many sources of pleasures to them, as well as to us, are considered in the first part. The latter is the most perfect degree of memory, and forms the subject of the second.

When ideas have any relation whatever, they are attractive of each other in the mind; and the perception of any object naturally leads to the idea of another, which was connected with it either in time or place, or which can be compared or contrasted with it. Hence arises our

attachment to inanimate objects; hence also, in some degree, the love of our country, and the emotion with which we contemplate the celebrated scenes of antiquity. Hence a picture directs our thoughts to the original: and, as cold and darkness suggest forcibly the ideas of heat and light, he who feels the infirmities of age dwells most on whatever reminds him of the vigour and vivacity of his youth.

The associating principle, as here employed, is no less conducive to virtue than to happiness; and, as such, it frequently discovers itself in the most tumultuous scenes of life. It addresses our finer feelings, and gives exercise to every mild and generous propensity.

Not confined to man, it extends through all animated nature; and its effect are peculiarly striking in the domestic tribes.

Twilight's soft dews steal o'er the village-green,
With magic tints to harmonize the scene.
Still'd is the hum that through the hamlet broke,
When round the ruins of their ancient oak
The peasants flock'd to hear the minstrel play,
And games and carols closed the busy day.
Her wheel at rest, the matron thrills no more
With treasured tales, and legendary lore.
All, all are fled; nor mirth nor music flows
To chase the dreams of innocent repose.
All, all are fled; yet still I linger here!
What secret charms this silent spot endear!
Mark yon old mansion frowning through the trees,
Whose hollow turret woos the whistling breeze.
That casement arch'd with ivy's brownest shade,
First to these eyes the light of heaven convey'd.
The mouldering gateway strews the grass-grown court,
Once the calm scene of many a simple sport;
When nature pleased, for life itself was new,
And the heart promised what the fancy drew.
See, through the fractured pediment reveal'd,
Where moss inlays the rudely-sculptured shield,
The martin's old, hereditary nest:
Long may the rain spare its hallow'd guest!
As jars the hinge, what sullen echoes call!
O haste, unfold the hospitable hall!
That hall, where once, in antiquated state,
The chair of justice held the grave debate. [hung,
Now stain'd with dews, with cobwebs darkly
Oft has its roof with peals of rapture rung;
When round yon ample board, in due degree,
We sweeten'd every meal with social glee.
The heart's light laugh pursued the circling jest
And all was sunshine in each little breast.
'Twas here we chased the slipper by the sound;
And turn'd the blindfold hero round and round.
'Twas here, at eve, we form'd our fairy ring;
And fancy flutter'd on her wildest wing.
Giants and genii chain'd each wondering ear;
And orphan sorrows drew the ready tear.
Oft with the babes we wander'd in the wood,
Or view'd the forest feats of Robin Hood:
Oft, fancy-led, at midnight's fearful hour,
With startling step we scaled the lonely tower;
O'er infant innocence to hang and weep,
Murder'd by ruffian hands, when smiling in its sleep.
Ye household deities! whose guardian eye
Mark'd each pure thought, ere register'd on high;
Still, still ye walk the consecrated ground,
And breathe the soul of inspiration round.
As o'er the dusky furniture I bend,
Each chair awakes the feelings of a friend.
The storied arras, source of fond delight,
With old achievement charms the wilder'd sight;
And still, with heraldry's rich hues impress,
On the dim window glows the pictured crest.
The screen unfolds its many-colour'd chart,
The clock still points its moral to the heart.
That faithful monitor 'twas heaven to hear,
When soft it spoke a promised pleasure near;
And has its sober hand, its simple chime,
Forgot to trace the feather'd feet of time?
That massive beam, with curious carvings wrought,
Whence the caged linnet soothed my pensive thought;
Those muskets, cased with venerable rust;
Those once-loved forms, still breathing through their dust,
Still, from the frame in mould gigantic cast,
Starting to life—all whisper of the past!
As through the garden's desert paths I rove,
What fond illusions swarm in every grove!
How oft, when purple evening tinged the west,
We watch'd the emmet to her grainy nest;
Welcomed the wild-bee home on weary wing,
Laden with sweets, the choicest of the spring!
How oft inscribed, with friendship's votive rhyme,
The bark now silver'd by the touch of time;
Soar'd in the swing, half pleased and half afraid,
Through sister elms that waved their summer-shade;
Or strew'd with crumbs yon root-inwoven seat,
To lure the redbreast from his lone retreat!
Childhood's loved group revisits every scene
The tangled wood-walk, and the tufted green!
Indulgent Memory wakes, and lo, they live!
Clothed with far softer hues than light can give.
Thou first, best friend that Heaven assigns below
To soothe and sweeten all the cares we know;
When glad suggestions still each vain alarm,
When nature fades, and life forgets to charm;
Thee would the muse invoke!—to thee belong
The sage's precept, and the poet's song.
What soften'd views thy magic glass reveals,
When o'er the landscape time's meek twilight steals!
As when in ocean sinks the orb of day,
Long on the wave reflected lustres play;
Thy temper'd gleams of happiness resign'd
Glance on the darken'd mirror of the mind.
The school's lone porch, with reverend mosses gray,
Just tells the pensive pilgrim where it lay.
Mute is the bell that rung at peep of dawn,
Quickening my truant feet across the lawn:
Unheard the shout that rent the noontide air,
When the slow dial gave a pause to care.
Up springs, at every step, to claim a tear,
Some little friendship form'd and cherish'd here,
And not the lightest leaf, but trembling teems
With golden visions, and romantic dreams!
Down by yon hazel copse, at evening, blazed
The gipsy's fagot—there we stood and gazed;
Gazed on her sunburnt face with silent awe,
Her tatter'd mantle, and her hood of straw;
Her moving lips, her caldron brimming o'er;
The drowsy brood that on her back she bore,

Imps in the barn with mousing owlet bred,
From rifled roost at nightly revel fed;
Whose dark eyes flash'd through locks of blackest shade,
When in the breeze the distant watch-dog bay'd:—
And heroes fled the Sibyl's mutter'd call,
Whose elfin prowess scaled the orchard wall.
As o'er my palm the silver piece she drew,
And traced the line of life with searching view,
How throbb'd my fluttering pulse with hopes and fears,
To learn the colour of my future years!
Ah, then, what honest triumph flush'd my breast;
This truth once known—To bless is to be blest!
We led the bending beggar on his way,
Bare were his feet, his tresses silver gray,)
Soothed the keen pangs his aged spirit felt,
And on his tale with mute attention dwelt.
As in his scrip we dropt our little store,
And sigh'd to think that little was no more,
He breath'd his prayer, "Long may such goodness live!"
'Twas all he gave, 'twas all he had to give.
But hark! through those old firs, with sullen swell,
The church clock strikes! ye tender scenes, farewell!
It calls me hence, beneath their shade, to trace
The few fond lines that time may soon efface.
On yon gray stone, that fronts the chancel door,
Worn smooth by busy feet now seen no more,
Each eve we shot the marble through the ring,
When the heart danced, and life was in its spring;
Alas! unconscious of the kindred earth,
That faintly echo'd to the voice of mirth.
The glow-worm loves her emerald light to shed,
Where now the sexton rests his hoary head.
Oft, as he turn'd the greensward with his spade,
He lectured every youth that round him play'd;
And, calmly pointing where our fathers lay,
Roused us to rival each, the hero of his day.
Hush, ye fond flutterings, hush! while here alone
I search the records of each mouldering stone.
Guides of my life! instructers of my youth!
Who first unveil'd the hallow'd form of truth;
Whose every word enlighten'd and endear'd;
In age beloved, in poverty revered;
In friendship's silent register ye live,
Nor ask the vain memorial art can give.
—But when the sons of peace, of pleasure sleep,
When only sorrow wakes, and wakes to weep,
What spells entrance my visionary mind
With sighs so sweet, with transports so refined!
Ethereal power! who at the noon of night
Recall'st the far fled spirit of delight;
From whom that musing, melancholy mood
Which charms the wise, and elevates the good;
Blest Memory, hail! O grant the grateful muse,
Her pencil dipt in nature's living hues,
To pass the clouds that round thy empire roll,
And trace its airy precincts in the soul.
Lull'd in the countless chambers of the brain,
Our thoughts are link'd by many a hidden chain.
Awake but one, and lo, what myriads rise!
Each stamps its image as the other flies!
Each, as the various avenues of sense
Delight or sorrow to the soul dispense,
Brightens or fades; yet all, with magic art,
Control the latent fibres of the heart.
As studious Prospero's mysterious spell
Drew every subject spirit to his cell;
Each, at thy call, advances or retires,
As judgment dictates, or the scene inspires.
Each thrills the seat of sense, that sacred source
Whence the fine nerves direct their mazy course,
And through the frame invisibly convey
The subtle, quick vibrations as they play.
Survey the globe, each ruder realm explore;
From reason's faintest ray to Newton soar.
What different spheres to human bliss assign'd!
What slow gradations in the scale of mind!
Yet mark in each these mystic wonders wrought;
O mark the sleepless energies of thought!
Th' adventurous boy, that asks his little share,
And flies from home with many a gossip's prayer,
Turns on the neighbouring hill, once more to see
The dear abode of peace and privacy;
And as he turns, the thatch among the trees,
The smoke's blue wreaths ascending with the breeze,
The village common spotted white with sheep,
The churchyard yews round which his fathers sleep:
All rouse reflection's sadly pleasing train,
And oft he looks and weeps, and looks again.
So, when the mild Tupia dared explore
Arts yet untaught, and worlds unknown before,
And, with the sons of science, woo'd the gale
That, rising, swell'd their strange expanse of sail;
So, when he breathed his firm, yet fond adieu,
Borne from his leafy hut, his carved canoe,
And all his soul best loved—such tears he shed,
While each soft scene of summer beauty fled.
Long o'er the wave a wistful look he cast,
Long watch'd the streaming signal from the mast;
Till twilight's dewy tints deceived his eye,
And fairy forests fringed the evening sky.
So Scotia's queen, as slowly dawn'd the day
Rose on her couch, and gazed her soul away.
Her eyes had bless'd the beacon's glimmering height,
That faintly tipt the feathery surge with light;
But now the morn with orient hues portray'd
Each castled cliff, and brown monastic shade:
All touch'd the talisman's resistless spring,
And lo, what busy tribes were instant on the wing!
Thus kindred objects kindred thoughts inspire,
As summer clouds flash forth electric fire.
And hence this spot gives back the joys of youth,
Warm as the life, and with the mirror's truth.
Hence homefelt pleasure prompts the patriot's sigh;
This makes him wish to live, and dare to die.
For this young Foscari, whose hapless fate
Venice should blush to hear the muse relate,
When exile wore his blooming years away,
To sorrow's long soliloquies a prey,
When reason, justice, vainly urged his cause,
For this he roused her sanguinary laws;
Glad to return, though hope could grant no more,
And chains and torture hail'd him to the shore.
And hence the charm historic scenes impart:
Hence Tiber awes, and Avon melts the heart.
Aërial forms in Tempe's classic vale
Glance through the gloom, and whisper in the gale;

In wild Vaucluse with love and Laura dwell,
And watch and weep in Eloisa's cell.
'Twas ever thus. As now at Virgil's tomb
We bless the shade, and bid the verdure bloom:
So Tully paused, amid the wrecks of time,
On the rude stone to trace the truth sublime;
When at his feet, in honour'd dust disclosed,
Th' immortal sage of Syracuse reposed.
And as he long in sweet delusion hung,
Where once a Plato taught, a Pindar sung;
Who now but meets him musing, when he roves
His ruin'd Tusculan's romantic groves?
In Rome's great forum, who but hears him roll
His moral thunders o'er the subject soul?

And hence that calm delight the portrait gives:
We gaze on every feature till it lives!
Still the fond lover sees the absent maid;
And the lost friend still lingers in his shade!
Say why the pensive widow loves to weep,
When on her knee she rocks her babe to sleep:
Tremblingly still, she lifts his veil to trace
The father's features in his infant face.
The hoary grandsire smiles the hour away,
Won by the raptures of a game at play;
He bends to meet each artless burst of joy,
Forgets his age, and acts again the boy.

What though the iron school of war erase
Each milder virtue, and each softer grace;
What though the fiend's torpedo touch arrest
Each gentler, finer impulse of the breast:
Still shall this active principle preside,
And wake the tear to pity's self denied.

Th' intrepid Swiss, who guards a foreign shore,
Condemn'd to climb his mountain cliffs no more,
If chance he hears the song so sweetly wild,
Which on those cliffs his infant hours beguiled,
Melts at the long-lost scenes that round him rise,
And sinks a martyr to repentant sighs.

Ask not if courts or camps dissolve the charm:
Say why Vespasian loved his Sabine farm;
Why great Navarre, when France and freedom bled,
Sought the lone limits of a forest shed.
When Dioclesian's self-corrected mind
The imperial fasces of a world resign'd.
Say why we trace the labours of his spade,
In calm Salona's philosophic shade.
Say, when contentious Charles renounced a throne,
To muse with monks unlettered and unknown,
What from his soul the parting tribute drew?
What claim'd the sorrows of a last adieu?
The still retreats that soothed his tranquil breast,
Ere grandeur dazzled, and its cares oppress'd.

Undamp'd by time, the generous instinct grows
Far as Angola's sands, as Zembla's snows;
Glows in the tiger's den, the serpent's nest,
On every form of varied life imprest.
The social tribes its choicest influence hail:—
And when the drum beats briskly in the gale,
The war-worn courser charges at the sound,
And with young vigour wheels the pasture round.

Oft has the aged tenant of the vale
Lean'd on his staff to lengthen out the tale;
Oft have his lips the grateful tribute breathed,
From sire to son with pious zeal bequeath'd.
When o'er the blasted heath the day declined,
And on the scath'd oak warr'd the winter wind;
When not a distant taper's twinkling ray
Gleam'd o'er the furze to light him on his way
When not a sheep-bell soothed his listening ear,
And the big rain-drops told the tempest near;
Then did his horse the homeward track descry,
The track that shunn'd his sad, inquiring eye;
And win each wavering purpose to relent,
With warmth so mild, so gently violent,
That his charm'd hand the careless rein resign'd,
And doubts and terrors vanish'd from his mind.

Recall the traveller, whose alter'd form
Has borne the buffet of the mountain storm;
And who will first his fond impatience meet?
His faithful dog's already at his feet!
Yes, though the porter spurn him from the door,
Though all, that knew him, know his face no more,
His faithful dog shall tell his joy to each,
With that mute eloquence which passes speech,—
And see, the master but returns to die!
Yet who shall bid the watchful servant fly?
The blasts of heaven, the drenching dews of earth,
The wanton insults of unfeeling mirth,
These, when to guard misfortune's sacred grave.
Will firm fidelity exult to brave.

Led by what chart, transports the timid dove
The wreaths of conquest, or the vows of love?
Say, through the clouds what compass points her flight?
Monarchs have gazed, and nations bless'd the sight.
Pile rocks on rocks, bid woods and mountains rise,
Eclipse her native shades, her native skies:—
'Tis vain! through ether's pathless wilds she goes,
And lights at last where all her cares repose.

Sweet bird! thy truth shall Haarlem's walls attest,
And unborn ages consecrate thy nest.
When, with the silent energy of grief,
With looks that ask'd, yet dared not hope relief,
Want with her babes round generous valour clung,
To wring the slow surrender from his tongue,
'Twas thine to animate her closing eye;
Alas! 'twas thine, perchance, the first to die,
Crush'd by her meager hand, when welcomed from the sky.

Hark! the bee winds her small but mellow horn,
Blithe to salute the sunny smile of morn.
O'er thymy downs she bends her busy course,
And many a stream allures her to its source.
'Tis noon, 'tis night. That eye so finely wrought,
Beyond the search of sense, the soar of thought,
Now vainly asks the scenes she left behind;
Its orb so full, its vision so confined!
Who guides the patient pilgrim to her cell?
Who bids her soul with conscious triumph swell?
With conscious truth retrace the mazy clue
Of varied scents, that charm'd her as she flew?
Hail, Memory, hail! thy universal reign
Guards the least link of being's glorious chain.

PART II.

Delle cose custode, e dispensiera.—*Tasso.*

ANALYSIS.

The Memory has hitherto acted only in subservience to the senses, and so far man is not eminently distinguished from other animals; but, with respect to man, she has a higher province; and is often busily employed, when excited by no external cause whatever. She preserves, for his use, the treasures of art and science, history and philosophy. She colours all the prospects of life: for "we can only anticipate the future, by concluding what is possible from what is past." On her agency depends every effusion of the fancy, who with the boldest effort can only compound or transpose, augment or diminish, the materials which she has collected.

When the first emotions of despair have subsided, and sorrow has softened into melancholy, she amuses with a retrospect of innocent pleasures, and inspires that noble confidence which results from the consciousness of having acted well. When sleep has suspended the organs of sense from their office, she not only supplies the mind with images, but assists in their combination. And even in madness itself, when the soul is resigned over to the tyranny of a distempered imagination, she revives past perceptions, and awakens that train of thought which was formerly most familiar.

Nor are we pleased only with a review of the brighter passages of life. Events, the most distressing in their immediate consequences, are often cherished in remembrance with a degree of enthusiasm.

But the world and its occupations give a mechanical impulse to the passions, which is not very favourable to the indulgence of this feeling. It is in a calm and well regulated mind that the memory is most perfect: and solitude is her best sphere of action. With this sentiment is introduced a tale illustrative of her influence in solitude, sickness, and sorrow. And the subject having now been considered, so far as it relates to man and the animal world, the poem concludes with a conjecture that superior beings are blest with a nobler exercise of this faculty.

Sweet Memory, wafted by thy gentle gale,
Oft up the stream of time I turn my sail,
To view the fairy haunts of long-lost hours,
Blest with far greener shades, far fresher flowers.

Ages and climes remote to thee impart
What charms in genius, and refines in art;
Thee, in whose hand the keys of science dwell,
The pensive portress of her holy cell;
Whose constant vigils chase the chilling damp
Oblivion steals upon her vestal lamp.

The friends of reason, and the guides of youth,
Whose language breathed the eloquence of truth;
Whose life, beyond preceptive wisdom, taught
The great in conduct, and the pure in thought;
These still exist, by thee to fame consign'd,
Still speak and act, the models of mankind.

From thee sweet hope her airy coloring draws;
And fancy's flights are subject to thy laws.
From thee that bosom spring of rapture flows,
Which only virtue, tranquil virtue, knows.

When joy's bright sun has shed his evening ray,
And hope's delusive meteors cease to play;
When clouds on clouds the smiling prospects close,
Still through the gloom thy star serenely glows:
Like yon fair orb, she gilds the brow of night
With the mild magic of reflected light.

The beauteous maid, who bids the world adieu,
Oft of that world will snatch a fond review;
Oft at the shrine neglect her beads, to trace
Some social scene, some dear familiar face:
And ere, with iron tongue, the vesper bell
Bursts through the cypress-walk, the convent cell
Oft will her warm and wayward heart revive,
To love and joy still tremblingly alive;
The whisper'd vow, the chaste caress prolong,
Weave the light dance and swell the choral song
With rapt ear drink th' enchanting serenade,
And, as it melts along the moonlight glade,
To each soft note return as soft a sigh,
And bless the youth that bids her slumbers fly.

But not till time has calm'd the ruffled breast,
Are these fond dreams of happiness confest.
Not till the rushing winds forget to rave,
Is heaven's sweet smile reflected on the wave.

From Guinea's coast pursue the lessening sail,
And catch the sounds that sadden every gale.
Tell, if thou canst, the sum of sorrows there;
Mark the fix'd gaze, the wild and frenzied glare,
The racks of thought, and freezings of despair!
But pause not then—beyond the western wave,
Go, view the captive barter'd as a slave!
Crush'd till his high, heroic spirit bleeds,
And from his nerveless frame indignantly recedes.

Yet here, e'en here, with pleasures long re sign'd,
Lo! Memory bursts the twilight of the mind.
Her dear delusions soothe his sinking soul,
When the rude scourge assumes its base control;
And o'er futurity's blank page diffuse
The full reflection of her vivid hues.
'Tis but to die, and then, to weep no more,
Then will he wake on Congo's distant shore;
Beneath his plantain's ancient shade, renew
The simple transports that with freedom flew;
Catch the cool breeze that musky evening blows,
And quaff the palm's rich nectar as it glows;
The oral tale of elder time rehearse,
And chant the rude, traditionary verse
With those, the loved companions of his youth,
When life was luxury, and friendship truth.

Ah! why should virtue fear the frowns of fate?
Hers what no wealth can buy, no power create!
A little world of clear and cloudless day,
Nor wreck'd by storms, nor moulder'd by decay;
A world, with Memory's ceaseless sunshine blest,
The home of happiness, an honest breast.

But most we mark the wonders of her reign,
When sleep has lock'd the senses in her chain.
When sober judgment has his throne resign'd
She smiles away the chaos of the mind;
And, as warm fancy's bright elysium glows,
From her each image springs, each colour flows.
She is the sacred guest! th' immortal friend!
Oft seen o'er sleeping innocence to bend,
In that dead hour of night to silence given,
Whispering seraphic visions of her heaven.

When the blithe son of Savoy, journeying round
With humble wares and pipe of merry sound,
From his green vale and shelter'd cabin hies,
And scales the Alps to visit foreign skies;
Though far below the forked lightnings play,
And at his feet the thunder dies away,

Oft, in the saddle rudely rock'd to sleep,
While his mule browses on the dizzy steep,
With Memory's aid, he sits at home, and sees
His children sport beneath their native trees,
And bends to hear their cherub voices call,
O'er the loud fury of the torrent's fall.
  But can her smile with gloomy madness dwell?
Say, can she chase the horrors of his cell?
Each fiery flight on frenzy's wing restrain,
And mould the coinage of the fever'd brain?
  Pass but that grate, which scarce a gleam supplies,
There in the dust the wreck of genius lies!
He, whose arresting hand divinely wrought
Each bold conception in the sphere of thought;
And round, in colours of the rainbow, threw
Forms ever fair, creations ever new!
But, as he fondly snatch'd the wreath of fame,
The spectre poverty unnerved his frame.
Cold was her grasp, a withering scowl she wore
And hope's soft energies were felt no more.
Yet still how sweet the soothings of his art!
From the rude wall what bright ideas start!
E'en now he claims the amaranthine wreath,
With scenes that glow, with images that breathe!
And whence these scenes, these images, declare:
Whence but from her who triumphs o'er despair?
  Awake, arise! with grateful fervour fraught,
Go, spring the mine of elevating thought.
He, who, through nature's various walk, surveys
The good and fair her faultless line portrays;
Whose mind, profaned by no unhallow'd guest,
Culls from the crowd the purest and the best;
May range, at will, bright fancy's golden clime,
Or, musing, mount where science sits sublime,
Or wake the spirit of departed time.
Who acts thus wisely, mark the moral muse,
A blooming Eden in his life reviews!
So rich the culture, though so small the space,
Its scanty limits he forgets to trace.
But the fond fool, when evening shades the sky,
Turns but to start, and gazes but to sigh!
The weary waste, that lengthen'd as he ran,
Fades to a blank, and dwindles to a span!
  Ah! who can tell the triumphs of the mind,
By truth illumined, and by taste refined?
When age has quench'd the eye, and closed the ear,
Still nerved for action in her native sphere,
Oft will she rise—with searching glance pursue
Some long-loved image vanish'd from her view;
Dart through the deep recesses of the past,
O'er dusky forms in chains of slumber cast;
With giant grasp fling back the folds of night,
And snatch the faithless fugitive to light.
So through the grove th' impatient mother flies,
Each sunless glade, each secret pathway tries;
Till the thin leaves the truant boy disclose,
Long on the woodmoss stretch'd in sweet repose.
  Nor yet to pleasing objects are confined
The silent feasts of the reflecting mind;
Danger and death a dread delight inspire,
And the bald veteran glows with wonted fire,
When richly bronzed by many a summer sun,
He counts his scars, and tells what deeds were done.
  Go, with old Thames, view Chelsea's glorious pile;
And ask the shatter'd hero, whence his smile?
Go, view the splendid domes of Greenwich—go,
And own what raptures from reflection flow.
  Hail, noblest structures imaged in the wave!
A nation's grateful tribute to the brave!
Hail, blest retreats from war and shipwreck, hail!
That oft arrest the wondering stranger's sail.
Long have ye heard the narratives of age,
The battle's havoc, and the tempest's rage;
Long have ye known reflection's genial ray
Gild the calm close of valour's various day.
  Time's sombrous touches soon correct the piece,
Mellow each tint, and bid each discord cease:
A softer tone of light pervades the whole,
And steals a pensive languor o'er the soul.
  Hast thou through Eden's wild-wood vales pursued
Each mountain scene, majestically rude;
To note the sweet simplicity of life,
Far from the din of folly's idle strife;
Nor there a while, with lifted eye, revered
That modest stone which pious Pembroke rear'd;
Which still records, beyond the pencil's power,
The silent sorrows of a parting hour;
Still to the musing pilgrim points the place,
Her sainted spirit most delights to trace?
  Thus, with the manly glow of honest pride,
O'er his dead son the gallant Ormond sigh'd.
Thus, through the gloom of Shenstone's fairy grove,
Maria's urn still breathes the voice of love.
  As the stern grandeur of a Gothic tower
Awes us less deeply in its morning hour,
Than when the shades of time serenely fall
On every broken arch and ivied wall;
The tender images we love to trace,
Steal from each year a melancholy grace!
And as the sparks of social love expand,
As the heart opens in a foreign land;
And, with a brother's warmth, a brother's smile,
The stranger greets each native of his isle;
So scenes of life, when present and confest,
Stamp but their bolder features on the breast;
Yet not an image, when remotely view'd,
However trivial, and however rude,
But wins the heart, and wakes the social sigh,
With every claim of close affinity!
  But these pure joys the world can never know;
In gentler climes their silver currents flow.
Oft at the silent, shadowy close of day,
When the hush'd grove has sung his parting lay;
When pensive twilight, in her dusky car,
Comes slowly on to meet the evening star;
Above, below, aërial murmurs swell,
From hanging wood, brown heath, and bushy dell.
A thousand nameless rills, that shun the light,
Stealing soft music on the ear of night.
So oft the finer movements of the soul,
That shun the sphere of pleasure's gay control,
In the still shades of calm seclusion rise,
And breathe their sweet, seraphic harmonies!
  Once, and domestic annals tell the time
(Preserved in Cumbria's rude, romantic clime)
When nature smiled, and o'er the landscape threw
Her richest fragrance, and her brightest hue,

A blithe and blooming forester explored
Those loftier scenes Salvator's soul adored;
The rocky pass half-hung with shaggy wood,
And the cleft oak flung boldly o'er the flood;
Nor shunn'd the track, unknown to human tread,
That downward to the night of caverns led;
Some ancient cataract's deserted bed.
High on exulting wind the heath-cock rose
And blew his shrill blast o'er perennial snows;
Ere the rapt youth, recoiling from the roar,
Gazed on the tumbling tide of dread Lodoar;
And through the rifted cliffs, that scaled the sky,
Derwent's clear mirror charm'd his dazzled eye.
Each osier isle, inverted on the wave,
Through morn's gray mist its melting colours gave;
And o'er the cygnet's haunt, the mantling grove
Its emerald arch with wild luxuriance wove.
Light as the breeze that brush'd the orient dew,
From rock to rock the young adventurer flew;
And day's last sunshine slept along the shore,
When lo, a path the smile of welcome wore.
Imbowering shrubs with verdure veil'd the sky,
And on the musk-rose shed a deeper dye;
Save when a bright and momentary gleam
Glanced from the white foam of some shelter'd stream.
O'er the still lake the bell of evening toll'd,
And on the moor the shepherd penn'd his fold;
And on the green hill's side the meteor play'd,
When, hark! a voice sung sweetly through the shade:
It ceased—yet still in Florio's fancy sung,
Still on each note his captive spirit hung;
Till o'er the mead a cool, sequester'd grot
From its rich roof a sparry lustre shot.
A crystal water cross'd the pebbled floor,
And on the front these simple lines it bore:

Hence away, nor dare intrude!
In this secret, shadowy cell
Musing Memory loves to dwell,
With her sister Solitude.
Far from the busy world she flies,
To taste that peace the world denies.
Entranced she sits; from youth to age,
Reviewing life's eventful page;
And noting, ere they fade away,
The little lines of yesterday.

Florio had gain'd a rude and rocky seat,
When lo, the genius of this still retreat!
Fair was her form—but who can hope to trace
The pensive softness of her angel face?
Can Virgil's verse, can Raphael's touch, impart
Those finer features of the feeling heart,
Those tenderer tints that shun the careless eye,
And in the world's contagious climate die?
She left the cave, nor mark'd the stranger there;
Her pastoral beauty and her artless air
Had breathed a soft enchantment o'er his soul!
In every nerve he felt her blest control!
What pure and white-wing'd agents of the sky,
Who rule the springs of sacred sympathy,
Inform congenial spirits when they meet?
Sweet is their office, as their natures sweet!
Florio, with fearful joy, pursued the maid,
Till through a vista's moonlight-checker'd shade,
Where the bat circled, and the rooks reposed,
(Their wars suspended, and their councils closed,)
An antique mansion burst in awful state,
A rich vine clustering round the Gothic gate.
Nor paused he there. The master of the scene
Saw his light step imprint the dewy green;
And, slow advancing, hail'd him as his guest,
Won by the honest warmth his looks express'd.
He wore the rustic manners of a 'squire;
Age had not quench'd one spark of manly fire;
But giant gout had bound him in her chain,
And his heart panted for the chase in vain.
Yet here remembrance, sweetly soothing power
Wing'd with delight confinement's lingering hour.
The fox's brush still emulous to wear,
He scour'd the country in his elbow chair;
And, with view-halloo, roused the dreaming hound
That rung, by starts, his deep-toned music round.
Long by the paddock's humble pale confined,
His aged hunters coursed the viewless wind:
And each, with glowing energy portray'd,
The far-famed triumphs of the field display'd;
Usurp'd the canvass of the crowded hall,
And chased a line of heroes from the wall.
There slept the horn each jocund echo knew,
And many a smile and many a story drew!
High o'er the hearth his forest trophies hung,
And their fantastic branches wildly flung.
How would he dwell on the vast antlers there!
These dash'd the wave, those fann'd the mountain air.
All, as they frown'd, unwritten records bore
Of gallant feats and festivals of yore.
But why the tale prolong?—His only child,
His darling Julia, on the stranger smiled.
Her little arts a fretful sire to please,
Her gentle gayety, and native ease
Had won his soul; and rapturous fancy shed
Her golden lights, and tints of rosy red.
But ah! few days had pass'd, ere the bright vision fled!
When evening tinged the lake's ethereal blue,
And her deep shades irregularly threw;
Their shifting sail dropt gently from the cove,
Down by Saint Herbert's consecrated grove;
Whence erst the chanted hymn, the taper'd rite
Amused the fisher's solitary night:
And still the mitred window, richly wreathed,
A sacred calm through the brown foliage breathed.
The wild deer, starting through the silent glade,
With fearful gaze their various course survey'd.
High hung in air the hoary goat reclined,
His streaming beard the sport of every wind;
And, while the coot her jet wing loved to lave,
Rock'd on the bosom of the sleepless wave;
The eagle rush'd from Skiddaw's purple crest,
A cloud still brooding o'er her giant nest.
And now the moon had dimm'd with dewy ray
The few fine flushes of departing day.
O'er the wide water's deep serene she hung,
And her broad lights on every mountain flung;
When lo! a sudden blast the vessel blew,
And to the surge consign'd the little crew.
All, all escaped—but ere the lover bore
His faint and faded Julia to the shore,

Her sense had fled!—Exhausted by the storm,
A fatal trance hung o'er her pallid form;
Her closing eye a trembling lustre fired;
'Twas life's last spark—it flutter'd and expired!
The father strew'd his white hairs in the wind,
Call'd on his child—nor linger'd long behind:
And Florio lived to see the willow wave,
With many an evening whisper, o'er their grave.
Yes, Florio lived—and, still of each possess'd,
The father cherish'd and the maid caress'd!
For ever would the fond enthusiast rove
With Julia's spirit through the shadowy grove;
Gaze with delight on every scene she plann'd,
Kiss every floweret planted by her hand.
Ah! still he traced her steps along the glade,
When hazy hues and glimmering lights betray'd
Half viewless forms; still listen'd as the breeze
Heaved its deep sobs among the aged trees;
And at each pause her melting accents caught,
In sweet delirium of romantic thought!
Dear was the grot that shunn'd the blaze of day;
She gave its spars to shoot a trembling ray.
The spring, that bubbled from its inmost cell,
Murmur'd of Julia's virtues as it fell;
And o'er the dripping moss, the fretted stone,
In Florio's ear breathed language not its own,
Her charm around th' enchantress Memory threw,
A charm that soothes the mind, and sweetens too!
But is her magic only felt below?
Say, through what brighter realms she bids it flow:
To what pure beings, in a nobler sphere,
She yields delight but faintly imaged here:
All that till now their rapt researches knew;
Not call'd in slow succession to review,
But, as a landscape meets the eye of day,
At once presented to their glad survey!
Each scene of bliss reveal'd, since chaos fled,
And dawning light its dazzling glories spread;
Each chain of wonders that sublimely glow'd,
Since first creation's choral anthem flow'd;
Each ready flight, at mercy's call divine,
To distant worlds that undiscover'd shine;
Full on her tablet flings its living rays,
And all, combined, with blest effulgence blaze.
There thy bright train, immortal friendship, soar;
No more to part, to mingle tears no more!
And, as the softening hand of time endears
The joys and sorrows of our infant years,
So there the soul, released from human strife,
Smiles at the little cares and ills of life;
Its lights and shades, its sunshine and its showers;
As at a dream that charm'd her vacant hours!
Oft may the spirits of the dead descend
To watch the silent slumbers of a friend;
To hover round his evening walk unseen,
And hold sweet converse on the dusky green;
To hail the spot where first their friendship grew,
And heaven and nature open'd to their view!
Oft, when he trims his cheerful hearth, and sees
A smiling circle emulous to please;
There may these gentle guests delight to dwell,
And bless the scene they loved in life so well!
O thou! with whom my heart was wont to share
From reason's dawn each pleasure and each care;
With whom, alas! I fondly hoped to know
The humble walks of happiness below;
If thy blest nature now unites above
An angel's pity with a brother's love,
Still o'er my life preserve thy mild control,
Correct my views, and elevate my soul;
Grant me thy peace and purity of mind,
Devout, yet cheerful, active, yet resign'd;
Grant me, like thee, whose heart knew no disguise
Whose blameless wishes never aim'd to rise,
To meet the changes time and chance present,
With modest dignity and calm content.
When thy last breath, ere nature sunk to rest,
Thy meek submission to thy God express'd;
When thy last look, ere thought and feeling fled,
A mingled gleam of hope and triumph shed;
What to thy soul its glad assurance gave,
Its hope in death, its triumph o'er the grave?
The sweet remembrance of unblemish'd youth,
The still inspiring voice of innocence and truth!
Hail, Memory, hail! in thy exhaustless mine
From age to age unnumber'd treasures shine!
Thought and her shadowy brood thy call obey,
And place and time are subject to thy sway!
Thy pleasures most we feel when most alone;
The only pleasures we can call our own.
Lighter than air, hope's summer visions die,
If but a fleeting cloud obscure the sky;
If but a beam of sober reason play,
Lo, fancy's fairy frost-work melts away!
But can the wiles of art, the grasp of power,
Snatch the rich relics of a well spent hour?
These, when the trembling spirit wings her flight
Pour round her path a stream of living light;
And gild those pure and perfect realms of rest,
Where virtue triumphs, and her sons are blest!

ITALY

PART I.

I.

THE LAKE OF GENEVA.

Day glimmer'd in the east, and the white moon
Hung like a vapour in the cloudless sky,
Yet visible, when on my way I went,
Glad to be gone—a pilgrim from the north,
Now more and more attracted as I drew
Nearer and nearer. Ere the artisan,
Drowsy, half-clad, had from his window leant,
With folded arms and listless look, to snuff
The morning air, or the caged sky-lark sung,
From his green sod up springing—but in vain,
His tuneful bill o'erflowing with a song
Old in the days of Homer, and his wings
With transport quivering, on my way I went,
Thy gates, Geneva, swinging heavily,
Thy gates so slow to open, swift to shut;
As on that Sabbath eve when he arrived,*
Whose name is now thy glory, now by thee
Inscribed to consecrate (such virtue dwells
In those small syllables) the narrow street,
His birth-place—when, but one short step too late,

* Rousseau.

He sate him down and wept—wept till the morning;
Then rose to go—a wanderer through the world.
'Tis not a tale that every hour brings with it.
Yet at a city gate, from time to time,
Much might be learnt; and most of all at thine,
London—thy hive the busiest, greatest, still
Gathering, enlarging still. Let us stand by,
And note who passes. Here comes one, a youth,
Glowing with pride, the pride of conscious power,
A Chatterton—in thought admired, caress'd,
And crown'd like Petrarch in the capitol;
Ere long to die—to fall by his own hand,
And fester with the vilest. Here come two,
Less feverish, less exalted—soon to part,
A Garrick and a Johnson; wealth and fame
Awaiting one—e'en at the gate, neglect
And want the other. But what multitudes,
Urged by the love of change, and, like myself,
Adventurous, careless of to-morrow's fare,
Press on—though but a rill entering the sea,
Entering and lost! Our task would never end.
Day glimmer'd and I went, a gentle breeze
Ruffling the Leman lake. Wave after wave,
If such they might be call'd, dash'd as in sport,
Not anger, with the pebbles on the beach,
Making wild music, and far westward caught
The sunbeam—where, alone and as entranced,
Counting the hours, the fisher in his skiff
Lay with his circular and dotted line,
Fishing in silence. When the heart is light
With hope, all pleases, nothing comes amiss;
And soon a passage boat swept gayly by,
Laden with peasant girls, and fruits and flowers,
And many a chanticleer and partlet caged
For Vevay's market-place—a motley group
Seen through the silvery haze. But soon 'twas gone.
The shifting sail flapp'd idly for an instant,
Then bore them off.
I am not one of those
So dead to all things in this visible world,
So wondrously profound—as to move on
In the sweet light of heaven, like him of old,
(His name is justly in the calendar,)
Who through the day pursued this pleasant path
That winds beside the mirror of all beauty,
And, when at eve his fellow pilgrims sate,
Discoursing of the lake, ask'd where it was.
They marvell'd, as they might; and so must all,
Seeing what now I saw; for now 'twas day,
And the bright sun was in the firmament,
A thousand shadows of a thousand hues
Checkering the clear expanse. A while his orb
Hung o'er thy trackless fields of snow, Mont Blanc,
Thy seas of ice and ice-built promontories,
That change their shapes for ever as in sport;
Then travell'd onward, and went down behind
The pine-clad heights of Jura, lighting up
The woodman's casement, and perchance his axe
Borne homeward through the forest in his hand;
And, in some deep and melancholy glen,
That dungeon fortress never to be named,
Where, like a lion taken in the toils,
Toussaint breathed out his brave and generous spirit.
Ah, little did he think, who sent him there,
That he himself, then greatest among men,
Should in like manner be so soon convey'd
Across the ocean—to a rock so small
Amid the countless multitude of waves,
That ships have gone and sought it, and return'd,
Saying it was not!
Still along the shore,
Among the trees, I went for many a mile,
Where damsels sit and weave their fishing-nets,
Singing some national song by the way-side.
But now 'twas dusk, and journeying by the Rhone,
That there came down, a torrent from the Alps,
I enter'd where a key unlocks a kingdom,*
The mountains closing, and the road, the river,
Filling the narrow pass. There, till a ray
Glanced through my lattice, and the household stir
Warn'd me to rise, to rise and to depart,
A stir unusual and accompanied
With many a tuning of rude instruments,
And many a laugh that argued coming pleasure,
Mine host's fair daughter for the nuptial rite,
And nuptial feast attiring—there I slept,
And in my dreams wander'd once more, well pleased.
But now a charm was on the rocks, and woods,
And waters; for, methought, I was with those
I had at morn, at even, wish'd for there.

II.

THE GREAT ST. BERNARD.

Night was again descending, when my mule,
That all day long had climb'd among the clouds,
Higher and higher still, as by a stair
Let down from heaven itself, transporting me,
Stopp'd, to the joy of both, at that low door
So near the summit of the great St. Bernard;
That door which ever on its hinges moved
To them that knock'd, and nightly sends abroad
Ministering spirits. Lying on the watch,
Two dogs of grave demeanour welcomed me,
All meekness, gentleness, though large of limb;
And a lay brother of the hospital,
Who, as we toil'd below, had heard by fits
The distant echoes gaining on his ear,
Came and held fast my stirrup in his hand,
While I alighted.
Long could I have stood,
With a religious awe contemplating
That house, the highest in the ancient world,
And placed there for the noblest purposes.
'Twas a rude pile of simplest masonry,
With narrow windows and vast buttresses,
Built to endure the shocks of time and chance;
Yet showing many a rent, as well it might,
Warr'd on for ever by the elements,
And in an evil day, nor long ago,
By violent men—when on the mountain top
The French and Austrian banners met in conflict
On the same rock beside it stood the church,
Reft of its cross, not of its sanctity;
The vesper bell, for 'twas the vesper hour,
Duly proclaiming through the wilderness,
"All ye who hear, whatever be your work,
Stop for an instant—move your lips in prayer!"
And, just beneath it, in that dreary dale,
If dale it might be call'd, so near to heaven,
A little lake, where never fish leap'd up,

* St. Maurice.

Lay like a spot of ink amid the snow;
A star, the only one in that small sky,
On its dead surface glimmering. 'Twas a scene
Resembling nothing I had left behind,
As though all worldly ties were now dissolved;—
And to incline the mind still more to thought,
To thought and sadness, on the eastern shore,
Under a beetling cliff stood, half in shadow,
A lonely chapel destined for the dead,
For such as, having wander'd from the way,
Had perish'd miserably. Side by side,
Within they lie, a mournful company,
All in their shrouds, no earth to cover them;
Their features full of life, yet motionless
In the broad day, nor soon to suffer change,
Though the barr'd windows, barr'd against the wolf,
Are always open!

But the *Bise* blew cold;
And, bidden to a spare but cheerful meal,
I sate among the holy brotherhood
At their long board. The fare, indeed, was such
As is prescribed on days of abstinence,
But might have pleased a nicer taste than mine;
And through the floor came up, an ancient matron
Serving unseen below; while from the roof
(The roof, the floor, the walls of native fir)
A lamp hung flickering, such as loves to fling
Its partial light on apostolic heads,
And sheds a grace on all. Theirs time as yet
Had changed not. Some were almost in the prime;
Nor was a brow o'ercast. Seen as I saw them,
Ranged round their ample hearth-stone in an hour
Of rest, they were as gay, as free from guile,
As children; answering, and at once, to all
The gentler impulses, to pleasure, mirth;
Mingling, at intervals, with rational talk,
Music; and gathering news from them that came,
As of some other world. But when the storm
Rose, and the snow roll'd on in ocean billows,
When on his face th' experienced traveller fell,
Sheltering his lips and nostrils with his hands,
Then all was changed; and, rallying with their pack
Into that blank of nature, they became
Unearthly beings. "Anselm, higher up,
Just where it drifts, a dog howls loud and long,
And now, as guided by a voice from heaven,
Digs with his feet. That noble vehemence,
Whose can it be, but his who never err'd?
Let us to work! there is no time to lose!—
But who descends Mont Velan? 'Tis La Croix.
Away, away! if not, alas, too late.
Homeward he drags an old man and a boy,
Faltering and falling, and but half awaken'd,
Asking to sleep again." Such their discourse.
Oft has a venerable roof received me;
St. Bruno's once*—where, when the winds were hush'd,
Nor from the cataract the voice came up,
You might have heard the mole work underground,
So great the stillness of that place; none seen,
Save when from rock to rock a hermit cross'd
By some rude bridge—or one at midnight toll'd
To matins, and white habits, issuing forth,
Glided along those aisles interminable,
All, all observant of the sacred law
Of silence. Nor is that sequester'd spot,
Once call'd "Sweet Waters," now "The Shady Vale,"*
To me unknown; that house so rich of old,
So courteous, and by two, that pass'd that way,†
Amply requited with immortal verse,
The poet's payment.

But, among them all,
None can with this compare, the dangerous seat
Of generous, active virtue. What though frost
Reign everlastingly, and ice and snow
Thaw not, but gather—there is that within,
Which, where it comes, makes summer; and in thought,
Oft am I sitting on the bench beneath
Their garden plot, where all that vegetates
Is but some scanty lettuce, to observe
Those from the south ascending, every step
As though it were their last—and instantly
Restored, renew'd, advancing as with songs,
Soon as they see, turning a lofty crag,
That plain, that modest structure, promising
Bread to the hungry, to the weary rest.

III.

THE DESCENT.

My mule refresh'd—and, let the truth be told,
He was not of that vile, that scurvy race,
From sire to son lovers of controversy,
But patient, diligent, and sure of foot,
Shunning the loose stone on the precipice,
Snorting suspicion while with sight, smell, touch,
Examining the wet and spongy moss,
And on his haunches sitting to slide down
The steep, the smooth—my mule refresh'd, his bells
Jingled once more, the signal to depart,
And we set out in the gray light of dawn,
Descending rapidly—by waterfalls
Fast frozen, and among huge blocks of ice
That in their long career had stopt midway,
At length, uncheck'd, unbidden, he stood still;
And all his bells were muffled. Then my guide,
Lowering his voice, address'd me: "Through this chasm
On and say nothing—for a word, a breath,
Stirring the air, may loosen and bring down
A winter's snow—enough to overwhelm
The horse and foot that, night and day, defiled
Along this path to conquer at Marengo.
Well I remember how I met them here,
As the light died away, and how Napoleon,
Wrapt in his cloak—I could not be deceived—
Rein'd in his horse, and ask'd me, as I pass'd,
How far 'twas to St. Remi. Where the rock
Juts forward, and the road, crumbling away,
Narrows almost to nothing at its base.
'Twas there; and down along the brink he led
To victory!—Dessaix, who turn'd the scale,
Leaving his life-blood in that famous field,
(When the clouds break, we may discern the spot
In the blue haze,) sleeps, as you saw at dawn,
Just as you enter'd, in the hospital church."

* The Grande Chartreuse.

* Vallombrosa, formerly called Acqua Bella.
† Ariosto and Milton.

So saying, for a while he held his peace,
Awe-struck beneath that dreadful canopy;
But soon, the danger pass'd, launch'd forth again.

IV.

JORASSE.

JORASSE was in his three-and-twentieth year;
Graceful and active as a stag just roused;
Gentle withal, and pleasant in his speech,
Yet seldom seen to smile. He had grown up
Among the hunters of the higher Alps;
Had caught their starts and fits of thoughtfulness,
Their haggard looks, and strange soliloquies,
Said to arise, by those who dwell below,
From frequent dealings with the mountain spirits.
But other ways had taught him better things;
And now he number'd, marching by my side,
The savans, princes, who with him had cross'd
The frozen tract, with him familiarly
Through the rough day and rougher night conversed
In many a chalêt round the Peak of Terror,*
Round Tacol, Tour, Well-horn and Rosenlau,
And her, whose throne is inaccessible,†
Who sits, withdrawn, in virgin majesty,
Nor oft unveils. Anon an avalanche
Roll'd its long thunder; and a sudden crash,
Sharp and metallic, to the startled ear
Told that far down a continent of ice
Had burst in twain. But he had now begun;
And with what transport he recall'd the hour
When to deserve, to win his blooming bride,
Madelaine of Annecy, to his feet he bound
The iron crampons, and, ascending, trod
The upper realms of frost; then, by a cord
Let halfway down, enter'd a grot star-bright,
And gather'd from above, below, around,
The pointed crystals!

Once, nor long before,
(Thus did his tongue run on, fast as his feet,
And with an eloquence that nature gives
To all her children—breaking off by starts
Into the harsh and rude, oft as the mule
Drew his displeasure,) once, nor long before,
Alone at daybreak on the Mettenberg,
He slipp'd, he fell; and through a fearful cleft
Gliding from ledge to ledge, from deep to deeper,
Went to the under world! Long while he lay
Upon his rugged bed—then waked like one
Wishing to sleep again and sleep for ever!
For, looking round, he saw or thought he saw
Innumerable branches of a cavern,
Winding beneath a solid crust of ice;
With here and there a rent that show'd the stars!
What then, alas, was left him but to die?
What else in those immeasurable chambers,
Strewn with the bones of miserable men,
Lost like himself? Yet must he wander on,
Till cold and hunger set his spirit free!
And, rising, he began his dreary round;
When hark, the noise as of some mighty river
Working its way to light! Back he withdrew,
But soon return'd, and, fearless from despair,
Dash'd down the dismal channel; and all day.
If day could be where utter darkness was,
Travell'd incessantly, the craggy roof
Just over head, and the impetuous waves,
Nor broad nor deep, yet with a giant's strength
Lashing him on. At last the water slept
In a dead lake—at the third step he took,
Unfathomable—and the roof, that long
Had threaten'd, suddenly descending, lay
Flat on the surface. Statue-like he stood,
His journey ended; when a ray divine
Shot through his soul. Breathing a prayer to her
Whose ears are never shut, the blessed virgin,
He plunged, he swam—and in an instant rose,
The barrier past, in light, in sunshine! Through
A smiling valley, full of cottages,
Glittering the river ran; and on the bank
The young were dancing ('twas a festival-day)
All in their best attire. There first he saw
His Madelaine. In the crowd she stood to hear,
When all drew round, inquiring; and her face,
Seen behind all, and, varying, as he spoke,
With hope, and fear, and generous sympathy,
Subdued him. From that very hour he loved.

The tale was long, but coming to a close,
When his dark eyes flash'd fire, and, stopping short,
He listen'd and look'd up. I look'd up too;
And twice there came a hiss that through me thrill'd.
'Twas heard no more. A chamois on the cliff
Had roused his fellows with that cry of fear,
And all were gone.

But now the thread was broken;
Love and its joys had vanish'd from his mind;
And he recounted his hair-breadth escapes
When with his friend, Hubert of Bionnay,
(His ancient carbine from his shoulder slung,
His axe to hew a staircase in the ice,)
He track'd their footsteps. By a cloud surprised,
Upon a crag among the precipices,
Where the next step had hurl'd them fifty fathoms,
Oft had they stood, lock'd in each other's arms,
All the long night under a freezing sky,
Each guarding each the while from sleeping, falling.
O, 'twas a sport he loved dearer than life,
And only would with life itself relinquish!
"My sire, my grandsire died among these wilds.
As for myself," he cried, and he held forth
His wallet in his hand, "this do I call
My winding sheet—for I shall have no other!"

And he spoke truth. Within a little month
He lay among these awful solitudes,
('Twas on a glacier—halfway up to heaven,)
Taking his final rest. Long did his wife,
Suckling her babe, her only one, look out
The way he went at parting, but he came not!
Long fear to close her eyes, lest in her sleep
(Such their belief) he should appear before her,
Frozen and ghastly pale, or crush'd and bleeding,
To tell her where he lay, and supplicate
For the last rite! At length the dismal news
Came to her ears, and to her eyes his corse.

V.

MARGUERITE DE TOURS.

Now the gray granite, starting through the snow
Discover'd many a variegated moss*

* The Schrekhorn. † The Jung-frau.

* Lichen Geographicus.

That to the pilgrim resting on his staff
Shadows out capes and islands; and ere long
Numberless flowers, such as disdain to live
In lower regions, and delighted drink
The clouds before they fall, flowers of all hues,
With their diminutive leaves cover'd the ground.
'Twas then, that, turning by an ancient larch,
Shiver'd in two, yet most majestical
With its long level branches, we observed
A human figure sitting on a stone
Far down by the way-side—just where the rock
Is riven asunder, and the Evil One
Has bridged the gulf, a wondrous monument
Built in one night, from which the flood beneath,
Raging along, all foam, is seen, not heard,
And seen as motionless!

Nearer we drew,
And 'twas a woman young and delicate,
Wrapt in a russet cloak from head to foot,
Her eyes cast down, her cheek upon her hand
In deepest thought. Young as she was, she wore
The matron cap; and from her shape we judged,
As well we might, that it would not be long
Ere she became a mother. Pale she look'd,
Yet cheerful; though, methought, once, if not twice,
She wiped away a tear that would be coming:
And in those moments her small hat of straw,
Worn on one side, and garnish'd with a riband
Glittering with gold, but ill conceal'd a face
Not soon to be forgotten. Rising up
On our approach, she journey'd slowly on;
And my companion, long before we met,
Knew, and ran down to greet her.

She was born
(Such was her artless tale, told with fresh tears)
In Val d'Aosta; and an Alpine stream,
Leaping from crag to crag in its short course
To join the Dora, turn'd her father's mill.
There did she blossom till a Valaisan,
A townsman of Martigny, won her heart,
Much to the old man's grief. Long he held out,
Unwilling to resign her; and at length,
When the third summer came, they stole a match
And fled. The act was sudden; and when far
Away, her spirit had misgivings. Then
She pictured to herself that aged face
Sickly and wan, in sorrow, not in anger;
And, when at last she heard his hour was near,
Went forth unseen, and, burden'd as she was,
Cross'd the high Alps on foot to ask forgiveness,
And hold him to her heart before he died.
Her task was done. She had fulfill'd her wish,
And now was on her way, rejoicing, weeping.
A frame like hers had suffer'd; but her love
Was strong within her; and right on she went,
Fearing no ill. May all good angels guard her!
And should I once again, as once I may,
Visit Martigny, I will not forget
Thy hospitable roof, Marguerite de Tours;
Thy sign the silver swan.* Heaven prosper thee!

VI.

THE ALPS.

Who first beholds those everlasting clouds,
Seed-time and harvest, morning, noon and night,
Still where they were, steadfast, immovable;
Who first beholds the Alps—that mighty chain
Of mountains, stretching on from east to west,
So massive, yet so shadowy, so ethereal,
As to belong rather to heaven than to earth—
But instantly receives into his soul
A sense, a feeling that he loses not,
A something that informs him 'tis a moment
Whence he may date henceforward and for ever?

To me they seem'd the barriers of a world,
Saying, Thus far, no farther! and as o'er
The level plain I travell'd silently,
Nearing them more and more, day after day,
My wandering thoughts my only company,
And they before me still, oft as I look'd,
A strange delight, mingled with fear, came o'er me.
A wonder as at things unknown and not heard of!
Oft as I look'd, I felt as though it were
For the first time!

Great was the tumult there,
Deafening the din, when in barbaric pomp
The Carthaginian on his march to Rome
Entered their fastnesses. Trampling the snows,
The war-horse reared; and the tower'd elephant
Upturn'd his trunk into the murky sky,
Then tumbled headlong, swallow'd up and lost,
He and his rider.

Now the scene is changed;
And o'er Mont Cenis, o'er the Simplon winds
A path of pleasure. Like a silver zone
Flung about carelessly, it shines afar,
Catching the eye in many a broken link,
In many a turn and traverse as it glides;
And oft above and oft below appears,
Seen o'er the wall by him who journeys up,
As though it were another, not the same,
Leading along he knows not whence or whither
Yet through its fairy course, go where it will,
The torrent stops it not, the rugged rock
Opens and lets it in; and on it runs.
Winning its easy way from clime to clime
Through glens lock'd up before.

Not such *my* path.
Mine but for those, who, like Jean Jacques, delight
In dizziness, gazing and shuddering on
Till fascination comes and the brain turns!
Mine, though I judge but from my ague-fits
Over the Drance, just where the abbot feel,
The same as Hannibal's.

But now 'tis past,
That turbulent chaos; and the promised land
Lies at my feet in all its loveliness!
To him who starts up from a terrible dream,
And lo the sun is shining, and the lark
Singing aloud for joy, to him is not
Such sudden ravishment as now I feel
At the first glimpses of fair Italy.

VII.

COMO.

I LOVE to sail along the Larian Lake
Under the shore—though not to visit Pliny,
To catch him musing in his plane tree walk,
Or fishing, as he might be, from his window:
And, to deal plainly, (may his shade forgive me!)
Could I recall the ages past, and play

* La Cygne.

The fool with Time, I should perhaps reserve
My leisure for Catullus on *his* lake,
Though to fare worse, or Virgil at his farm
A little further on the way to Mantua.
But such things cannot be. So I sit still,
And let the boatman shift his little sail,
His sail so forked and so swallow-like,
Well pleased with all that comes. The morning air
Plays on my cheek how gently, flinging round
A silvery gleam: and now the purple mists
Rise like a curtain; now the sun looks out,
Filling, o'erflowing with his glorious light
This noble amphitheatre of mountains;
And now appear as on a phosphor sea
Numberless barks, from Milan, from Pavia;
Some sailing up, some down, and some at anchor,
Lading, unlading at that small port-town
Under the promontory—its tall tower
And long flat roofs, just such as Poussin drew,
Caught by a sunbeam slanting through a cloud;
A quay-like scene, glittering and full of life,
And doubled by reflection.
What delight,
After so long a sojourn in the wild,
To hear once more the sounds of cheerful labour!
—But in a clime like this where are they not?
Along the shores, among the hills 'tis now
The heyday of the vintage; all abroad,
But most the young and of the gentler sex,
Busy in gathering; all among the vines,
Some on the ladder, and some underneath,
Filling their baskets of green wickerwork,
While many a canzonet and frolic laugh
Come through the leaves; the vines in light festoons
From tree to tree, the trees in avenues,
And every avenue a cover'd walk,
Hung with black clusters. 'Tis enough to make
The sad man merry, the benevolent one
Melt into tears—so general is the joy!
While up and down the cliffs, over the lake,
Wains oxen-drawn, and pannier'd mules are seen,
Laden with grapes, and dropping rosy wine.
Here I received from thee, Filippo Mori,
One of those courtesies so sweet, so rare!
When, as I rambled through thy vineyard ground
On the hill-side, thou sent'st thy little son,
Charged with a bunch almost as big as he,
To press it on the stranger.
May thy vats
O'erflow, and he, thy willing gift-bearer,
Live to become ere long himself a giver;
And in due time, when thou art full of honour,
The staff of thine old age!
In a strange land
Such things, however trifling, reach the heart,
And through the heart the head, clearing away
The narrow notions that grow up at home,
And in their place grafting good-will to all.
At least I found it so; nor less at eve,
When, bidden as an English traveller,
('Twas by a little boat that gave me chase
With oar and sail, as homeward-bound I cross'd
The bay of Tramezzine,) right readily
I turn'd my prow and follow'd, landing soon
Where steps of purest marble met the wave;
Where, through the trellises and corridors,
Soft music came as from Armida's palace,
Breathing enchantment o'er the woods, the waters
And through a bright pavilion, bright as day,
Forms such as hers were flitting, lost among
Such as of old in sober pomp swept by,
Such as adorn the triumphs and the feasts
Painted by Cagliari; where the world danced
Under the starry sky, while I look'd on,
Admiring, listening, quaffing gramolata,
And reading, in the eyes that sparkled round,
The thousand love adventures written there.
Can I forget—no, never, such a scene
So full of witchery! Night linger'd still,
When, with a dying breeze, I left Bellaggio;
But the strain follow'd me; and still I saw
Thy smile, Angelica; and still I heard
Thy voice—once and again bidding adieu.

VIII.

BERGAMO.

The song was one that I had heard before,
But where I knew not. It inclined to sadness;
And, turning round from the delicious fare
My landlord's little daughter, Barbara,
Had from her apron just roll'd out before me,
Figs and rock-melons—at the door I saw
Two boys of lively aspect. Peasant-like
They were, and poorly clad, but not unskill'd;
With their small voices and an old guitar
Winning their mazy progress to my heart
In that, the only universal language.
But soon they changed the measure, entering on
A pleasant dialogue of sweet and sour,
A war of words, and waged with looks and gestures,
Between Trappanti and his ancient dame,
Mona Lucilla. To and fro it went;
While many a titter on the stairs was heard,
And Barbara's among them.
When 'twas done,
Their dark eyes flash'd no longer, yet, methought,
In many a glance as from the soul, express'd
More than enough to serve them. Far or near,
Few let them pass unnoticed; and there was not
A mother round about for many a league,
But could repeat their story. Twins they were,
And orphans, as I learnt, cast on the world;
The parents lost in the old ferry-boat
That, three years since, last Martinmas, went down
Crossing the rough Penacus.*
May they live
Blameless and happy—rich they cannot be,
Like him who, in the days of minstrelsy,
Came in a beggar's weeds to Petrarch's door,
Crying without, "Give me a lay to sing!"
And soon in silk (such then the power of song)
Return'd to thank him; or like him wayworn
And lost, who, by the foaming Adigè
Descending from the Tyrol, as night fell,
Knock'd at a city gate near the hill foot,
The gate that bore so long, sculptured in stone,
An eagle on a ladder, and at once
Found welcome—nightly in the banner'd hall
Tuning his harp to tales of chivalry

* Lago di Garda.

Before the great Mastino, and his guests,
The three-and-twenty, by some adverse fortune,
By war or treason or domestic malice,
Reft of their kingly crowns, reft of their all,
And living on his bounty.
But who now
Enters the chamber, flourishing a scroll
In his right hand, his left at every step
Brushing the floor with what was once a hat
Of ceremony? Gliding on he comes,
Slipshod, ungarter'd; his long suit of black
Dingy and threadbare, though renew'd in patches
Till it has almost ceased to be the old one.
At length arrived, and with a shrug that pleads
"'Tis my necessity!" he stops and speaks,
Screwing a smile into his dinnerless face.
"I am a poet, signor:—give me leave
To bid you welcome. Though you shrink from notice,
The splendour of your name has gone before you;
And Italy from sea to sea rejoices,
As well indeed she may! But I transgress:
I too have known the weight of praise, and ought
To spare another."
Saying so, he laid
His sonnet, an impromptu, on my table,
And bow'd and left me; in his hollow hand
Receiving my small tribute, a zecchino,
Unconsciously, as doctors do their fees.
My omelet, and a flagon of hill-wine,
"The very best in Bergamo!" had long
Fled from all eyes; or, like the young Gil Blas
De Santillane, I had perhaps been seen
Bartering my bread and salt for empty praise.

IX.

ITALY.

Am I in Italy? Is this the Mincius?
Are those the distant turrets of Verona?
And shall I sup where Juliet at the mask
Saw her loved Montague, and now sleeps by him?
Such questions hourly do I ask myself;
And not a finger-post by the road side
"To Mantua"—"To Ferrara"—but excites
Surprise, and doubt, and self-congratulation.
O Italy, how beautiful thou art!
Yet could I weep—for thou art lying, alas!
Low in the dust; and they who come, admire thee
As we admire the beautiful in death.
Thine was a dangerous gift, the gift of beauty.
Would thou hadst less, or wert as once thou wast,
Inspiring awe in those who now enslave thee!
—But why despair? Twice hast thou lived already,
Twice shone among the nations of the world,
As the sun shines among the lesser lights
Of heaven; and shalt again. The hour shall come,
When they who think to bind the ethereal spirit,
Who, like the eagle cowering o'er his prey,
Watch with quick eye, and strike and strike again
If but a sinew vibrate, shall confess
Their wisdom folly. E'en now the flame
Bursts forth where once it burnt so gloriously,
And, dying, left a splendour like the day,
That like the day diffused itself, and still
Blesses the earth—the light of genius, virtue,
Greatness in thought and act, contempt of death,
Godlike example. Echoes that have slept
Since Athens, Lacedæmon, were themselves,
Since men invoked "By those in Marathon!"
Awake along the Ægean; and the dead,
They of that sacred shore, have heard the call,
And through the ranks, from wing to wing, are seen
Moving as once they were—instead of rage
Breathing deliberate valour.

X.

COLL'ALTO.

In this neglected mirror (the broad frame
Of massive silver serves to testify
That many a noble matron of the house
Has sate before it) once, alas, was seen
What led to many sorrows. From that time
The bat came hither for a sleeping place;
And he, who cursed another in his heart,
Said, "Be thy dwelling through the day, the night,
Shunn'd like Coll'alto." 'Twas in that old castle,
Which flanks the cliff with its grey battlements
Flung here and there, and, like an eagle's nest,
Hangs in the Trevisan, that thus the steward,
Shaking his locks, the few that time had left him,
Address'd me, as we enter'd what was call'd
"My lady's chamber." On the walls, the chairs,
Much yet remain'd of the rich tapestry
Much of the adventures of Sir Lancelot
In the green glades of some enchanted forest.
The toilet table was of massive silver,
Florentine art, when Florence was renown'd;
A gay confusion of the elements,
Dolphins and boys, and shells and fruits and flowers;
And from the ceiling, in his gilded cage,
Hung a small bird of curious workmanship,
That, when his mistress bade him, would unfold
(So said at least the babbling dame, tradition)
His emerald wings, and sing and sing again
The song that pleased her. While I stood and look'd,
A gleam of day yet lingering in the west,
The steward went on.
"She had ('tis now long since)
A gentle serving maid, the fair Cristina.
Fair as a lily, and as spotless too;
None so admired, beloved. They had grown up
As play-fellows; and some there were, who said,
Some who knew much, discoursing of Cristina,
'She is not what she seems.' When unrequired,
She would steal forth; her custom, her delight,
To wander through and through an ancient grove
Self-planted halfway down, losing herself
Like one in love with sadness; and her veil
And vesture white, seen ever in that place,
Ever as surely as the hours came round,
Among those reverend trees, gave her below
The name of the White Lady. But the day
Is gone, and I delay you.
In that chair
The countess, as it might be now, was sitting,
Her gentle serving maid, the fair Cristina,
Combing her golden hair; and through this door
The count, her lord, was hastening, call'd away
By letters of great urgency to Venice;
When in the glass she saw, as she believed,
('Twas an illusion of the evil spirit—

Some say he came and cross'd it at the instant,)
A smile, a glance at parting, given and answer'd,
That turn'd her blood to gall. That very night
The deed was done. That night, ere yet the moon
Was up on Monte Calvo, and the wolf
Baying as still he does, (oft do I hear him,
An hour and more by the old turret clock,)
They led her forth, th' unhappy, lost Cristina,
Helping her down in her distress—to die.
"No blood was spilt; no instrument of death
Lurk'd—or stood forth, declaring its bad purpose;
Nor was a hair of her unblemish'd head
Hurt in that hour. Fresh as a flower ungather'd,
And warm with life, her youthful pulses playing,
She was wall'd up within the castle wall.
The wall itself was hollow'd to receive her;
Then closed again, and done to line and rule.
Would you descend and see it?—'Tis far down;
And many a stair is gone. 'Tis in a vault
Under the chapel: and there nightly now,
As in the narrow niche, when smooth and fair,
And as though nothing had been done or thought of,
The stone-work rose before her, till the light
Glimmer'd and went—there, nightly, at that hour,
(You smile, and would it were an idle tale!
Would we could say so!) at that hour she stands
Shuddering—her eyes uplifted, and her hands
Join'd as in prayer; then, like a blessed soul
Bursting the tomb, springs forward, and away
Flies o'er the woods, the mountains. Issuing forth,
The hunter meets her in his hunting track;
The shepherd on the heath, starting, exclaims,
(For still she bears the name she bore of old,)
'"'Tis the White Lady!'"

XI.

VENICE.

THERE is a glorious city in the sea.
The sea is in the broad, the narrow streets,
Ebbing and flowing; and the salt sea-weed
Clings to the marble of her palaces.
No track of men, no footsteps to and fro,
Lead to her gates. The path lies o'er the sea,
Invisible; and from the land we went,
As to a floating city—steering in,
And gliding up her streets as in a dream,
So smoothly, silently—by many a dome
Mosque-like, and many a stately portico,
The statues ranged along an azure sky;
By many a pile in more than eastern splendour,
Of old the residence of merchant kings;
The fronts of some, though time had shatter'd them,
Still glowing with the richest hues of art,
As though the wealth within them had run o'er.
Thither I came, and in a wondrous ark,
(That, long before we slipp'd our cable, rang
As with the voices of all living things,)
From Padua, where the stars are, night by night,
Watch'd from the top of an old dungeon tower,
Whence blood ran once, the tower of Ezzelin—
Not as he watch'd them, when he read his fate
And shudder'd. But of him I thought not then,
Him or his horoscope; far, far from me
The forms of guilt and fear; though some were there,
Sitting among us round the cabin board,
Some who, like him, had cried, "Spill blood enough!"
And could shake long at shadows. They had play'd
Their parts at Padua, and were now returning;
A vagrant crew, and careless of to-morrow,
Careless and full of mirth. Who, in that quaver
Sings "Caro, caro?"—'Tis the prima donna,
And to her monkey, smiling in his face,
Who, as transported, cries, "Brava! ancora?"
'Tis a grave personage, an old macaw,
Perch'd on her shoulder. But mark him who leaps
Ashore, and with a shout urges along
The lagging mules; then runs and climbs a tree
That with its branches overhangs the stream,
And, like an acorn, drops on deck again.
'Tis he who speaks not, stirs not, but we laugh;
That child of fun and frolic, Arlecchino.
And mark their poet—with what emphasis
He prompts the young soubrette, conning her part.
Her tongue plays truant, and he raps his box,
And prompts again; for ever looking round
As if in search of subjects for his wit,
His satire; and as often whispering
Things, though unheard, not unimaginable.
Had I thy pencil, Crabbe, (when thou hast done,—
Late may it be,—it will, like Prospero's staff,
Be buried fifty fathoms in the earth,)
I would portray the Italian—Now I cannot.
Subtle, discerning, eloquent, the slave
Of love, of hate, for ever in extremes;
Gentle when unprovoked, easily won,
But quick in quarrel—through a thousand shades
His spirit flits, chameleon-like; and mocks
The eye of the observer.
Gliding on,
At length we leave the river for the sea.
At length a voice aloft proclaims "Venezia!"
And, as call'd forth, it comes.
A few in fear,
Flying away from him whose boast it was,*
That the grass grew not where his horse had trod,
Gave birth to Venice. Like the waterfowl,
They built their nests among the ocean waves;
And, where the sands were shifting, as the wind
Blew from the north, the south; where they that came,
Had to make sure the ground they stood upon,
Rose, like an exhalation, from the deep,
A vast metropolis, with glittering spires,
With theatres, basilicas adorn'd;
A scene of light and glory, a dominion,
That has endured the longest among men.
And whence the talisman by which she rose,
Towering? 'Twas found there in the barren sea.
Want led to enterprise; and, far and near,
Who met not the Venetian?—now in Cairo;
Ere yet the califa came, listening to hear
Its bells approaching from the Red Sea coast;
Now on the Euxine, on the Sea of Azoph,
In converse with the Persian, with the Russ,
The Tartar; on his lowly deck receiving
Pearls from the Gulf of Ormus, gems from Bagdad,
Eyes brighter yet, that shed the light of love,
From Georgia, from Circassia. Wandering round,
When in the rich bazaar he saw, display'd,
Treasures from unknown climes, away he went,

* Attila.

And, travelling slowly upward, drew ere long
From the well-head supplying all below;
Making the imperial city of the east,
Herself, his tributary.
If we turn
To the black forests of the Rhine, the Danube,
Where o'er each narrow glen a castle hangs,
And, like the wolf that hunger'd at his door,
The baron lived by rapine—there we meet,
In warlike guise, the caravan from Venice;
When on its march, now lost and now emerging,
A glittering file, the trumpet heard, the scout
Sent and recall'd—but at a city gate
All gayety, and look'd for ere it comes;
Winning its way with all that can attract,
Cages, whence every wild cry of the desert,
Jugglers, stage-dancers. Well might Charlemain,
And his brave peers, each with his visor up,
On their long lances lean and gaze a while,
When the Venetian to their eyes disclosed
The wonders of the east! Well might they then
Sigh for new conquests!
Thus did Venice rise,
Thus flourish, till th' unwelcome tidings came,
That in the Tagus had arrived a fleet
From India, from the region of the sun,
Fragrant with spices—that a way was found,
A channel open'd, and the golden stream
Turn'd to enrich another. Then she felt
Her strength departing, and at last she fell,
Fell in an instant, blotted out and razed;
She who had stood yet longer than the longest
Of the four kingdoms—who, as in an ark,
Had floated down, amid a thousand wrecks,
Uninjured, from the old world to the new,
From the last trace of civilized life—to where
Light shone again, and with unclouded splendour.
Though many an age in the midsea she dwelt,
From her retreat calmly contemplating
The changes of the earth, herself unchanged.
Before her pass'd, as in an awful dream,
The mightiest of the mighty. What are these,
Clothed in their purple? O'er the globe they fling
Their monstrous shadows; and, while yet we speak,
Phantom-like, vanish with a dreadful scream!
What—but the last that styled themselves the Cæsars?
And who in long array (look where they come;
Their gestures menacing so far and wide)
Wear the green turban and the heron's plume?
Who—but the caliphs? follow'd fast by shapes
As new and strange—emperor, and king, and czar,
And soldan, each, with a gigantic stride,
Trampling on all the flourishing works of peace
To make his greatness greater, and inscribe
His name in blood—some, men of steel, steel-clad;
Others, nor long, alas! the interval,
In light and gay attire, with brow serene
Wielding Jove's thunder, scattering sulphurous fire
Mingled with darkness; and, among the rest,
Lo, one by one, passing continually,
Those who assume a sway beyond them all;
Men gray with age, each in a triple crown,
And in his tremulous hands grasping the keys
That can alone, as he would signify,
Unlock heaven's gate.

XII.

LUIGI.

He who is on his travels and loves ease,
Ease and companionship, should hire a youth,
Such as thou wert, Luigi. Thee I found,
Playing at mora on the cabin roof
With Pulcinella, crying, as in wrath,
"Tre! Quattro! Cinque!"—'tis a game to strike
Fire from the coldest heart. What then from thine?
And, ere the twentieth throw, I had resolved,
Won by thy looks. Thou wert an honest lad;
Wert generous, grateful, not without ambition.
Had it depended on thy will and pleasure,
Thou wouldst have number'd in thy family
At least six doges and twelve procurators.
But that was not to be. In thee I saw
The last of a long line of Carbonari,
Who in their forest, for three hundred years,
Had lived and labour'd, cutting, charring wood;
Discovering where they were, to those astray,
By the re-echoing stroke, the crash, the fall,
Or the blue wreath that travell'd slowly up
Into the sky. Thy nobler destinies
Led thee away to jostle in the crowd;
And there I found thee—by thy own prescription
Crossing the sea to try once more a change
Of air and diet, landing, and as gayly
Near the Dogano—on the great canal,
As though thou knewest where to dine and sleep.
First didst thou practise patience in Bologna,
Serving behind a cardinal's gouty chair,
Laughing at jests that were no laughing matter;
Then teach the art to others in Ferrara,
—At the Three Moors—as guide, as cicerone—
Dealing out largely in exchange for pence
Thy scraps of knowledge—through the grassy street
Leading, explaining—pointing to the bars
Of Tasso's dungeon, and the Latin verse
Graven in the stone, that yet denotes the door
Of Ariosto.
Many a year is gone
Since on the Rhine we parted; yet, methinks
I can recall thee to the life, Luigi,
In our long journey ever by my side,
O'er rough and smooth, o'er Apennine, Maremma;
Thy locks jet black, and clustering round a face
Open as day, and full of manly daring.
Thou hadst a hand, a heart for all that came,
Herdsman or pedlar, monk or muleteer;
And few there were that met thee not with smiles.
Mishap pass'd o'er thee like a summer cloud.
Cares thou hadst none; and they, who stood to hear thee,
Caught the infection, and forgot their own.
Nature conceived thee in her merriest mood,
Her happiest—not a speck was in the sky;
And at thy birth the cricket chirp'd, Luigi,
Thine a perpetual voice—at every turn
A larum to the echo. In a clime
Where all the world was gay, thou wert the gayest,
And, like a babe, hush'd only by thy slumbers,
Up hill and down, morning, and noon, and night,
Singing or talking; singing to thyself
When none gave ear, but to the listener talking.

XIII.

ST. MARK'S PLACE.

Over how many tracts, vast, measureless,
Nothing from day to day, from year to year,
Passes, save now and then a cloud, a meteor,
A famish'd eagle ranging for his prey;
While on this spot of earth, the work of man,
How much has been transacted! Emperors, popes,
Warriors, from far and wide, laden with spoil,
Landing, have here perform'd their several parts,
Then left the stage to others. Not a stone
In the broad pavement, but to him who has
An eye, an ear for the inanimate world,
Tells of past ages.
In that temple porch
(The brass is gone, the porphyry remains,)
Did Barbarossa fling his mantle off
And kneeling, on his neck receive the foot
Of the proud pontiff—thus at last consoled
For flight, disguise, and many an anguish shake
On his stone pillow. In that temple porch
Old as he was, so near his hundredth year,
And blind—his eyes put out—did Dandolo
Stand forth, displaying on his ducal crown
The cross just then assumed at the high altar.
There did he stand, erect, invincible,
Though wan his cheeks, and wet with many tears,
For in his prayers he had been weeping much;
And now the pilgrims and the people wept
With admiration, saying in their hearts,
"Surely those aged limbs have need of rest!"
—There did he stand, with his old armour on,
Ere, gonfalon in hand, that stream'd aloft,
As conscious of its glorious destiny,
So soon to float o'er mosque and minaret,
He sail'd away, five hundred gallant ships,
Their lofty sides hung with emblazon'd shields,
Following his track to glory. He returned not;
But of his trophies four arrived ere long,
Snatch'd from destruction—the four steeds divine,
That strike the ground, resounding with their feet,
And from their nostrils snort ethereal flame
Over that very portal—in the place
Where in an after-time Petrarch was seen
Sitting beside the doge, on his right hand,
Amid the ladies of the court of Venice,
Their beauty shaded from the setting sun
By many-colour'd hangings; while, beneath,
Knights of all nations, some from merry England,
Their lances in the rest, charged for the prize.
Here, among other pageants, and how oft
It came, as if returning to console
The least, instruct the greatest, did the doge,
Himself, go round, borne through the gazing crowd,
Once in a chair of state, once on his bier.
They were his first appearance, and his last.
The sea, that emblem of uncertainty,
Changed not so fast for many and many an age,
As this small spot. To-day 'twas full of maskers;
And lo, the madness of the carnival,
The monk, the nun, the holy legate mask'd!
To-morrow came the scaffold and the headsman;
And he died there by torchlight, bound and gagg'd,
Whose name and crime they knew not. Underneath
Where the archangel, turning with the wind,
Blesses the city from the topmost tower,
His arms extended—there continually
Two phantom shapes were sitting side by side,
Or up, and, as in sport, chasing each other;
Horror and Mirth. Both vanish'd in one hour!
But Ocean only, when again he claims
His ancient rule, shall wash away their footsteps.
Enter the palace by the marble stairs*
Down which the grisly head of old Faliero
Roll'd from the block. Pass onward through the chamber,
Where, amongst all drawn in their ducal robes,
But one is wanting—where, thrown off in heat,
A short inscription on the doge's chair
Led to another on the wall yet shorter;
And thou wilt track them—wilt from halls of state
Where kings have feasted, and the festal song
Rung through the fretted roof, cedar and gold,
Step into darkness; and be told, "'Twas here,
Trusting, deceived, assembled but to die,
To take a long embrace and part again,
Carrara and his valiant sons were strangled;
He first—then they, whose only crime had been
Struggling to save their father."—Through the door
So soon to cry, smiting his brow, "I'm lost!"
Was shown, and with all courtesy, all honour,
The great and noble captain, Carmagnola.—
That deep descent (thou canst not yet discern
Aught as it is) leads to the dripping vaults
Under the flood, where light and warmth came never
Leads to a cover'd bridge, the Bridge of Sighs;
And to that fatal closet at the foot,
Lurking for prey, which, when a victim enter'd,
Grew less and less, contracting to a span;
An iron door, urged onward by a screw,
Forcing out life.—But let us to the roof,
And, when thou hast survey'd the sea, the land,
Visit the narrow cells that cluster there,
As in a place of tombs. They had their tenants,
And each supplied with sufferings of his own.
There burning suns beat unrelentingly,
Turning all things to dust, and scorching up
The brain, till reason fled, and the wild yell
And wilder laugh burst out on every side,
Answering each other as in mockery!
—Few houses of the size were better fill'd;
Though many came and left it in an hour.
"Most nights," so said the good old Nicolo,
(For three-and-thirty years his uncle kept
The water gate below, but seldom spoke,
Though much was on his mind,) "most nights arrived
The prison boat, that boat with many oars,
And bore away as to the lower world,
Disburdening in the canal Orfano,
That drowning-place, were never net was thrown
Summer or winter, death the penalty;
And where a secret, once deposited,
Lay till the waters should give up their dead."
Yet what so gay as Venice? Every gale
Breathed heavenly music! and who flock'd me thither

* Scala de' Giganti.

To celebrate her nuptials with the sea?
To wear the mask, and mingle in the crowd
With Greek, Armenian, Persian—night and day
(There, and there only, did the hour stand still)
Pursuing through her thousand labyrinths
The enchantress Pleasure; realizing dreams
The earliest, happiest—for a tale to catch
Credulous ears, and hold young hearts in chains,
Had only to begin, "There lived in Venice"—
"Who were the six we supp'd with yesternight?"
"Kings, one and all! Thou couldst not but remark
The style and manner of the six that served them."
"Who answer'd me just now? Who, when I said,
'Tis nine,' turn'd round, and said so solemnly,
'Signor, he died at nine!'"—"'Twas the Armenian;
The mask that follows thee, go where thou wilt."
"But who stands there, alone among them all?"
"The Cypriot. Ministers from foreign courts
Beset his doors, long ere his hour of rising;
His the great secret! Not the golden house
Of Nero, or those fabled in the East,
As wrought by magic, half so rich as his!
Two dogs, coal black, in collars of pure gold,
Walk in his footsteps—who but his familiars?
He casts no shadow, nor is seen to smile!"
Such their discourse. Assembling in St. Mark's,
All nations met as on enchanted ground!
What though a strange, mysterious power was there,
Moving throughout, subtle, invisible,
And universal as the air they breathed;
A power that never slumber'd, never pardon'd,
All eye, all ear, nowhere and everywhere,
Entering the closet and the sanctuary,
No place of refuge for the doge himself;
Most present when least thought of—nothing dropt
In secret, when the heart was on the lips,
Nothing in feverish sleep, but instantly
Observed and judged—a power, that if but glanced at
In casual converse, be it where it might,
The speaker lower'd at once his eyes, his voice,
And pointed upward, as to God in heaven—
What though that power was there, he who lived thus,
Pursuing pleasure, lived as if it were not;
But let him in the midnight air indulge
A word, a thought against the laws of Venice,
And in that hour he vanish'd from the earth!

XIV.

THE GONDOLA.

Boy, call the gondola; the sun is set.—
It came, and we embark'd; but instantly,
Though she had stept on board so light of foot,
So light of heart, laughing she knew not why,
Sleep overcame her; on my arm she slept.
From time to time I waked her; but the boat
Rock'd her to sleep again.
The moon was up,
But broken by a cloud. The wind was hush'd,
And the sea mirror-like. A single zephyr
Play'd with her tresses, and drew more and more
Her veil across her bosom.
Long I lay
Contemplating that face so beautiful,
That rosy mouth, that cheek dimpled with smiles,
That neck but half concealed, whiter than snow.
'Twas the sweet slumber of her early age.
I look'd and look'd, and felt a flush of joy
I would express, but cannot.
Oft I wish'd
Gently—by stealth—to drop asleep myself,
And to incline yet lower that sleep might come;
Oft closed my eyes as in forgetfulness.
'Twas all in vain. Love would not let me rest.
But how delightful when at length she waked.
When, her light hair adjusting, and her veil
So rudely scatter'd, she resumed her place
Beside me; and, as gayly as before,
Sitting unconsciously nearer and nearer,
Pour'd out her innocent mind!
So, nor long since,
Sung a Venetian: and his lay of love,
Dangerous and sweet, charm'd Venice. As for me
(Less fortunate, if love be happiness)
No curtain drawn, no pulse beating alarm,
I went alone under the silent moon;
Thy place, St. Mark, thy churches, palaces,
Glittering, and frost-like, and as day drew on,
Melting away, an emblem of themselves.
Those porches pass'd through which the water-breeze
Plays, though no longer on the noble forms
That moved there, sable-vested—and the quay
Silent, grass-grown—adventurer-like I launch'd
Into the deep, ere long discovering
Isles such as cluster in the southern seas,
All verdure. Everywhere, from bush and brake,
The musky odour of the serpents came;
Their slimy track across the woodman's path
Bright in the moonshine: and, as round I went,
Dreaming of Greece, whither the waves were gliding,
I listen'd to the venerable pines
Then in close converse; and, if right I guess'd,
Delivering many a message to the winds
In secret, for their kindred on Mount Ida.
Nor when again in Venice, when again
In that strange place, so stirring and so still,
Where nothing comes to drown the human voice
But music, or the dashing of the tide,
Ceased I to wander. Now a Jessica
Sung to her lute, her signal as she sate
At her half-open window. Then, methought,
A serenade broke silence, breathing hope
Through walls of stone, and torturing the proud heart
Of some Priuli. Once, we could not err,
(It was before an old Palladian house,
As between night and day we floated by,)
A gondolier lay singing; and he sung,
As in the time when Venice was herself,
Of Tancred and Erminia. On our oars
We rested; and the verse was verse divine!
We could not err—perhaps he was the last—
For none took up the strain, none answer'd him;
And when he ceased, he left upon my ear
A something like the dying voice of Venice.
The moon went down; and nothing now was seen
Save here and there the lamp of a madonna,

Glimmering—or heard, but when he spoke, who stood
Over the lantern at the prow, and cried,
Turning the corner of some reverend pile,
Some school or hospital of old renown,
Though haply none were coming, none were near,
"Hasten or slacken."*
But at length night fled;
And with her fled, scattering, the sons of pleasure.
Star after star shot by, or meteor-like,
Cross'd me and vanish'd—lost at once among
Those hundred isles that tower majestically,
That rise abruptly from the water mark,
Not with rough crag, but marble, and the work
Of noblest architects. I linger'd still;
Nor struck my threshold, till the hour was come
And past, when, flitting home in the gray light,
The young Bianca found her father's door,
That door so often with a trembling hand,
So often—then so lately left ajar,
Shut; and, all terror, all perplexity,
Now by her lover urged, now by her love,
Fled o'er the waters to return no more.

XV.

THE BRIDES OF VENICE.

It was St. Mary's eve, and all pour'd forth
As to some grand solemnity. The fisher
Came from his islet, bringing o'er the waves
His wife and little one; the husbandman
From the firm land, along the Po, the Brenta,
Crowding the common ferry. All arrived;
And in his straw the prisoner turn'd and listen'd,
So great the stir in Venice. Old and young
Throng'd her three hundred bridges; the grave Turk,
Turban'd, long vested, and the cozening Jew,
In yellow hat and threadbare gaberdine,
Hurrying along. For, as the custom was,
The noblest sons and daughters of the state,
They of patrician birth, the flower of Venice,
Whose names are written in the book of gold,
Were on that day to solemnize their nuptials.
At noon, a distant murmur through the crowd,
Rising and rolling on, announced their coming;
And never from the first was to be seen
Such splendour or such beauty. Two and two,
(The richest tapestry unroll'd before them,)
First came the brides in all their loveliness;
Each in her veil, and by two bridemaids follow'd,
Only less lovely, who behind her bore
The precious caskets that within contain'd
The dowry and the presents. On she moved,
Her eyes cast down, and holding in her hand
A fan, that gently waved, of ostrich feathers.
Her veil, transparent as the gossamer,
Fell from beneath a starry diadem;
And on her dazzling neck a jewel shone,
Ruby, or diamond, or dark amethyst;
A jewell'd chain, in many a winding wreath,
Wreathing her gold brocade.
Before the church,
That venerable pile on the sea brink,
Another train they met, no strangers to them,
Brothers to some, and to the rest still dearer;
Each in his hand bearing his cap and plume,
And, as he walk'd, with modest dignity
Folding his scarlet mantle, his tabarro.
They join, they enter in, and, up the aisle,
Led by the full-voiced choir in bright procession,
Range round the altar. In his vestments there
The patriarch stands; and, while the anthem flows
Who can look on unmoved?—mothers in secret
Rejoicing in the beauty of their daughters,
Sons in the thought of making them their own;
And they, array'd in youth and innocence,
Their beauty heighten'd by their hopes and fears.
At length the rite is ending. All fall down
In earnest prayer, all of all ranks together;
And, stretching out his hands, the holy man
Proceeds to give the general benediction;
When hark, a din of voices from without,
And shrieks, and groans, and outcries as in battle;
And lo, the door is burst, the curtain rent,
And armed ruffians, robbers from the deep,
Savage, uncouth, led on by Barbarigo,
And his six brothers in their coats of steel,
Are standing on the threshold! Statue-like,
A while they gaze on the fallen multitude,
Each with his sabre up, in act to strike;
Then, as at once recovering from the spell,
Rush forward to the altar, and as soon
Are gone again—amid no clash of arms
Bearing away the maidens and the treasures.
Where are they now?—ploughing the distant waves,
Their sails all set, and they upon the deck
Standing triumphant. To the east they go,
Steering for Istria; their accursed barks
(Well are they known, the galliot and the galley)
Freighted with all that gives to life its value!
The richest argosies were poor to them!
Now might you see the matrons running wild
Along the beach; the men half arm'd and arming,
One with a shield, one with a casque and spear;
One with an axe hewing the mooring-chain
Of some old pinnace. Not a raft, a plank,
But on that day was drifting. In an hour
Half Venice was afloat. But long before,
Frantic with grief and scorning all control,
The youths were gone in a light brigantine,
Lying at anchor near the arsenal;
Each having sworn, and by the holy rood,
To slay or to be slain.
And from the tower
The watchman gives the signal. In the east,
A ship is seen, and making for the port;
Her flag St. Mark's.—And now she turns the point.
Over the waters like a sea-bird flying!
Ha, 'tis the same, 'tis theirs! from stern to prow
Hung with green boughs, she comes, she comes, restoring
All that was lost.
Coasting, with narrow search
Friuli—like a tiger in his spring,
They had surprised the corsairs where they lay
Sharing the spoil in blind security
And casting lots—had slain them, one and all,
All to the last, and flung them far and wide
Into the sea, their proper element;
Him first, as first in rank, whose name so long

* Premi o sta.

Had hush'd the babes of Venice, and who yet,
Breathing a little, in his look retain'd
The fierceness of his soul.
Thus were the brides
Lost and recover'd; and what now remain'd
But to give thanks? Twelve breast-plates and twelve crowns,
Flaming with gems and gold, the votive offerings
Of the young victors to their patron saint,
Vow'd on the field of battle, were ere long
Laid at his feet; and to preserve for ever
The memory of a day so full of change,
From joy to grief, from grief to joy again,
Through many an age, as oft as it came round,
'Twas held religiously with all observance.
The doge resign'd his crimson for pure ermine;
And through the city in a stately barge
Of gold, were borne, with songs and symphonies,
Twelve ladies young and noble. Clad they were
In bridal white with bridal ornaments,
Each in her glittering veil; and on the deck,
As on a burnish'd throne, they glided by;
No window or balcony but adorn'd
With hangings of rich texture, not a roof
But cover'd with beholders, and the air
Vocal with joy. Onward they went, their oars
Moving in concert with the harmony,
Through the Rialto to the ducal palace;
And at a banquet there, served with due honour,
Sate representing, in the eyes of all,
Eyes not unwet, I ween, with grateful tears,
Their lovely ancestors, the brides of Venice.

XVI.

FOSCARI.

Let us lift up the curtain, and observe
What passes in that chamber. Now a sigh,
And now a groan is heard. Then all is still.
Twenty are sitting as in judgment there;
Men who have served their country, and grown gray
In governments and distant embassies,
Men eminent alike in war and peace;
Such as in effigy shall long adorn
The walls of Venice—to show what she has been!
Their garb is black, and black the arras is,
And sad the general aspect. Yet their looks
Are calm, are cheerful; nothing there like grief,
Nothing or harsh or cruel. Still that noise,
That low and dismal moaning.
Half withdrawn,
A little to the left, sits one in crimson,
A venerable man, fourscore and upward.
Cold drops of sweat stand on his furrow'd brow,
His hands are clench'd; his eyes half shut and glazed;
His shrunk and wither'd limbs rigid as marble.
'Tis Foscari, the doge. And there is one,
A young man, lying at his feet, stretch'd out
In torture. 'Tis his son, his only one;
'Tis Giacomo, the blessing of his age,
(Say, has he lived for this?) accused of murder,
The murder of the senator Donato.
Last night the proofs, if proofs they are, were dropt
Into the lion's mouth, the mouth of brass,
That gapes and gorges; and the doge himself
Must sit and look on a beloved son
Suffering the Question.
Twice, to die in peace
To save a falling house, and turn the hearts
Of his fell adversaries, those who now,
Like hell-hounds in full cry, are running down
His last of four, twice did he ask their leave
To lay aside the crown, and they refused him,
An oath exacting, never more to ask it;
And there he sits, a spectacle of wo,
By them, his rivals in the state, compell'd,
Such the refinement of their cruelty,
To keep the place he sigh'd for.
Once again
The screw is turn'd; and, as it turns, the son
Looks up, and, in a faint and broken accent,
Murmurs "My father!" the old man shrinks back,
And in his mantle muffles up his face.
"Art thou not guilty?" says a voice, that once
Would greet the sufferer long before they met,
And on his ear strike like a pleasant music—
"Art thou not guilty?"—"No! indeed I am not"
But all is unavailing. In that court
Groans are confessions; patience, fortitude,
The work of magic; and, released, upheld
For condemnation, from his father's lips
He hears the sentence, "Banishment to Candia:
Death, if he leaves it."
And the bark sets sail;
And he is gone from all he loves—for ever!
His wife, his boys, and his disconsolate parents!
Gone in the dead of night—unseen of any—
Without a word, a look of tenderness,
To be call'd up, when, in his lonely hours,
He would indulge in weeping.
Like a ghost,
Day after day, year after year he haunts
An ancient rampart, that o'erhangs the sea;
Gazing on vacancy, and hourly starting
To answer to the watch——Alas, how changed
From him, the mirror of the youth of Venice,
In whom the slightest thing, or whim, or chance,
Did he but wear his doublet so and so,
All follow'd; at whose nuptials, when at length
He won that maid at once the fairest, noblest,
A daughter of the house of Contarini,
That house as old as Venice, now among
Its ancestors in monumental brass
Numbering eight doges—to convey her home
The bucentaur went forth; and thrice the sun
Shone on the chivalry, that, front to front,
And blaze on blaze reflecting, met and ranged,
To tournay in St. Mark's.
But lo, at last,
Messengers come. He is recall'd: his heart
Leaps at the tidings. He embarks: the boat
Springs to the oar, and back again he goes—
Into that very chamber! there to lie
In his old resting-place, the bed of torture;
And thence look up (five long, long years of grief
Have not kill'd either) on his wretched sire,
Still in that seat—as though he had not left it,
Immovable, enveloped in his mantle.
But now he comes, convicted of a crime
Great by the laws of Venice. Night and day,
Brooding on what he had been, what he was

'Twas more than he could bear. His longing fits
Thicken'd upon him. His desire for home
Became a madness; and, resolved to go,
If but to die, in his despair he writes
A letter to Francesco, Duke of Milan,
Soliciting his influence with the state,
And drops it to be found.—"Would ye know all?
I have transgress'd, offended wilfully;
And am prepared to suffer as I ought.
But let me, let me, if but for an instant,
(Ye must consent—for all of you are sons
Most of you husbands, fathers,) let me first
Indulge the natural feelings of a man,
And, ere I die, if such my sentence be,
Press to my heart ('tis all I ask of you)
My wife, my children—and my aged mother—
Say, is she yet alive?"
He is condemn'd
To go ere set of sun, go whence he came,
A banish'd man—and for a year to breathe
The vapour of a dungeon.—But his prayer
(What could they less?) is granted.
In a hall
Open and crowded by the common rabble,
'Twas there a trembling wife and her four sons
Yet young, a mother, borne along, bedridden,
And an old doge, mustering up all his strength,
That strength how small! assembled now to meet
One so long lost, long mourn'd, one who for them
Had braved so much—death, and yet worse than
death—
To meet him, and to part with him for ever!
Time and their heavy wrongs had changed them
all;
Him most! Yet when the wife, the mother look'd
Again, 'twas he himself, 'twas Giacomo,
Their only hope, and trust, and consolation!
And all clung round him, weeping bitterly;
Weeping the more, because they wept in vain.
Unnerved, unsettled in his mind from long
And exquisite pain, he sobs aloud and cries,
Kissing the old man's cheek, "Help me, my father!
Let me, I pray thee, live once more among you:
Let me go home."—"My son," returns the doge,
Mastering a while his grief, "if I may still
Call thee my son, if thou art innocent,
As I would fain believe," but, as he speaks,
He falls, "submit without a murmur."
Night,
That to the world brought revelry, to them
Brought only food for sorrow. Giacomo
Embark'd—to die; sent to an early grave
For thee, Erizzo, whose death-bed confession,
"He is most innocent! 'Twas I who did it!"
Came when he slept in peace. The ship, that sail'd
Swift as the winds with his recall to honour,
Bore back a lifeless corse. Generous as brave,
Affection, kindness, the sweet offices
Of love and duty, were to him as needful
As was his daily bread;—and to become
A by-word in the meanest mouths of Venice,
Bringing a stain on those who gave him life,
On those, alas! now worse than fatherless—
To be proclaim'd a ruffian, a night-stabber,
He on whom none before had breathed reproach—
He lived but to disprove it. That hope lost,
Death follow'd. From the hour he went, he spoke
not;
And in his dungeon, when he laid him down
He sunk to rise no more. O, if there be
Justice in heaven, and we are assured there is,
A day must come of ample retribution!
Then was thy cup, old man, full to o'erflowing.
But thou wert yet alive; and there was one,
The soul and spring of all that enmity,
Who would not leave thee; fastening on thy flank
Hungering and thirsting, still unsatisfied
One of a name illustrious as thine own!
One of the Ten! one of the Invisible Three!
'Twas Loredano.
When the whelps were gone,
He would dislodge the lion from his den;
And, leading on the pack he long had led,
The miserable pack that ever howl'd
Against fallen greatness, moved that Foscari
Be doge no longer; urging his great age,
His incapacity and nothingness;
Calling a father's sorrows in his chamber
Neglect of duty, anger, contumacy.
"I am most willing to retire," said Foscari:
"But I have sworn, and cannot of myself.
Do with me as ye please."
He was deposed,
He, who had reign'd so long and gloriously;
His ducal bonnet taken from his brow,
His robes stript off, his ring, that ancient symbol,
Broken before him. But now nothing moved
The meekness of his soul. All things alike!
Among the six that came with the decree,
Foscari saw one he knew not, and inquired
His name. "I am the son of Marco Memmo."
"Ah," he replied, "thy father was my friend."
And now he goes. "It is the hour and past.
I have no business here."—"But wilt thou not
Avoid the gazing crowd? That way is private."
"No! as I enter'd, so will I retire."
And leaning on his staff, he left the palace,
His residence for four-and-thirty years,
By the same staircase he came up in splendour,
The staircase of the Giants. Turning round,
When in the court below, he stopt and said,
"My merits brought me hither. I depart,
Driven by the malice of my enemies."
Then through the crowd withdrew, poor as he came
And in his gondola went off, unfollow'
But by the sighs of them that dared not speak.
This journey was his last. When the bell rang
Next day, announcing a new doge to Venice,
It found him on his knees before the altar,
Clasping his aged hands in earnest prayer;
And there he died. Ere half its task was done,
It rang his knell.
But whence the deadly hate
That caused all this—the hate of Loredano!
It was a legacy his father left him,
Who, but for Foscari, had reign'd in Venice,
And, like the venom in the serpent's bag,
Gather'd and grew! Nothing but turn'd to venom:
In vain did Foscari sue for peace, for friendship,
Offering in marriage his fair Isabel.
He changed not; with a dreadful piety,
Studying revenge, listening alone to those

Biblioteka

GINEVRA.

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

Who talk'd of vengeance; grasping by the hand
Those in their zeal (and none, alas! were wanting)
Who came to tell him of another wrong,
Done or imagined. When his father died,
'Twas whisper'd in his ear, "He died by poison!"
He wrote it on the tomb, ('tis there in marble,)
And in his ledger-book—among his debtors—
Enter'd the name "Francesco Foscari,"
And added, "For the murder of my father."
Leaving a blank—to be fill'd up hereafter.
When Foscari's noble heart at length gave way
He took the volume from the shelf again
Calmly, and with his pen fill'd up the blank,
Inscribing, "He has paid me."

Ye who sit,
Brooding from day to day, from day to day
Chewing the bitter cud, and starting up
As though the hour was come to whet your fangs,
And, like the Pisan,* gnaw the hairy scalp
Of him who had offended—if ye must,
Sit and brood on; but O! forbear to teach
The lesson to your children.

XVII.

ARQUA.

There is, within three leagues and less of Padua,
(The Paduan student knows it, honours it,)
A lonely tombstone in a mountain churchyard;
And I arrived there as the sun declined
Low in the west. The gentle airs, that breathe
Fragrance at eve, were rising, and the birds
Singing their farewell song—the very song
They sung the night that tomb received a tenant;
When, as alive, clothed in his canon's habit,
And, slowly winding down the narrow path,
He came to rest there. Nobles of the land,
Princes, and prelates mingled in his train,
Anxious by any act, while yet they could,
To catch a ray of glory by reflection;
And from that hour have kindred spirits flock'd
From distant countries, from the north, the south,
To see where he is laid.

Twelve years ago,
When I descended the impetuous Rhone,
Its vineyards of such great and old renown,
Its castles, each with some romantic tale,
Vanishing fast—the pilot at the stern,
He who had steer'd so long, standing aloft,
His eyes on the white breakers, and his hands
On what at once served him for oar and rudder,
A huge misshapen plank—the bark itself
Frail and uncouth, launch'd to return no more,
Such as a shipwreck'd man might hope to build,
Urged by the love of home—when I descended
Two long, long days' silence, suspense on board,
It was to offer at thy fount, Valclusa,
Entering the arch'd cave, to wander where
Petrarch had wander'd, in a trance to sit
Where in his peasant dress he loved to sit,
Musing, reciting—on some rock moss-grown,
Or the fantastic root of some old fig tree,
That drinks the living waters as they stream
Over their emerald bed; and could I now
Neglect to visit Arqua, where, at last,

* Count Ugolino.

When he had done and settled with the world,
When all the illusions of his youth were fled,
Indulged perhaps too long, cherish'd too fondly,
He came for the conclusion? Halfway up
He built his house, whence as by stealth he caught,
Among the hills, a glimpse of busy life,
That soothed, not stirr'd.—But knock, and enter in
This was his chamber. 'Tis as when he left it;
As if he now were busy in his garden.
And this his closet. Here he sate and read.
This was his chair; and in it, unobserved,
Reading, or thinking of his absent friends,
He pass'd away as in a quiet slumber.

Peace to this region! Peace to all who dwell here.
They know his value—every coming step,
That gathers round the children from their play,
Would tell them if they knew not.—But could aught,
Ungentle or ungenerous, spring up
Where he is sleeping; where, and in an age
Of savage warfare and blind bigotry,
He cultured all that could refine, exalt;
Leading to better things?

XVIII.

GINEVRA.

If ever you should come to Modena,
Where among other trophies may be seen
Tassoni's bucket, (in its chain it hangs,
Within that reverend tower, the Guirlandina,)
Stop at a palace near the Reggio-gate,
Dwelt in of old by one of the Orsini,
Its noble gardens, terrace above terrace,
And rich in fountains, statues, cypresses,
Will long detain you—but, before you go,
Enter the house—forget it not, I pray—
And look a while upon a picture there.

'Tis of a lady in her earliest youth,
The last of that illustrious family;
Done by Zampieri—but by whom I care not.
He, who observes it—ere he passes on,
Gazes his fill, and comes and comes again,
That he may call it up, when far away.

She sits, inclining forward as to speak,
Her lips half open, and her finger up,
As though she said "Beware!" her vest of gold
Broider'd with flowers, and clasp'd from head to foot
An emerald stone in every golden clasp;
And on her brow, fairer than alabaster,
A coronet of pearls.

But then her face,
So lovely, yet so arch, so full of mirth,
The overflowings of an innocent heart—
It haunts me still, though many a year has fled,
Like some wild melody!

Alone it hangs
Over a mouldering heir-loom, its companion,
An oaken chest, half eaten by the worm,
But richly carved by Antony of Trent
With Scripture stories from the Life of Christ;
A chest that came from Venice, and had held
The ducal robes of some old ancestor—
That by the way—it may be true or false—
But don't forget the picture; and you will not,
When you have heard the tale they told me there.

She was an only child—her name Ginevra,
The joy the pride of an indulgent father;

And in her fifteenth year became a bride,
Marrying an only son, Francesco Doria,
Her playmate from her birth, and her first love.
Just as she looks there in her bridal dress,
She was all gentleness, all gayety,
Her pranks the favourite theme of every tongue.
But now the day was come, the day, the hour;
Now frowning, smiling, for the hundredth time,
The nurse, that ancient lady, preach'd decorum;
And, in the lustre of her youth, she gave
Her hand, with her heart in it, to Francesco.
Great was the joy; but at the nuptial feast,
When all sate down, the bride herself was wanting.
Nor was she to be found! Her father cried,
"'Tis but to make a trial of our love!"
And fill'd his glass to all; but his hand shook,
And soon from guest to guest the panic spread
'Twas but that instant she had left Francesco,
Laughing, and looking back, and flying still,
Her ivory tooth imprinted on his finger.
But now, alas! she was not to be found;
Nor from that hour could any thing be guess'd,
But that she was not!
Weary of his life,
Francesco flew to Venice, and, embarking,
Flung it away in battle with the Turk.
Orsini lived—and long might you have seen
An old man wandering as in quest of something,
Something he could not find—he knew not what.
When he was gone, the house remain'd a while
Silent and tenantless—then went to strangers.
Full fifty years were past, and all forgotten.
When on an idle day, a day of search
'Mid the old lumber in the gallery,
That mouldering chest was noticed; and 'twas said
By one as young, as thoughtless as Ginevra,
"Why not remove it from its lurking-place?"
'Twas done as soon as said; but on the way
It burst, it fell; and lo, a skeleton,
With here and there a pearl, an emerald stone,
A golden clasp, clasping a shred of gold.
All else had perish'd—save a wedding ring,
And a small seal, her mother's legacy,
Engraven with a name, the name of both,
"Ginevra."
There then had she found a grave!
Within that chest had she conceal'd herself,
Fluttering with joy, the happiest of the happy;
When a spring lock, that lay in ambush there,
Fasten'd her down for ever!

XIX.

BOLOGNA.

'Twas night; the noise and bustle of the day
Were o'er. The mountebank no longer wrought
Miraculous cures—he and his stage were gone;
And he who, when the crisis of his tale
Came, and all stood breathless with hope and fear,
Sent round his cap; and he who thrumm'd his wire
And sang, with pleading look and plaintive strain
Melting the passenger. Thy thousand cries,*
So well portray'd, and by a son of thine,
Whose voice had swell'd the hubbub in his youth,
Were hush'd, Bologna; silence in the streets,
The squares, when hark, the clattering of fleet hoofs
And soon a courier, posting as from far,
Housing and holster, boot and belted coat,
And doublet, stain'd with many a various soil,
Stopt and alighted. 'Twas where hangs aloft
That ancient sign, the pilgrim, welcoming
All who arrive there, all, perhaps, save those
Clad like himself, with staff and scallop-shell,
Those on a pilgrimage; and now approach'd
Wheels, through the lofty porticoes resounding,
Arch beyond arch, a shelter or a shade
As the sky changes. To the gate they came;
And, ere the man had half his story done,
Mine host received the master—one long used
To sojourn among strangers, everywhere
(Go where he would, along the wildest track)
Flinging a charm that shall not soon be lost,
And leaving footsteps to be traced by those
Who love the haunts of genius; one who saw,
Observed, nor shunn'd the busy scenes of life,
But mingled not, and, 'mid the din, the stir,
Lived as a separate spirit.
Much had pass'd,
Since last we parted; and those five short years—
Much had they told! His clustering locks were turn'd
Gray; nor did aught recall the youth that swam
From Sestos to Abydos. Yet his voice,
Still it was sweet; still from his eye the thought
Flash'd lightning-like, nor linger'd on the way,
Waiting for words. Far, far into the night
We sate, conversing—no unwelcome hour,
The hour we met; and, when Aurora rose,
Rising, we climb'd the rugged Apennine.
Well I remember how the golden sun
Fill'd with its beams th' unfathomable gulfs,
As on we travell'd, and along the ridge,
'Mid groves of cork, and cistus, and wild fig,
His motley household came—Not last nor least,
Battista, who, upon the moonlight sea
Of Venice, had so ably, zealously
Served, and, at parting, flung his oar away
To follow through the world; who without stain
Had worn so long that honourable badge,*
The gondolier's, in a patrician house
Arguing unlimited trust.—Not last nor least,
Thou, though declining in thy beauty and strength,
Faithful Moretto, to the latest hour
Guarding his chamber door, and now along
The silent, sullen strand of Missolonghi
Howling in grief.
He had just left that place
Of old renown, once in the Adrian sea,†
Ravenna; where, from Dante's sacred tomb
He had so oft, as many a verse declares,‡
Drawn inspiration; where, at twilight time,
Through the pine forest wandering with loose rein,
Wandering and lost, he had so oft beheld§

* See the Cries of Bologna, as drawn by Annibal Caracci. He was of very humble origin; and, to correct his brother's vanity, once sent him a portrait of their father, tailor, threading his needle.

* The principal gondolier, il fante di poppa, was almost always in the confidence of his master, and employed on occasions that required judgment and address.

† Adrianum mare.—*Cic.*

‡ See the prophecy of Dante.

§ See the tale as told by Boccaccio and Dryden.

(What is not visible to a poet's eye?)
The spectre knight, the hell-hounds and their prey,
The chase, the slaughter, and the festal mirth
Suddenly blasted. 'Twas a theme he loved;
But others claim'd their turn; and many a tower,
Shatter'd, uprooted from its native rock,
Its strength the pride of some heroic age,
Appear'd and vanish'd, (many a sturdy steer*
Yoked and unyoked,) while as in happier days
He pour'd his spirit forth. The past forgot,
All was enjoyment. Not a cloud obscured
Present or future.

He is now at rest;
And praise and blame fall on his ear alike,
Now dull in death. Yes, Byron, thou art gone,
Gone like a star that through the firmament
Shot and was lost, in its eccentric course
Dazzling, perplexing. Yet thy heart, methinks,
Was generous, noble—noble in its scorn
Of all things low or little; nothing there
Sordid or servile. If imagined wrongs
Pursued thee, urging thee sometimes to do
Things long regretted, oft, as many know,
None more than I, thy gratitude would build
On slight foundations: and, if in thy life
Not happy, in thy death thou surely wert,—
Thy wish accomplish'd; dying in the land
Where thy young mind had caught ethereal fire,
Dying in Greece, and in a cause so glorious!

They in thy train—ah, little did they think,
As round we went, that they so soon should sit
Mourning beside thee, while a nation mourn'd,
Changing her festal for her funeral song;
That they so soon should hear the minute-gun,
As morning gleam'd on what remain'd of thee,
Roll o'er the sea, the mountains, numbering
Thy years of joy and sorrow.

Thou art gone;
And he who would assail thee in thy grave,
O, let him pause! For who among us all,
Tried as thou wert—e'en from thine earliest years,
When wandering, yet unspoilt, a highland boy—
Tried as thou wert, and with thy soul of flame;
Pleasure, while yet the down was on thy cheek,
Upliftung, pressing, and to lips like thine,
Her charmed cup—ah, who among us all
Could say he had not err'd as much, and more?

XX.

FLORENCE.

Of all the fairest cities of the earth,
None are so fair as Florence. 'Tis a gem
Of purest ray, a treasure for a casket!
And what a glorious lustre did it shed
When it emerged from darkness! Search within,
Without, all is enchantment! 'Tis the past
Contending with the present; and in turn
Each has the mastery.

In this chapel wrought
Massaccio; and he slumbers underneath.
Wouldst thou behold his monument? Look round!
And know that where we stand, stood oft and long,
Oft till the day was gone, Raphael himself,
He and his haughty rival—patiently,
Humbly, to learn of those who came before,
To steal a spark from their authentic fire,
Theirs, who first broke the gloom, sons of the morning.

There, on the seat that runs along the wall,
South of the church, east of the belfry tower,
(Thou canst not miss it,) in the sultry time
Would Dante sit conversing, and with those
Who little thought that in his hand he held
The balance, and assign'd at his good pleasure
To each his place in the invisible world,
To some an upper, some a lower region;
Reserving in his secret mind a niche
For thee, Saltrello, who with quirks of law
Hadst plagued him sore, and carefully requiting
Such as ere long condemn'd his mortal part
To fire. Sit down a while—then by the gates
Wondrously wrought, so beautiful, so glorious,
That they might serve to be the gates of heaven,
Enter the baptistery. That place he loved,
Calling it his! And in his visits there
Well might he take delight! For, when a child,
Playing, with venturous feet, near and yet nearer
One of the fonts, fell in, he flew and saved him.
Flew with an energy, a violence,
That broke the marble—a mishap ascribed
To evil motives; his, alas! to lead
A life of trouble, and ere long to leave
All things most dear to him, ere long to know
How salt another's bread is, and how toilsome
The going up and down another's stairs.

Nor then forget that chamber of the dead,
Where the gigantic forms of night and day,
Turn'd into stone, rest everlastingly,
Yet still are breathing; and shed round at noon
A two-fold influence—only to be felt—
A light, a darkness, mingling each with each;
Both and yet neither. There, from age to age
Two ghosts are sitting on their sepulchres.
That is the duke Lorenzo. Mark him well.
He meditates, his head upon his hand.
What scowls beneath his broad and helm-like bonnet?
Is it a face, or but an eyeless skull?
'Tis hid in shade; yet, like the basilisk,
It fascinates, and is intolerable.
His mien is noble, most majestical!
Then most so, when the distant choir is heard,
At morn or eve—nor fail thou to attend
On that thrice-hallow'd day, when all are there;
When all, propitiating with solemn songs,
With light, and frankincense, and holy water,
Visit the dead. Then wilt thou feel his power

But let not sculpture, painting, poesy,
Or they, the masters of these mighty spells,
Detain us. Our first homage is to virtue.
Where, in what dungeon of the citadel
(It must be known—the writing on the wall
Cannot be gone—'twas cut in with his dagger,
Ere, on his knees to God, he slew himself,)
Where, in what dungeon, did Filippo Strozzi,
The last, the greatest of the men of Florence,
Breathe out his soul—lest in his agony,

* They wait for the traveller's carriage at the foot of every hill.

When on the rack and call'd upon to answer,
He might accuse the guiltless.
That debt paid,
But with a sigh, a tear for human frailty,
We may return, and once more give a loose
To the delighted spirit—worshipping,
In her small temple of rich workmanship,*
Venus herself, who, when she left the skies,
Came hither.

XXI.

DON GARZIA.

Among the awful forms that stand assembled
In the great square of Florence, may be seen
That Cosmo, not the father of his country,
Not he so styled, but he who play'd the tyrant.
Clad in rich armour like a paladin,
But with his helmet off—in kingly state,
Aloft he sits upon his horse of brass;
And they, who read the legend underneath,
Go and pronounce him happy. Yet there is
A chamber at Grosseto, that, if walls
Could speak, and tell of what is done within,
Would turn your admiration into pity.
Half of what pass'd died with him; but the rest
All he discover'd when the fit was on,
All that, by those who listen'd, could be glean'd
From broken sentences and starts in sleep,
Is told, and by an honest chronicler.

Two of his sons, Giovanni and Garzia,
(The eldest had not seen his sixteenth summer,)
Went to the chase; but one of them, Giovanni,
His best beloved, the glory of his house,
Return'd not; and at close of day was found
Bathed in his innocent blood. Too well, alas!
The trembling Cosmo guess'd the deed, the doer;
And having caused the body to be borne
In secret to that chamber—at an hour
When all slept sound, save the disconsolate mother,†
Who little thought of what was yet to come,
And lived but to be told—he bade Garzia
Arise and follow him. Holding in one hand
A winking lamp, and in the other a key
Massive and dungeon-like, thither he led;
And having enter'd in and lock'd the door,
The father fix'd his eyes upon the son,
And closely questioned him. No change betray'd
Or guilt or fear. Then Cosmo lifted up
The bloody sheet, "Look there! Look there!" he cried,
"Blood calls for blood—and from a father's hand!
—Unless thyself wilt save him that sad office.
What!" he exclaim'd, when, shuddering at the sight,
The boy breathed out, "I stood but on my guard."
"Darest thou then blacken one who never wrong'd thee,
Who would not set his foot upon a worm?—
Yes, thou must die, lest others fall by thee,
And thou shouldst be the slayer of us all."
Then from Garzia's side he took the dagger,
That fatal one which spilt his brother's blood;
And, kneeling on the ground, "Great God!" he cried,
"Grant me the strength to do an act of justice.
Thou knowest what it costs me; but, alas!
How can I spare myself, sparing none else.
Grant me the strength, the will—and O forgive
The sinful soul of a most wretched son.
'Tis a most wretched father who implores it."
Long on Garzia's neck he hung, and wept
Tenderly, long press'd him to his bosom;
And then, but while he held him by the arm,
Thrusting him backward, turn'd away his face,
And stabb'd him to the heart.
Well might De Thou,
When in his youth he came to Cosmo's court,
Think on the past; and, as he wander'd through
The ancient palace—through those ample spaces
Silent, deserted—stop a while to dwell
Upon two portraits there, drawn on the wall
Together, as of two in bonds of love,
One in a cardinal's habit, one in black,
Those of the unhappy brothers, and infer
From the deep silence that his questions drew,
The terrible truth.
Well might he heave a sigh
For poor humanity, when he beheld
That very Cosmo shaking o'er his fire,
Drowsy and deaf and inarticulate,
Wrapt in his night-gown, o'er a sick man's mess,
In the last stage—death-struck and deadly pale;
His wife, another, not his Eleonora,
At once his nurse and his interpreter.

* The Tribune. † Eleonora di Toledo.

XXII.

THE CAMPAGNA OF FLORENCE.

'Tis morning. Let us wander through the fields,
Where Cimabuè found a shepherd boy*
Tracing his idle fancies on the ground;
And let us from the top of Fiesole,
Whence Galileo's glass by night observed
The phases of the moon, look round below
On Arno's vale, where the dove-colour'd oxen
Are ploughing up and down among the vines,
While many a careless note is sung aloud,
Filling the air with sweetness—and on thee,
Beautiful Florence, all within thy walls,
Thy groves and gardens, pinnacles and towers,
Drawn to our feet.
From that small spire, just caught
By the bright ray, that church among the rest
By one of old distinguish'd as the bride,
Let us pursue in thought (what can we better?)
Those who assembled there at matin prayers;†
Who, when vice revell'd, and along the street
Tables were set, what time the bearer's bell
Rang to demand the dead at every door,
Came out into the meadows; and, a while
Wandering in idleness, but not in folly,
Sate down in the high grass and in the shade
Of many a tree sun proof—day after day,
When all was still and nothing to be heard
But the Cicala's voice among the olives,
Relating in a ring, to banish care,
Their hundred novels.
Round the hill they went
Round underneath—first to a splendid house,
Gherardi, as an old tradition runs,
That on the left, just rising from the vale;

* Giotto. † See the Decameron. First Day

A place for luxury—the painted rooms,
The open galleries and middle court
Not unprepared, fragrant and gay with flowers.
Then westward to another, nobler yet;
That on the right, now known as the Palmieri,
Where art with nature vied—a paradise,
With verdurous walls, and many a trellis'd walk
All rose and jasmine, many a forest vista
Cross'd by the deer. Then to the Ladies' Valley;
And the clear lake, that seem'd as by enchantment
To lift up to the surface every stone
Of lustre there, and the diminutive fish
Innumerable, dropt with crimson and gold,
Now motionless, now glancing to the sun.
Who has not dwelt on their voluptuous day?
The morning banquet by the fountain side,
The dance that follow'd, and the noontide slumber;
Then the tales told in turn, as round they lay
On carpets, the fresh waters murmuring;
And the short interval fill'd up with games
Of chess, and talk, and reading old romances,
Till supper time, when many a siren voice
Sung down the stars, and in the grass the torches
Burn'd brighter for their absence.
He* whose dream
It was (it was no more) sleeps in Val d'Elsa,
Sleeps in the church, where (in his ear I ween)
The friar pour'd out his catalogue of treasures;
A ray, imprimis, of the star that shone
To the wise men; a phial full of sounds,
The musical chimes of the great bells that hung
In Solomon's temple; and, though last not least
A feather from the angel Gabriel's wing
Dropt in the virgin's chamber.
That dark ridge
Stretching away in the south-east, conceals it;
Not so his lowly roof and scanty farm,
His copse and rill, if yet a trace be left,
Who lived in Val di Pesa, suffering long
Exile and want, and the keen shafts of malice,
With an unclouded mind.† The glimmering tower
On the gray rock beneath, his landmark once,
Now serves for ours, and points out where he ate
His bread with cheerfulness.
Who sees him not
('Tis his own sketch—he drew it from himself)
Playing the bird-catcher, and sallying forth
In an autumnal morn, laden with cages,
To catch a thrush on every lime-twig there;
Or in the wood among his woodcutters;
Or in the tavern by the highway side
At tric-trac with the miller; or at night,
Doffing his rustic suit, and, duly clad,
Entering his closet, and, among his books,
Among the great of every age and clime,
A numerous court, turning to whom he pleased,
Questioning each why he did this or that,
And learning how to overcome the fear
Of poverty and death?
Nearer we hail
Thy sunny slope, Arcetri, sung of old
For its green wine—dearer to me, to most,
As dwelt on by that great astronomer,‡
Seven years a prisoner at the city gate,
Let in but in his grave clothes. Sacred be
His cottage, (justly was it call'd the Jewel!)
Sacred the vineyard, where, while yet his sight
Glimmer'd, at blush of dawn he dress'd his vines,
Chanting aloud in gayety of heart
Some verse of Ariosto. There, unseen,
In manly beauty Milton stood before him,
Gazing with reverent awe—Milton, his guest,
Just then come forth, all life and enterprise;
He in his old age and extremity,
Blind, at noonday exploring with his staff;
His eyes upturn'd as to the golden sun,
His eyeballs idly rolling. Little then
Did Galileo think whom he bade welcome;
That in his hand he held the hand of one
Who could requite him—who would spread his name
O'er lands and seas—great as himself, nay greater;
Milton as little that in him he saw,
As in a glass, what he himself should be,
Destined so soon to fall on evil days
And evil tongues—so soon, alas! to live
In darkness, and with dangers compass'd round,
And solitude.
Well pleased, could we pursue
The Arno, from his birthplace in the clouds,
So near the yellow Tiber's—springing up
From his four fountains on the Apennine,
That mountain ridge a sea-mark to the ships
Sailing on either sea. Downward he runs,
Scattering fresh verdure through the desolate wild
Down by the City of Hermits, and, ere long,
The venerable woods of Vallombrosa;
Then through these gardens to the Tuscan sea,
Reflecting castles, convents, villages,
And those great rivals in an elder day,
Florence and Pisa—who have given him fame,
Fame everlasting, but who stain'd so oft
His troubled waters. Oft, alas! were seen,
When flight, pursuit, and hideous rout were there
Hands, clad in gloves of steel, held up imploring;
The man, the hero, on his foaming steed,
Borne underneath—already in the realms
Of darkness.
Nor did night or burning noon
Bring respite. Oft, as that great artist saw,*
Whose pencil had a voice, the cry "To arms!"
And the shrill trumpet, hurried up the bank
Those who had stolen an hour to breast the tide,
And wash from their unharness'd limbs the blood
And sweat of battle. Sudden was the rush,
Violent the tumult; for, already in sight,
Nearer and nearer yet the danger drew;
Each every sinew straining, every feature,
Each snatching up, and girding, buckling on,
Morion, and greave, and shirt of twisted mail,
As for his life—no more, perchance, to taste,
Arno, the grateful freshness of thy glades,
Thy waters—where, exulting, he had felt
A swimmer's transport, there, alas! to float
And welter. Nor between the gusts of war,
When flocks were feeding, and the shepherd's pipe
Gladden'd the valley, when, but not unarm'd,
The sower came forth, and, following him who
plough'd,

* Boccaccio † Machiavel. ‡ Galileo.

* Michael Angelo.

Threw in the seed—did thy indignant waves
Escape pollution. Sullen was the splash,
Heavy and swift the plunge, when they received
The key that just had grated on the ear
Of Ugolino—closing up for ever
That dismal dungeon henceforth to be named
The Tower of Famine.
Once indeed 'twas thine,
When many a winter flood, thy tributary,
Was through its rocky glen rushing, resounding,
And thou wert in thy might, to save, restore
A charge most precious. To the nearest ford,
Hastening, a horseman from Arezzo came,
Careless, impatient of delay, a babe
Slung in a basket to the knotty staff
That lay athwart his saddle-bow. He spurs,
He enters; and his horse, alarm'd, perplex'd,
Halts in the midst. Great is the stir, the strife;
And lo, an atom on that dangerous sea,
The babe is floating! Fast and far he flies;
Now tempest rock'd, now whirling round and round,
But not to perish. By thy willing waves
Borne to the shore, among the bulrushes
The ark has rested; and unhurt, secure
As on his mother's breast he sleeps within,
All peace! or never had the nations heard
That voice so sweet, which still enchants, inspires;
That voice, which sung of love, of liberty.
Petrarch lay there!——And such the images
That cluster'd round our Milton, when at eve
Reclined beside thee, Arno; when at eve,
Led on by thee, he wander'd with delight,
Framing Ovidian verse, and through thy groves
Gathering wild myrtle. Such the poet's dreams;
Yet not such only. For look round and say,
Where is the ground that did not drink warm blood,
The echo that had learnt not to articulate
The cry of murder?—Fatal was the day
To Florence, when—('twas in a street behind
The church and convent of the Holy Cross—
There is the house—that house of the Donati,
Towerless, and left long since, but to the last
Braving assault—all rugged, all emboss'd
Below, and still distinguished by the rings
Of brass, that held in war and festival time
Their family standards)—fatal was the day
To Florence, when, at morn, at the ninth hour,
A noble dame in weeds of widowhood,
Weeds to be worn hereafter by so many,
Stood at her door; and, like a sorceress, flung
Her dazzling spell. Subtle she was, and rich,
Rich in a hidden pearl of heavenly light,
Her daughter's beauty; and too well she knew
Its virtue! Patiently she stood and watch'd;
Nor stood alone—but spoke not.—In her breast
Her purpose lay; and, as a youth pass'd by,
Clad for the nuptial rite, she smiled and said,
Lifting a corner of the maiden's veil,
"This had I treasured up in secret for thee.
This hast thou lost!" He gazed, and was undone!
Forgetting—not forgot—he broke the bond,
And paid the penalty, losing his life
At the bridge foot; and hence a world of wo!
Vengeance for vengeance crying, blood for blood;
No intermission! Law, that slumbers not,
And, like the angel with the flaming sword,
Sits over all, at once chastising, healing,
Himself th' avenger, went; and every street
Ran red with mutual slaughter—though sometimes
The young forgot the lessons they had learnt,
And loved when they should hate—like thee, Imelda,
Thee and thy Paolo. When last ye met
In that still hour—(the heat, the glare was gone,
Not so the splendour—through the cedar grove
A radiance stream'd like a consuming fire,
As though the glorious orb, in its descent,
Had come and rested there)—when last ye met,
And those relentless brothers dragg'd him forth,
It had been well hadst thou slept on, Imelda,
Nor from thy trance of fear awaked, as night
Fell on that fatal spot, to wish thee dead,
To track him by his blood, to search, to find,
Then fling thee down to catch a word, a look,
A sigh, if yet thou couldst, (alas! thou couldst not,)
And die, unseen, unthought of—from the wound
Sucking the poison.
Yet, when slavery came,
Worse follow'd. Genius, valour left the land,
Indignant—all that had from age to age
Adorn'd, ennobled; and headlong they fell,
Tyrant and slave. For deeds of violence,
Done in broad day and more than half redeem'd
By many a great and generous sacrifice
Of self to others, came the unpledged bowl,
The stab of the stiletto. Gliding by
Unnoticed, in slouch'd hat and muffling cloak,
That just discover'd, Caravaggio-like,
A swarthy cheek, black brow, and eye of flame.
The bravo took his stand, and o'er the shoulder
Plunged to the hilt, or from beneath the rib
Slanting (a surer path, as some averr'd)
Struck upward—then slunk off, or, if pursued,
Made for the sanctuary, and there along
The glimmering aisle, among the worshippers,
Wander'd with restless step and jealous look,
Dropping thick gore.
Misnamed to lull suspicion,
In every palace was the laboratory,
Where he within brew'd poisons swift and slow,
That scatter'd terror till all things seem'd poisonous
And brave men trembled if a hand held out
A nosegay or a letter; while the great
Drank from the Venice-glass, that broke, that
shiver'd,
If aught malignant, aught of thine was there,
Cruel Tophana; and pawn'd provinces
For the miraculous gem that to the wearer
Gave signs infallible of coming ill,
That clouded though the vehicle of death
Were an invisible perfume.
Happy then
The guest to whom at sleeping time 'twas said,
But in an under voice, (a lady's page
Speaks in no louder,) "Pass not on. That door
Leads to another which awaits your coming,
One in the floor—now left, alas! unbolted,
No eye detects it—lying under foot,
Just as you enter, at the threshold-stone;
Ready to fall and plunge you into darkness,
Darkness and long oblivion!"
Then, indeed.
Where lurk'd not danger? Through the fairy land

No seat of pleasure glittering halfway down,
No hunting place—but with some damning spot
That will not be wash'd out! There, at Caïano,
Where, when the hawks were hooded and night came,
Pulci would set the table in a roar
With his wild lay—there, where the sun descends,
And hill and dale are lost, veil'd with his beams,
The fair Venetian* died—she and her lord,
Died of a posset drugg'd by him who sate
And saw them suffer, flinging back the charge,
The murderer on the murder'd.
Sobs of grief,
Sounds inarticulate—suddenly stopt,
And follow'd by a struggle and a gasp,
A gasp in death, are heard yet in Cerreto,
Along the marble halls and staircases,
Nightly at twelve; and, at the selfsame hour,
Shrieks, such as penetrate the inmost soul,
Such as awake the innocent babe to long,
Long wailing, echo through the emptiness
Of that old den far up among the hills,
Frowning on him who comes from Pietra-Mala:
In them, in both, within five days and less,
Two unsuspecting victims, passing fair,
Welcomed with kisses, and slain cruelly,
One with the knife, one with the fatal noose.
But lo, the sun is setting; earth and sky
One blaze of glory—What but now we saw
As though it were not, though it had not been!
He lingers yet, and, lessening to a point,
Shines like the eye of heaven—then withdraws;
And from the zenith to the utmost skirts
All is celestial red! The hour is come,
When they that sail along the distant seas
Languish for home; and they that in the morn
Said to sweet friends "Farewell," melt as at parting;
When, journeying on, the pilgrim, if he hears,
As now we hear it, echoing round the hill,
The bell that seems to mourn the dying day,
Slackens his pace and sighs, and those he loved
Loves more than ever. But who feels it not?
And well may we, for we are far away.
Let us retire, and hail it in our hearts.

PART II.

I.

THE PILGRIM.

It was an hour of universal joy,
The lark was up and at the gate of heaven,
Singing, as sure to enter when he came;
The butterfly was basking in my path,
His radiant wings unfolded. From below
The bell of prayer rose slowly, plaintively;
And odours, such as welcome in the day
Such as salute the early traveller,
And come and go, each sweeter than the last,
Were rising. Hill and valley breathed delight;
And not a living thing but bless'd the hour.
In every bush and brake there was a voice
Responsive!
From the Thrasymene, that now
Slept in the sun, a lake of molten gold,
And from the shore that once, when armies met,
Rock'd to and fro unfelt, so terrible
The rage, the slaughter, I had turn'd away;
The path, that led me, leading through a wood,
A fairy wilderness of fruits and flowers,
And by a brook that, in the day of strife,
Ran blood, but now runs amber—when a glade,
Far, far within, sunn'd only at noonday,
Suddenly open'd. Many a bench was there,
Each round its ancient elm; and many a track
Well known to them that from the highway love
A while to deviate. In the midst a cross
Of mouldering stone as in a temple stood,
Solemn, severe; coeval with the trees
That round it in majestic order rose;
And on the lowest step a pilgrim knelt,
Clasping his hands in prayer. He was the first
Yet seen by me, (save in a midnight mask,
A revel, where none cares to play his part,
And they that speak at once dissolve the charm,)
The first in sober truth, no counterfeit;
And, when his orisons were duly paid,
He rose, and we exchanged, as all are wont,
A traveller's greeting.
Young, and of an age
When youth is most attractive, when a light
Plays round and round, reflected, if I err not,
From some attendant spirit, that ere long
(His charge relinquish'd with a sigh, a tear)
Wings his flight upward—with a look he won
My favour; and, the spell of silence broke,
I could not but continue.
"Whence," I ask'd,
"Whence art thou?"—"From Mont'alto," he replied,
"My native village in the Apennines."
"And whither journeying?"—"To the holy shrine
Of Saint Antonio, in the city of Padua.
Perhaps, if thou hast ever gone so far,
Thou wilt direct my course."—"Most willingly;
But thou hast much to do, much to endure,
Ere thou hast enter'd where the silver lamps
Burn ever. Tell me—I would not transgress,
Yet ask I must—what could have brought thee forth,
Nothing in act or thought to be atoned for?"—
"It was a vow I made in my distress.
We were so blest, none were so blest as we,
Till sickness came. First, as death-struck, I fell
Then my beloved sister; and ere long,
Worn with continual watchings, night and day,
Our saint-like mother. Worse and worse she grew;
And in my anguish, my despair, I vow'd,
That if she lived, if Heaven restored her to us,
I would forthwith, and in a pilgrim's weeds,
Visit that holy shrine. My vow was heard;
And therefore am I come."—"Thou hast done well
And may those weeds, so reverenced of old,
Guard thee in danger!"—
"They are nothing worth
But they are worn in humble confidence;
Nor would I for the richest robe resign them,
Wrought, as they were, by those I love so well,

* Bianca Capello.

Lauretta and my sister; theirs the task,
But none to them, a pleasure, a delight,
To ply their utmost skill, and send me forth
As best became this service. Their last words,
'Fare thee well, Carlo. We shall count the hours!'
Will not go from me."—
"Health and strength be thine
In thy long travel! May no sunbeam strike;
No vapour cling and wither! Mayst thou be,
Sleeping or waking, sacred and secure!
And, when again thou comest, thy labour done,
Joy be among ye! In that happy hour
All will pour forth to bid thee welcome, Carlo;
And there is one, or I am much deceived,
One thou hast named, who will not be the last."—
"O, she is true as truth itself can be!
But ah, thou know'st her not. Would that thou couldst!
My steps I quicken when I think of her;
For, though they take me further from her door,
I shall return the sooner."

II.

AN INTERVIEW.

PLEASURE, that comes unlook'd-for, is thrice welcome;
And, if it stir the heart, if aught be there
That may hereafter, in a thoughtful hour,
Wake but a sigh, 'tis treasured up among
The things most precious; and the day it came
Is noted as a white day in our lives.
The sun was wheeling westward, and the cliffs
And nodding woods, that everlastingly
(Such the dominion of thy mighty voice,
Thy voice, Velino, utter'd in the mist)
Hear thee and answer thee, were left at length
For others still as noon; and on we stray'd
From wild to wilder, nothing hospitable
Seen up or down, no bush or green or dry,
That ancient symbol at the cottage door,
Offering refreshment—when Luigi cried,
"Well, of a thousand tracts we chose the best!"
And, turning round an oak, oracular once,
Now lightning-struck, a cave, a thoroughfare
For all that came, each entrance a broad arch,
Whence many a deer, rustling his velvet coat,
Had issued, many a gipsy and her brood
Peer'd forth, then housed again—the floor yet gray
With ashes, and the sides, where roughest, hung
Loosely with locks of hair—I look'd and saw
What, seen in such an hour by Sancho Panza,
Had given his honest countenance a breadth,
His cheeks a flush of pleasure and surprise,
Unknown before, had chain'd him to the spot,
And thou, Sir Knight, hadst traversed hill and dale
Squire-less.
Below and winding far away,
A narrow glade unfolded, such as spring
Broiders with flowers, and, when the moon is high,
The hare delights to race in, scattering round
The silvery dews. Cedar and cypress threw
Singly their length of shadow, checkering
The greensward, and, what grew in frequent tufts,
An underwood of myrtle, that by fits
Sent up a gale of fragrance. Through the midst,
Redeeming, as it ran, purple and gold,
A rainbow's splendour, (somewhere in the east
Rain-drops were falling fast,) a rivulet
Sported as loath to go; and on the bank
Stood (in the eyes of one, if not of both,
Worth all the rest and more) a sumpter-mule
Well laden, while two menials as in haste
Drew from his ample panniers, ranging round
Viands and fruits on many a shining salver,
And plunging in the cool translucent wave
Flasks of delicious wine.
Anon a horn
Blew, through the champaign bidding to the feast,
Its jocund note to other ears address'd,
Not ours; and, slowly coming by a path
That, ere it issued from an ilex grove,
Was seen far inward, though along the glade
Distinguish'd only by a fresher verdure,
Peasants approach'd, one leading in a leash
Beagles yet panting, one with various game,
In rich confusion slung, before, behind,
Leveret, and quail, and pheasant. All announced
The chase as over; and ere long appear'd
Their horses, full of fire, champing the curb,
For the white foam was dry upon the flank,
Two in close converse, each in each delighting,
Their plumage waving as instinct with life;
A lady young and graceful, and a youth,
Yet younger, bearing on a falconer's glove,
As in the golden, the romantic time,
His falcon hooded. Like some spirit of air,
Or fairy vision, such as feign'd of old,
The lady, while her courser paw'd the ground,
Alighted; and her beauty, as she trod
Th' enamell'd bank, bruising nor herb nor flower
That place illumined.
Ah, who should she be,
(And with her brother, as when last we met,
When the first lark had sung ere half was said,
And as she stood, bidding adieu, her voice,
So sweet it was, recall'd me like a spell,)
Who but Angelica?
That day we gave
To pleasure, and, unconscious of their flight,
Another and another; hers a home
Dropt from the sky amid the wild and rude,
Loretto-like. The rising moon we hail'd,
Duly, devoutly, from a vestibule
Of many an arch, o'erwrought, and lavishly,
With many a wildering dream of sylphs and flowers,
When Raphael and his school from Florence came,
Filling the land with splendour—nor less oft
Watch'd her declining from a silent dell,
Not silent once, what time in rivalry
Tasso, Guarini, waved their wizard wands,
Peopling the groves from Arcady, and lo,
Fair forms appear'd, murmuring melodious verse,
—Then, in their day, a sylvan theatre,
Mossy the seats, the stage a verdurous floor,
The scenery rock and shrub-wood, nature's own;
Nature the architect.

III.

ROME.

I AM in Rome! Oft as the morning ray
Visits these eyes, waking at once I cry,
Whence this excess of joy? what has befallen me?

And from within a thrilling voice replies,
Thou art in Rome! A thousand busy thoughts
Rush on my mind, a thousand images;
And I spring up as girt to run a race!
Thou art in Rome! the city that so long
Reign'd absolute, the mistress of the world;
The mighty vision that the prophets saw,
And trembled; that from nothing, from the least,
The lowliest village (what but here and there
A reed-roof'd cabin by a river side?)
Grew into every thing; and, year by year,
Patiently, fearlessly working her way
O'er brook and field, o'er continent and sea,
Not like the merchant with his merchandise,
Or traveller with staff and scrip exploring,
But hand to hand, and foot to foot, through hosts,
Through nations numberless in battle array,
Each behind each, each, when the other fell,
Up and in arms, at length subdued them all.
Thou art in Rome! the city where the Gauls,
Entering at sunrise through her open gates,
And, through her streets silent and desolate,
Marching to slay, thought they saw gods, not men;
The city that, by temperance, fortitude,
And love of glory, tower'd above the clouds,
Then fell—but, falling, kept the highest seat,
And in her loneliness, her pomp of wo,
Where now she dwells, withdrawn into the wild,
Still o'er the mind maintains, from age to age,
Her empire undiminish'd.
There, as though
Grandeur attracted grandeur, are beheld
All things that strike, ennoble—from the depths
Of Egypt, from the classic fields of Greece,
Her groves, her temples—all things that inspire
Wonder, delight! Who would not say the forms
Most perfect, most divine, had by consent
Flock'd thither to abide eternally,
Within those silent chambers where they dwell,
In happy intercourse?
And I am there!
Ah, little thought I, when in school I sate,
A schoolboy on his bench, at early dawn
Glowing with Roman story, I should live
To tread the Appian, once an avenue
Of monuments most glorious, palaces,
Their doors seal'd up and silent as the night,
The dwellings of the illustrious dead—to turn
Toward Tiber, and, beyond the city gate,
Pour out my unpremeditated verse,
Where on his mule I might have met so oft
Horace himself—or climb the Palatine,
Dreaming of old Evander and his guest,
Dreaming and lost on that proud eminence,
Longwhile the seat of Rome, hereafter found
Less than enough (so monstrous was the brood
Engender'd there, so Titan-like) to lodge
One in his madness;* and, the summit gain'd,
Inscribe my name on some broad aloe-leaf,
That shoots and spreads within those very walls
Where Virgil read aloud his tale divine,
Where his voice falter'd, and a mother wept
Tears of delight!
But what a narrow space

* Nero

Just underneath! In many a heap the ground
Heaves, as though ruin in a frantic mood
Had done his utmost. Here and there appears
As left to show his handy-work, not ours,
An idle column, a half buried arch,
A wall of some great temple.
It was once,
And long, the centre of their universe,
The Forum—whence a mandate, eagle-wing'd,
Went to the ends of th' earth. Let us descend
Slowly. At every step much may be lost;
The very dust we tread stirs as with life;
And not the lightest breath that sends not up
Something of human grandeur.
We are come,
Are now where once the mightiest spirits met
In terrible conflict; this, while Rome was free,
The noblest theatre on this side heaven!
Here the first Brutus stood, when o'er the corse
Of her so chaste all mourn'd, and from his cloud
Burst like a god. Here, holding up the knife
That ran with blood, the blood of his own child,
Virginius call'd down vengeance.—But whence
spoke
They who harangued the people; turning now
To the twelve tables, now with lifted hands
To the Capitoline Jove, whose fulgent shape
In the unclouded azure shone far off,
And to the shepherd on the Alban mount
Seem'd like a star new risen? Where were ranged
In rough array as on their element,
The beaks of those old galleys, destined still*
To brave the brunt of war—at last to know
A calm far worse, a silence as in death?
All spiritless; from that disastrous hour
When he, the bravest, gentlest of them all,†
Scorning the chains he could not hope to break,
Fell on his sword!
Along the Sacred Way
Hither the triumph came, and, winding round
With acclamation, and the martial clang
Of instruments, and cars laden with spoil,
Stopt at the sacred stair that then appear'd,
Then through the darkness broke, ample, star-bright,
As though it led to heaven. 'Twas night; but now
A thousand torches, turning night to day,
Blazed, and the victor, springing from his seat,
Went up, and, kneeling as in fervent prayer,
Enter'd the capitol. But what are they,
Who at the foot withdraw, a mournful train
In fetters? And who, yet incredulous,
Now gazing wildly round, now on his sons,
On those so young, well pleased with all they see,
Staggers along, the last?—They are the fallen,
Those who were spared to grace the chariot wheels
And there they parted, where the road divides,
The victor and the vanquish'd—there withdrew
He to the festal-board, and they to die.
Well might the great, the mighty of the world
They who were wont to fare deliciously,
And war but for a kingdom more or less,
Shrink back, nor from their thrones endure to look
To think that way! Well might they in their
state

* The Rostra. † Marcus Junius Brutus.

Humble themselves, and kneel and supplicate
To be delivered from a dream like this!
Here Cincinnatus pass'd, his plough the while
Left in the furrow, and how many more
Whose laurels fade not, who still walk the earth,
Consuls, dictators, still in curule pomp
Sit and decide; and, as of old in Rome,
Name but their names, set every heart on fire!
Here, in his bonds, he whom the phalanx saved not,*
The last on Philip's throne; and the Numidian,†
So soon to say, stript of his cumbrous robe,
Stript to the skin, and in his nakedness
Thrust under ground, "How cold this bath of yours!"
And thy proud queen, Palmyra, through the sands‡
Pursued, o'ertaken on her dromedary;
Whose temples, palaces, a wondrous dream
That passes not away, for many a league
Illumine yet the desert. Some invoked
Death, and escaped; the Egyptian, when her asp
Came from his covert under the green leaf;§
And Hannibal himself; and she who said,
Taking the fatal cup between her hands,‖
"Tell him I would it had come yesterday;
For then it had not been his nuptial gift."
Now all is changed; and here, as in the wild,
The day is silent, dreary as the night;
None stirring, save the herdsman and his herd,
Savage alike; or they that would explore,
Discuss and learnedly; or they that come,
(And there are many who have cross'd the earth,)
That they may give the hours to meditation,
And wander, often saying to themselves,
"This was the Roman Forum!"

IV.

A FUNERAL.

"WHENCE this delay?" "Along the crowded street
A funeral comes, and with unusual pomp."
So I withdrew a little, and stood still,
While it went by. "She died as she deserved,"
Said an abatè, gathering up his cloak,
And with a shrug retreating as the tide
Flow'd more and more.—"But she was beautiful!"
Replied a soldier of the pontiff's guard.
"And innocent as beautiful!" exclaim'd
A matron sitting in her stall, hung round
With garlands, holy pictures, and what not?
Her Alban grapes and Tusculan figs display'd
In rich profusion. From her heart she spoke;
And I accosted her to hear her story.
"The stab," she cried, "was given in jealousy;
But never fled a purer spirit to heaven,
As thou wilt say, or much my mind misleads,
When thou hast seen her face. Last night at dusk
When on her way from vespers—None were near,
None save her serving boy, who knelt and wept,
But what could tears avail him, when she fell—
Last night at dusk, the clock then striking nine,
Just by the fountain—that before the church,
The church she always used, St. Isidore's—
Alas, I knew her from her earliest youth,
That excellent lady. Ever would she say,
Good even, as she pass'd, and with a voice
Gentle as theirs in heaven!"—But now by fits
A dull and dismal noise assail'd the ear,
A wail, a chant, louder and louder yet;
And now a strange fantastic troop appear'd.
Thronging, they came—as from the shades I ekew;
All of ghostly white! "O say," I cried,
"Do not the living here bury the dead?
Do spirits come and fetch them? What are these
That seem not of this world, and mock the day;
Each with a burning taper in his hand?"—
"It is an ancient brotherhood thou seest.
Such their apparel. Through the long, long line,
Look where thou wilt, no likeness of a man;
The living mask'd, the dead alone uncover'd.
But mark"—And, lying on her funeral couch,
Like one asleep, her eyelids closed, her hands
Folded together on her modest breast,
As 'twere her nightly posture, through the crowd
She came at last—and richly, gayly clad,
As for a birth-day feast! But breathes she not?
A glow is on her cheek—and her lips move!
And now a smile is there—how heavenly sweet!
"O no!" replied the dame, wiping her tears,
But with an accent less of grief than anger,
"No, she will never, never wake again!"
Death, when we meet the spectre in our walks,
As we did yesterday, and shall to-morrow,
Soon grows familiar—like most other things,
Seen, not observed; but in a foreign clime,
Changing his shape to something new and strange
(And through the world he changes as in sport,
Affect he greatness or humility)
Knocks at the heart. His form and fashion here
To me, I do confess, reflect a gloom,
A sadness round; yet one I would not lose;
Being in unison with all things else
In this, this land of shadows, where we live
More in past time than present, where the ground,
League beyond league, like one great cemetery,
Is cover'd o'er with mouldering monuments;
And, let the living wander where they will,
They cannot leave the footsteps of the dead.
Oft, where the burial rite follows so fast,
The agony, oft coming, nor from far,
Must a fond father meet his darling child,
(Him who at parting climb'd his knees and clung,)
Clay cold and wan, and to the bearers cry,
"Stand, I conjure ye!"
Seen thus destitute,
What are the greatest? They must speak beyond
A thousand homilies. When Raphael went,
His heavenly face the mirror of his mind,
His mind a temple for all lovely things
To flock to and inhabit—when he went,
Wrapt in his sable cloak he wore,
To sleep beneath the venerable dome,*
By those attended, who in life had loved,
Had worshipp'd, following in his steps to fame,
('Twas on an April day, when nature smiles,)
All Rome was there. But, ere the march began,
Ere to receive their charge the bearers came,

* Perseus. † Jugurtha. ‡ Zenobia.
§ Cleopatra. ‖ Sophonisba.

* The Pantheon.

Who had not sought him? And when all beheld
Him, where he lay, how changed from yesterday,
Him in that hour cut off, and at his head
His last great work; when, entering in, they look'd
Now on the dead, then on that master-piece,
Now on his face, lifeless and colourless,
Then on those forms divine that lived and breathed,
And would live on for ages—all were moved;
And sighs burst forth, and loudest lamentations.

V.

NATIONAL PREJUDICES.

"ANOTHER assassination! This venerable city," I exclaimed, "what is it, but as it began, a nest of robbers and murderers? We must away at sunrise, Luigi." But before sunrise I had reflected a little, and in the soberest prose. My indignation was gone; and, when Luigi undrew my curtain, crying, "Up, signor, up! The horses are at the door."—"Luigi," I replied, "if thou lovest me, draw the curtain."*

It would lessen very much the severity with which men judge of each other, if they would but trace effects to their causes, and observe the progress of things in the moral as accurately as in the physical world. When we condemn millions in the mass as vindictive and sanguinary, we should remember that wherever justice is ill administered, the injured will redress themselves. Robbery provokes to robbery; murder to assassination. Resentments become hereditary; and what began in disorder, ends as if all hell had broke loose.

Laws create a habit of self-restraint, not only by the influence of fear, but by regulating in its exercise the passion of revenge. If they overawe the bad by the prospect of a punishment certain and well defined, they console the injured by the infliction of that punishment; and, as the infliction is a public act, it excites and entails no enmity. The laws are offended; and the community, for its own sake, pursues and overtakes the offender; often without the concurrence of the sufferer, sometimes against his wishes.

Now those who were not born, like ourselves, to such advantages, we should surely rather pity than hate; and, when at length they venture to turn against their rulers,† we should lament, not wonder at their excesses; remembering that nations are naturally patient, and long-suffering, and seldom rise in rebellion till they are so degraded by a bad government as to be almost incapable of a good one.

"Hate them, perhaps," you may say, "we should not; but despise them we must, if enslaved, like the people of Rome, in mind as well as body; if their religion be a gross and barbarous superstition."—I respect knowledge; but I do not despise ignorance. They think only as their fathers thought, worship as they worshipped. They do no more and, if ours had not burst their bondage, braving imprisonment and death, might not we at this very moment have been exhibiting, in our streets and our churches, the same processions, ceremonials, and mortifications?

Nor should we require from those who are in an earlier stage of society, what belongs to a later? They are only where we once were; and why hold them in derision? It is their business to cultivate the inferior arts before they think of the more refined; and in many of the last what are we as a nation, when compared to others that have passed away? Unfortunately, it is too much the practice of governments to nurse and keep alive in the governed their national prejudices. It withdraws their attention from what is passing at home, and makes them better tools in the hands of ambition. Hence next-door neighbours are held up to us from our childhood as *natural enemies*; and we are urged on like curs to worry each other.*

In like manner we should learn to be just to individuals. Who can say, "In such circumstances I should have done otherwise?" Who, did he but reflect by what slow gradations, often by how many strange concurrences, we are led astray; with how much reluctance, how much agony, how many efforts to escape, how many self-accusations, how many sighs, how many tears—Who, did he but reflect for a moment, would have the heart to cast a stone? Fortunately, these things are known to Him, from whom no secrets are hidden; and let us rest in the assurance that *his* judgments are not as ours are.

VI.

THE CAMPAGNA OF ROME.

HAVE none appear'd as tillers of the ground,
None since they went—as though it still were theirs,
And they might come and claim their own again?
Was the last plough a Roman's?
From this seat,
Sacred for ages, whence, as Virgil sings,
The Queen of Heaven, alighting from the sky
Look'd down and saw the armies in array,†
Let us contemplate; and, where dreams from Jove
Descended on the sleeper, where perhaps
Some inspirations may be lingering still,
Some glimmerings of the future or the past,
Await their influence; silently revolving
The changes from that hour, when he from Troy
Went up the Tiber; when refulgent shields,
No strangers to the iron hail of war,
Stream'd far and wide, and dashing oars were heard

* A dialogue, which is said to have passed many years ago at Lyons, (Mem. de Grammont, I. 3,) and which may still be heard in almost every hôtellerie at daybreak.

† As the descendants of an illustrious people have lately done. Can it be believed there are many among us, who, from a desire to be thought superior to commonplace sentiments and vulgar feelings, affect an indifference to their cause! "If the Greeks," they say, "had the probity of other nations—but they are false to a proverb!" And is not falsehood the characteristic of slaves? Man is the creature of circumstances. Free, he has the qualities of a freeman; enslaved, those of a slave.

* Candour, generosity, how rare are they in the world! and how much is to be deplored the want of them! When a minister in our parliament consents at last to a measure, which, for many reasons perhaps existing no longer, he had before refused to adopt, there should be no exultation as over the fallen, no taunt, no jeer. How often may the resistance be continued lest an enemy should triumph, and the result of conviction be received as a symptom of fear!

† Æneid, xii. 134.

Among those woods where Silvia's stag was lying,
His antlers gay with flowers; among those woods
Where, by the moon, that saw and yet withdrew not,
Two were so soon to wander and be slain,
Two lovely in their lives, nor in their death
Divided.

Then, and hence to be discern'd,
How many realms, pastoral and warlike, lay
Along this plain, each with its schemes of power,
Its little rivalships! What various turns
Of fortune there; what moving accidents
From ambuscade and open violence!
Mingling, the sounds came up; and hence how oft
We might have caught among the trees below,
Glittering with helm and shield, the men of Tibur;*
Or in Greek vesture, Greek their origin,
Some embassy, ascending to Prænestè;†
How oft descried without thy gates, Aricia,‡
Entering the solemn grove for sacrifice,
Senate and people! Each a busy hive,
Glowing with life!

But all ere long are lost
In one. We look, and where the river rolls
Southward its shining labyrinth, in her strength
A city, girt with battlements and towers,
On seven small hills is rising. Round about,
At rural work the citizens are seen,
None unemploy'd; the noblest of them all
Binding their sheaves or on their threshing-floors,
As though they had not conquer'd. Everywhere
Some trace of valour or heroic virtue!
Here is the sacred field of the Horatii,
There are the Quintian meadows. Here the hill,§
How holy, where a generous people, twice,
Twice going forth, in terrible anger sate [way,
Arm'd; and, their wrongs redress'd, at once gave
Helmet and shield, and sword and spear thrown down,
And every hand uplifted, every heart
Pour'd out in thanks to heaven.

Once again
We look; and, lo, the sea is white with sails
Innumerable, wafting to the shore
Treasures untold; the vale, the promontories,
A dream of glory; temples, palaces,
Call'd up as by enchantment; aqueducts
Among the groves and glades rolling along
Rivers, on many an arch high over head;
And in the centre, like a burning sun,
The imperial city! They have now subdued
All nations. But where they who led them forth
Who, when at length released by victory,
(Buckler and spear hung up—but not to rust,)
Held poverty no evil, no reproach,
Living on little with a cheerful mind,
The Decii, the Fabricii? Where the spade
And reaping-hook, among their household things
Duly transmitted? In the hands of men
Made captive; while the master and his guests,
Reclining, quaff in gold, and roses swim,
Summer and winter, through the circling year,
On their Falernian—in the hands of men
Dragg'd into slavery, with how many more
Spared but to die, a public spectacle,
In combat with each other, and required
To fall with grace, with dignity to sink,
While life is gushing, and the plaudits ring
Faint and yet fainter on their failing ear,
As models for the sculptor.

But their days,
Their hours are number'd. Hark, a yell, a shriek
A barbarous dissonance, loud and yet louder,
That echoes from the mountains to the sea!
And mark, beneath us, like a bursting cloud,
The battle moving onward! Had they slain
All, that the earth should from her womb bring forth
New nations to destroy them? From the depth
Of forests, from what none had dared explore,
Regions of thrilling ice, as though in ice
Engender'd, multiplied, they pour along,
Shaggy and huge! Host after host, they come;
The Goth, the Vandal; and again the Goth!
Once more we look, and all is still as night,
All desolate! Groves, temples, palaces,
Swept from the sight, and nothing visible,
Amid the sulphurous vapours that exhale
As from a land accurst, save here and there,
An empty tomb, a fragment like the limb
Of some dismember'd giant. In the midst
A city stands, her domes and turrets crown'd
With many a cross; but they that issue forth
Wander like strangers who had built among
The mighty ruins, silent, spiritless;
And on the road, where once we might have met
Cæsar and Cato, and men more than kings,
We meet, none else, the pilgrim and the beggar.

* Tivoli. † Palestrina.
‡ La Riccia. § Mons Sacer

VII.

THE ROMAN PONTIFFS.

Those ancient men, what were they, who achieved
A sway beyond the greatest conquerors;
Setting their feet upon the necks of kings,
And, through the world subduing, chaining down
The free, immortal spirit? Were they not
Mighty magicians? Theirs a wondrous spell,
Where true and false were with infernal art
Close interwoven; where together met
Blessings and curses, threats and promises;
And with the terrors of futurity,
Mingled whate'er enchants and fascinates,
Music and painting, sculpture, rhetoric
And architectural pomp, such as none else;
And dazzling light, and darkness visible!
What in his day the Syracusan sought,
Another world to plant his engines on,
They had; and, having it, like gods, not men,
Moved this world at their pleasure. Ere they came
Their shadows, stretching far and wide, were known,
And two, that look'd beyond the visible sphere,
Gave notice of their coming—he who saw
The Apocalypse; and he of elder time,
Who in an awful vision of the night
Saw the Four Kingdoms. Distant as they were,
Well might those holy men be fill'd with fear!

VIII.

CAIUS CESTIUS.

WHEN I am inclined to be serious, I love to wander up and down before the tomb of Caius Cestius. The Protestant burial-ground is there; and most of the little monuments are erected to the young: young men of promise, cut off when on their travels, full of enthusiasm, full of enjoyment; brides, in the bloom of their beauty, on their first journey; or children, borne from home in search of health. This stone was placed by his fellow travellers, young as himself, who will return to the house of his parents without him; that, by a husband or a father, now in his native country. His heart is buried in that grave.

It is a quiet and sheltered nook, covered in the winter with violets; and the pyramid, that overshadows it, gives it a classical and singularly solemn air. You feel an interest there, a sympathy you were not prepared for. You are yourself in a foreign land, and they are for the most part your countrymen. They call upon you in your mother tongue—in English—in words unknown to a native, known only to yourselves: and the tomb of Cestius, that old majestic pile, has this also in common with them. It is itself a stranger, among strangers. It has stood there till the language spoken round about it has changed; and the shepherd, born at the foot, can read its inscription no longer.

IX.

THE NUN.

'Tis over; and her lovely cheek is now
On her hard pillow—there, alas! to be
Nightly, through many and many a dreary hour,
Wan, often wet with tears, and (ere at length
Her place is empty, and another comes)
In anguish, in the ghastliness of death;
Hers never more to leave those mournful walls,
Even on her bier.

'Tis over; and the rite,
With all its pomp and harmony, is now
Floating before her. She arose at home,
To be the show, the idol of the day;
Her vesture gorgeous, and her starry head—
No ro ket, bursting in the midnight sky,
So da..zling. When to-morrow she awakes,
She will awake as though she still was there,
Still in her father's house; and lo, a cell
Narrow and dark, naught through the gloom discern'd,
Naught save the crucifix, the rosary,
And the gray habit lying by to shroud
Her beauty and grace.

When on her knees she fell,
Entering the solemn place of consecration,
And from the latticed gallery came a chant
Of psalms, most saint-like, most angelical,
Verse after verse sung out, how hollily!
The strain returning, and still, still returning,
Methought it acted like a spell upon her,
And she was casting off her earthly dross;
Yet was it sad as sweet, and, ere it closed,
Came like a dirge. When her fair head was shorn,
And the long tresses in her hands were laid,
That she might fling them from her, saying, "Thus
Thus I renounce the world and worldly things!"
When, as she stood, her bridal ornaments
Were, one by one, removed, e'en to the last,
That she might say, flinging them from her, "Thus,
Thus I renounce the world!" when all was changed,
And, as a nun, in homeliest guise she knelt,
Veil'd in her veil, crown'd with her silver crown,
Her crown of lilies as the spouse of Christ,
Well might her strength forsake her, and her knees
Fail in that hour! Well might the holy man,
He at whose feet she knelt, give as by stealth
('Twas in her utmost need; nor, while she lives,
Will it go from her, fleeting as it was)
That faint but fatherly smile, that smile of love
And pity!

Like a dream the whole is fled;
And they that came in idleness to gaze
Upon the victim dress'd for sacrifice,
Are mingling in the world; thou in thy cell
Forgot, Teresa. Yet, among them all,
None were so form'd to love and to be loved,
None to delight, adorn; and on thee now
A curtain, blacker than the night, is dropp'd
For ever! In thy gentle bosom sleep
Feelings, affections, destined now to die,
To wither like the blossom in the bud,
Those of a wife, a mother; leaving there
A cheerless void, a chill as of the grave,
A languor and a lethargy of soul,
Death-like, and gathering more and more, till death
Comes to release thee. Ah, what now to thee,
What now to thee the treasure of thy youth?
As nothing!

But thou canst not yet reflect
Calmly; so many things, strange and perverse,
That meet, recoil, and go but to return,
The monstrous birth of one eventful day,
Troubling thy spirit—from the first, at dawn
The rich arraying for the nuptial feast,
To the black pall, the requiem.

All in turn
Revisit thee, and round thy lowly bed
Hover, uncall'd. The young and innocent heart,
How is it beating? Has it no regrets?
Discoverest thou no weakness lurking there?
But thine exhausted frame has sunk to rest.
Peace to thy slumbers!

X.

THE FIRE-FLY.

THERE is an insect, that, when evening comes,
Small though he be and scarce distinguishable,
Like evening clad in sobrest livery,
Unsheaths his wings, and through the woods and
glades
Scatters a marvellous splendour. On he wheels,
Blazing by fits as from excess of joy,
Each gush of light a gush of ecstasy;
Nor unaccompanied; thousands that fling
A radiance all their own, not of the day,
Thousands as bright as he, from dusk till dawn,
Soaring descending.

In the mother's lap
Well may the child put forth his little hands,
Singing the nursery-song he learnt so soon

And the young nymph, preparing for the dance.
By brook or fountain side, in many a braid,
Wreathing her golden hair, well may she cry,
"Come hither; and the shepherds gathering round,
Shall say, Floretta emulates the night,
Spangling her head with stars."

Oft have I met
This shining race, when in the Tusculan groves
My path no longer glimmer'd; oft among
Those trees, religious once and always green,
That yet dream out their stories of old Rome
Over the Alban lake; oft met and hail'd,
Where the precipitate Anio thunders down,
And through the surging mist a poet's house
(So some aver, and who would not believe?)
Reveals itself.

Yet cannot I forget
Him, who rejoiced me in those walks at eve,
My earliest, pleasantest; who dwells unseen,
And in our northern clime, when all is still,
Nightly keeps watch, nightly in bush or brake
His lonely lamp rekindling.* Unlike theirs,
His, if less dazzling, through the darkness knows
No intermission; sending forth its ray
Through the green leaves, a ray serene and clear
As virtue's own.

XI.

FOREIGN TRAVEL.

It was in a splenetic humour that I sate me down to my scanty fare at Terracina; and how long I should have contemplated the lean thrushes in array before me, I cannot say, if a cloud of smoke, that drew the tears into my eyes, had not burst from the green and leafy boughs on the hearth-stone. "Why," I exclaimed, starting up from the table, "why did I leave my own chimney-corner?—But am I not on the road to Brundusium? And are not these the very calamities that befell Horace and Virgil, and Mæcenas, and Plotius, and Varius? Horace laughed at them—then why should not I? Horace resolved to turn them to account; and Virgil—cannot we hear him observing, that to remember them will, by-and-by, be a pleasure?" My soliloquy reconciled me at once to my fate; and when, for the twentieth time, I had looked through the window on a sea sparkling with innumerable brilliants, a sea on which the heroes of the Odyssey and the Eneid had sailed, I sat down as to a splendid banquet. My thrushes had the flavour of ortolans; and I ate with an appetite I had not known before.

"Who," I cried, as I poured out my last glass of Falernian,† (for Falernian it was said to be, and in my eyes it ran bright and clear as a topaz stone) —"who would remain at home, could he do otherwise? Who would submit to tread that dull, but daily round; his hours forgotten as soon as spent?" and, opening my journal-book and dipping my pen into my ink-horn, I determined, as far as I could, to justify myself and my countryman in wandering over the face of the earth. "It may serve me," said I, "as a remedy in some future fit of the spleen."

Ours is a nation of travellers;* and no wonder when the elements, air, water, fire, attend at our bidding, to transport us from shore to shore; when the ship rushes into the deep, her track the foam as of some mighty torrent; and, in three hours or less we stand gazing and gazed at among a foreign people. None want an excuse. If rich, they go to enjoy; if poor, to retrench; if sick, to recover; if studious, to learn; if learned, to relax from their studies. But whatever they may say, whatever they may believe, they go for the most part on the same errand; nor will those who reflect, think that errand an idle one.

Almost all men are over anxious. No sooner do they enter the world, than they lose that taste for natural and simple pleasures, so remarkable in early life. Every hour do they ask themselves what progress they have made in the pursuit of wealth or honour; and on they go as their fathers went before them, till, weary and sick at heart, they look back with a sigh of regret to the golden time of their childhood.

Now travel, and foreign travel more particularly, restores to us in a great degree what we have lost. When the anchor is heaved, we double down the leaf; and for a while at least all effort is over. The old cares are left clustering round the old objects; and at every step, as we proceed, the slightest circumstance amuses and interests. All is new and strange. We surrender ourselves, and feel once again as children. Like them, we enjoy eagerly; like them, when we fret, we fret only for the moment; and here indeed the resemblance is very remarkable, for if a journey has its pains as well as its pleasures, (and there is nothing unmixed in this world,) the pains are no sooner over than they are forgotten, while the pleasures live long in the memory.

Nor is it surely without another advantage. If life be short, not so to many of us are its days and its hours. When the blood slumbers in the veins, how often do we wish that the earth would turn faster on its axis, that the sun would rise and set before it does, and, to escape from the weight of time, how many follies, how many crimes are committed! Men rush on danger, and even on death. Intrigue, play, foreign and domestic broil, such are their resources; and, when these things fail, they destroy themselves.

Now in travelling we multiply events, and innocently. We set out, as it were, on our adventures; and many are those that occur to us, morning, noon, and night. The day we come to a place which we have long heard and read of, and in Italy we do so continually, it is an era in our lives; and from that

* The glow-worm.

† We were now within a few hours of the Campania Felix. On the colour and flavour of Falernian, consult Galen and Dioscorides.

* As indeed it always was, contributing those of every degree, from a *milors* with his suite to him whose only attendant is his shadow. Coryate in 1608 performed his journey on foot; and, returning, hung up his shoes in his village church as an ex-voto. Goldsmith, a century and a half afterwards, followed in nearly the same path; playing a tune on his flute to procure admittance whenever he approached a cottage at nightfall.

moment the very name calls up a picture. How delightfully too does the knowledge flow in upon us, and how fast!* Would he who sat, in a corner of his library, poring over books and maps, learn more or so much in the time, as he who, with his eyes and his heart open, is receiving impressions, all day long, from the things themselves?† How accurately do they arrange themselves in our memory, towns, rivers, mountains; and in what living colours do we recall the dresses, manners, and customs of the people! Our sight is the noblest of all our senses. "It fills the mind with most ideas, converses with its objects at the greatest distance, and continues longest in action without being tired." Our sight is on the alert when we travel; and its exercise is then so delightful, that we forget the profit in the pleasure.

Like a river that gathers, that refines as it runs, like a spring that takes its course through some rich vein of mineral, we improve and imperceptibly—nor in the head only, but in the heart. Our prejudices leave us, one by one. Seas and mountains are no longer our boundaries. We learn to love, and esteem, and admire beyond them. Our benevolence extends itself with our knowledge. And must we not return better citizens than we went? For the more we become acquainted with the institutions of other countries, the more highly must we value our own.

I threw down my pen in triumph "The question," said I, "is set to rest for ever. And yet—"

"And yet—" I must still say. The wisest of men seldom went out of the walls of Athens; and for that worst of evils, that sickness of the soul, to which we are most liable when most at our ease, is there not after all a surer and yet pleasanter remedy, a remedy for which we have only to cross the threshold? A Piedmontese nobleman, into whose company I fell at Turin, had not long before experienced its efficacy: and his story, which he told me without reserve, was as follows.

"I was weary of life, and, after a day, such as few have known and none would wish to remember, was hurrying along the street to the river, when I felt a sudden check. I turned and beheld a little boy, who had caught the skirt of my cloak in his anxiety to solicit my notice. His look and manner were irresistible. Not less so was the lesson he had learnt.

"'There are six of us; and we are dying for want of food.'—'Why should I not,' said I to myself, 'relieve this wretched family? I have the means; and it will not delay me many minutes. But what, if it does?' The scene of misery he conducted me to I cannot describe. I threw them my purse; and their burst of gratitude overcame me. It filled my eyes—it went as a cordial to my heart. 'I will call again to-morrow,' I cried. 'Fool that I was, to think of leaving a world, where such pleasure was to be had, and so cheaply!'"

* To judge at once of a nation, we have only to throw our eyes on the markets and the fields. If the markets are well supplied, the fields well cultivated, all is right. If otherwise, we may say, and say truly, these people are barbarous or oppressed.

† Assuredly not, if the last has laid a proper foundation. Knowledge makes knowledge as money makes money, nor ever perhaps so fast as on a journey.

XII.

THE FOUNTAIN

It was a well
Of whitest marble, white as from the quarry;
And richly wrought with many a high relief,
Greek sculpture—in some earlier day perhaps
A tomb, and honour'd with a hero's ashes.
The water from the rock fill'd, overflow'd it;
Then dash'd away, playing the prodigal,
And soon was lost—stealing unseen, unheard,
Through the long grass, and round the twisted roots
Of aged trees; discovering where it ran
By the fresh verdure. Overcome with heat,
I threw me down; admiring, as I lay,
That shady nook, a singing place for birds,
That grove so intricate, so full of flowers,
More than enough to please a child a-Maying.

The sun was down, a distant convent-bell
Ringing the *Angelus*; and now approach'd
The hour for stir and village gossip there,
The hour Rebekah came, when from the well
She drew with such alacrity to serve
The stranger and his camels. Soon I heard
Footsteps; and lo, descending by a path
Trodden for ages, many a nymph appear'd,
Appear'd and vanish'd, bearing on her head
Her earthen pitcher. It call'd up the day
Ulysses landed there; and long I gazed,
Like one awaking in a distant time.

At length there came the loveliest of them all,
Her little brother dancing down before her;
And ever as he spoke, which he did ever,
Turning and looking up in warmth of heart
And brotherly affection. Stopping there,
She join'd her rosy hands, and, filling them
With the pure element, gave him to drink.
And, while he quench'd his thirst, standing on tiptoe,
Look'd down upon him with a sister's smile,
Nor stirr'd till he had done, fix'd as a statue.

Then hadst thou seen them as they stood, Canova,
Thou hadst endow'd them with immortal youth;
And they had evermore lived undivided,
Winning all hearts—of all thy works the fairest.

XIII.

BANDITTI.

'Tis a wild life, fearful and full of change,
The mountain robber's. On the watch he lies,
Levelling his carbine at the passenger;
And, when his work is done, he dares not sleep.

Time was, the trade was nobler, if not honest;
When they that robb'd were men of better faith
Than kings or pontiffs, when, such reverence
The poet drew among the woods and wilds,
A voice was heard, that never bade to spare,
Crying aloud, "Hence to the distant hills!
Tasso approaches; he, whose song beguiles
The day of half its hours; whose sorcery
Dazzles the sense, turning our forest glades
To lists that blaze with gorgeous armory,
Our mountain caves to regal palaces.

Hence, nor descend till he and his are gone.
Let him fear nothing."
When along the shore,
And by the path that, wandering on its way,
Leads through the fatal grove where Tully fell,
(Gray and o'ergrown, an ancient tomb is there,)
He came and they withdrew: they were a race
Careless of life in others and themselves,
For they had learnt their lesson in a camp;
But not ungenerous. 'Tis no longer so.
Now crafty, cruel, torturing ere they slay
Th' unhappy captive, and with bitter jests
Mocking misfortune; vain, fantastical,
Wearing whatever glitters in the spoil;
And most devout, though when they kneel and pray,
With every bead they could recount a murder.
As by a spell they start up in array,
As by a spell they vanish—theirs a band,
Not as elsewhere of outlaws, but of such
As sow and reap, and at the cottage door
Sit to receive, return the traveller's greeting;
Now in the garb of peace, now silently
Arming and issuing forth, led on by men
Whose names on innocent lips are words of fear,
Whose lives have long been forfeit.
Some there are
That, ere they rise to this bad eminence,
Lurk, night and day, the plague spot visible,
The guilt that says, Beware; and mark we now
Him, where he lies, who couches for his prey
At the bridge foot, in some dark cavity
Scoop'd by the waters, or some gaping tomb,
Nameless and tenantless, whence the red fox
Slunk as he enter'd. There he broods, in spleen
Gnawing his beard; his rough and sinewy frame
O'erwritten with the story of his life:
On his wan cheek a sabre cut, well earn'd
In foreign warfare; on his breast the brand
Indelible, burnt in when to the port
He clank'd his chain, among a hundred more
Dragg'd ignominiously; on every limb
Memorials of his glory and his shame,
Stripes of the lash and honourable scars,
And channels here and there worn to the bone
By galling fetters.
He comes slowly forth
Unkennelling, and up that savage dell
Anxiously looks; his cruse, an ample gourd,
(Duly replenish'd from the vintner's cask,)
Slung from his shoulder; in his breadth of belt
Two pistols and a dagger yet uncleansed,
A parchment scrawl'd with uncouth characters,
And a small vial, his last remedy,
His cure when all things fail. No noise is heard,
Save when the rugged bear and the gaunt wolf
Howl in the upper region, or a fish
Leaps in the gulf beneath:—But now he kneels
And (like a scout when listening to the tramp
Of horse or foot) lays his experienced ear
Close to the ground, then rises and explores,
Then kneels again, and, his short rifle gun
Against his cheek, waits patiently.
Two monks,
Portly, gray-headed, on their gallant steeds,
Descend where yet a moulderirg cross o'erhangs
The grave of one that from the precipice
Fell in an evil hour. Their bridle bells
Ring merrily; and many a loud, long laugh
Re-echoes; but at once the sounds are lost.
Unconscious of the good in store below,
The holy fathers have turn'd off, and now
Cross the brown heath, are long to wag their beards
Before my lady abbess, and discuss
Things only known to the devout and pure
O'er her spiced bowl—then shrive the sisterhood,
Sitting by turns with an inclining ear
In the confessional.
He moves his lips
As with a curse—then paces up and down,
Now fast, now slow, brooding and muttering on;
Gloomy alike to him the past, the future.
But hark, the nimble tread of numerous feet!
—'Tis but a dappled herd come down to slake
Their thirst in the cool wave. He turns and aims—
Then checks himself, unwilling to disturb
The sleeping echoes.
Once again he earths;
Slipping away to house with them beneath,
His old companions in that hiding place,
The bat, the toad, the blind-worm, and the newt;
And hark, a footstep, firm and confident,
As of a man in haste. Nearer it draws;
And now is at the entrance of the den.
Ha! 'tis a comrade, sent to gather in
The band for some great enterprise.
Who wants
A sequel, may read on. Th' unvarnish'd tale,
That follows, will supply the place of one.
'Twas told me by the Marquis of Ravina,
When in a blustering night he shelter'd me,
In that brave castle of his ancestors
O'er Garigliano, and is such, indeed,
As every day brings with it—in a land
Where laws are trampled on, and lawless men
Walk in the sun; but it should not be lost,
For it may serve to bind us to our country.

XIV.

AN ADVENTURE.

Three days they lay in ambush at my gate,
Then sprung and led me captive. Many a wild
We traversed; but Rusconi, 'twas no less,
March'd by my side, and, when I thirsted, climb'd
The cliffs for water; though whene'er he spoke,
'Twas briefly, sullenly; and on he led,
Distinguish'd only by an amulet,
That in a golden chain hung from his neck,
A crystal of rare virtue. Night fell fast,
When on a heath, black and immeasurable,
He turn'd and bade them halt. 'Twas where the earth
Heaves o'er the dead—where erst some Alaric
Fought his last fight, and every warrior threw
A stone to tell for ages where he lay.
Then all advanced, and, ranging in a square,
Stretch'd forth their arms as on the holy cross,
From each to each their sable cloaks extending,
That, like the solemn hangings of a tent,
Cover'd us round; and in the midst I stood,
Weary and faint, and face to face with one
Whose voice, whose look dispenses life and death

Whose heart knows no relentings. Instantly
A light was kindled, and the bandit spoke.
"I know thee. Thou hast sought us, for the sport
Slipping thy blood-hounds with a hunter's cry;
And thou hast found at last. Were I as thou,
I in thy grasp as thou art now in ours,
Soon should I make a midnight spectacle,
Soon, limb by limb, be mangled on a wheel,
Then gibbeted to blacken for the vultures.
But I would teach thee better—how to spare.
Write as I dictate. If thy ransom comes,
Thou livest. If not—but answer not, I pray,
Lest thou provoke me. I may strike thee dead;
And know, young man, it is an easier thing
To do it than to say it. Write, and thus."—
I wrote. "'Tis well," he cried. "A peasant boy,
Trusty and swift of foot, shall bear it hence.
Meanwhile lie down and rest. This cloak of mine
Will serve thee; it has weather'd many a storm."
The watch was set; and twice it had been changed,
When morning broke, and a wild bird, a hawk,
Flew in a circle, screaming. I look'd up,
And all were gone, save him who now kept guard,
And on his arms lay musing. Young he seem'd,
And sad, as though he could indulge at will
Some secret sorrow. "Thou shrink'st back," he said.
"Well mayst thou, lying, as thou dost, so near
A ruffian,—one for ever link'd and bound
To guilt and infamy. There was a time
When he had not perhaps been deem'd unworthy,
When he had watch'd that planet to its setting,
And dwelt with pleasure on the meanest thing
That nature has given birth to. Now 'tis past.
"Wouldst thou know more? My story is an old one.
I loved, was scorn'd; I trusted, was betray'd;
And in my anguish, my necessity,
Met with the fiend, the tempter—in Rusconi.
'Why thus?' he cried. 'Thou wouldst be free, and darest not.
Come and assert thy birthright while thou canst.
A robber's cave is better than a dungeon;
And death itself, what is it at the worst,
What, but a harlequin's leap?' Him I had known,
Had served with, suffer'd with; and on the walls
Of Capua, while the moon went down, I swore
Allegiance on his dagger.
Dost thou ask
How I have kept my oath? Thou shalt be told,
Cost what it may.—But grant me, I implore,
Grant me a passport to some distant land,
That I may never, never more be named.
Thou wilt, I know thou wilt.
Two months ago,
When on a vineyard hill we lay conceal'd,
And scatter'd up and down as we were wont,
I heard a damsel singing to herself,
And soon espied her, coming all alone,
In her first beauty. Up a path she came,
Leafy and intricate, singing her song,
A song of love, by snatches; breaking off
If but a flower, an insect in the sun
Pleased for an instant; then as carelessly
The strain resuming, and, where'er she stopt,
Rising on tiptoe underneath the boughs
To pluck a grape in very wantonness.
Her look, her mien, and maiden ornaments,
Show'd gentle birth; and, step by step, she came
Nearer and nearer to the dreadful snare.
None else were by; and, as I gazed unseen,
Her youth, her innocence and gayety
Went to my heart; and, starting up, I cried,
'Fly—for your life!' Alas, she shriek'd, she fell
And, as I caught her falling, all rush'd forth.
'A wood nymph!' said Rusconi. 'By the light,
Lovely as Hebe. Lay her in the shade.'
I heard him not. I stood as in a trance.
'What,' he exclaim'd, with a malicious smile,
'Wouldst thou rebel?' I did as he required.
'Now bear her hence to the well-head below
A few cold drops will animate this marble.
Go! 'Tis an office all will envy thee;
But thou hast earn'd it.'
As I stagger'd down,
Unwilling to surrender her sweet body;
Her golden hair dishevell'd on a neck
Of snow, and her fair eyes closed as in sleep,
Frantic with love, with hate, 'Great God!' I cried,
(I had almost forgotten how to pray,)
'Why may I not, while yet—while yet I can,
Release her from a thraldom worse than death?'
'Twas done as soon as said. I kiss'd her brow,
And smote her with my dagger. A short cry
She utter'd, but she stirr'd not; and to heaven
Her gentle spirit fled. 'Twas where the path
In its descent turn'd suddenly. No eye
Observed me, though their steps were following fast.
But soon a yell broke forth, and all at once
Levell'd their deadly aim. Then I had ceased
To trouble or be troubled, and had now
(Would I were there!) been slumbering in my grave,
Had not Rusconi with a terrible shout
Thrown himself in between us, and exclaim'd,
Grasping my arm, 'Tis bravely, nobly done!
Is it for deeds like these thou wear'st a sword?
Was this the business that thou camest upon?
—But 'tis his first offence, and let it pass.
Like the young tiger he has tasted blood,
And may do much hereafter. He can strike
Home to the hilt.' Then in an under tone,
'Thus wouldst thou justify the pledge I gave,
When in the eyes of all I read distrust?
For once,' and on his cheek, methought, I saw
The blush of virtue, 'I will save thee, Albert;
Again, I cannot.'"
Ere his tale was told,
As on the heath we lay, my ransom came;
And in six days, with no ungrateful mind,
Albert was sailing on a quiet sea.
—But the night wears, and thou art much in need
Of rest. The young Antonio, with his torch,
Is waiting to conduct thee to thy chamber.

XV.

NAPLES.

This region, surely, is not of the earth.*
Was it not dropt from heaven? Not a grove,
Citron, or pine, or cedar, not a grot,

* Un pezzo di cielo caduto in terro.—*Sannazaro.*

Sea-worn and mantled with the gadding vine,
But breathes enchantment. Not a cliff but flings
On the clear wave some image of delight,
Some cabin roof glowing with crimson flowers,
Some ruin'd temple or fallen monument,
To muse on as the bark is gliding by,
And be it mine to muse there, mine to glide,
From daybreak, when the mountain pales his fire,
Yet more and more, and from the mountain top,
Till then invisible, a smoke ascends,
Solemn and slow, as erst from Ararat,
When he the patriarch, who escaped the flood,
Was with his household sacrificing there—
From daybreak to that hour, the last and best,
When, one by one, the fishing boats come forth,
Each with its glimmering lantern at the prow,
And, when the nets are thrown, the evening hymn
Steals o'er the trembling waters.

Everywhere
Fable and truth have shed, in rivalry,
Each her peculiar influence. Fable came,
And laugh'd and sung, arraying truth in flowers,
Like a young child her grandam. Fable came;
Earth, sea, and sky reflecting, as she flew,
A thousand, thousand colours not their own:
And at her bidding, lo! a dark descent
To Tartarus, and those thrice happy fields,
Those fields with ether pure and purple light
Ever invested, scenes by him described,*
Who here was wont to wander, record
What they reveal'd, and on the western shore
Sleeps in a silent grove, o'erlooking thee,
Beloved Parthenope.

Yet here, methinks,
Truth wants no ornament, in her own shape
Filling the mind by turns with awe and love,
By turns inclining to wild ecstasy,
And soberest meditation.

Here the vines
Wed, each her elm, and o'er the golden grain
Hang their luxuriant clusters, checkering
The sunshine; where, when cooler shadows fall,
And the mild moon her fairy net-work weaves,
The lute, or mandoline, accompanied
By many a voice yet sweeter than their own,
Kindles, nor slowly; and the dance† displays
The gentle arts and witcheries of love,
Its hopes and fears and feignings, till the youth
Drops on his knee as vanquish'd, and the maid,
Her tambourine uplifting with a grace,
Nature's and Nature's only, bids him rise.

But here the mighty monarch underneath,
He in his palace of fire, diffuses round
A dazzling splendour. Here, unseen, unheard,
Opening another Eden in the wild,
He works his wonders; save, when issuing forth
In thunder, he blots out the sun, the sky,
And, mingling all things earthly as in scorn,
Exalts the valley, lays the mountain low,
Pours many a torrent from his burning lake,
And in an hour of universal mirth,
What time the trump proclaims the festival,
Buries some capital city, there to sleep
The sleep of ages—till a plough, a spade
Disclose the secret, and the eye of day
Glares coldly on the streets, the skeletons,
Each in his place, each in his gay attire,
And eager to enjoy.

Let us go round,
And let the sail be slack, the course be slow,
That at our leisure, as we coast along,
We may contemplate, and from every scene
Receive its influence. The Cumæan towers,
There did they rise, sun-gilt; and here thy groves
Delicious Baiæ. Here (what would they not?)
The masters of the earth, unsatisfied,
Built in the sea; and now the boatman steers
O'er many a crypt and vault yet glimmering,
O'er many a broad and indestructible arch,
The deep foundations of their palaces;
Nothing now heard ashore, so great the change,
Save when the sea-mew clamours, or the owl
Hoots in the temple.

What the mountainous isle,*
Seen in the south? 'Tis where a monster dwelt,†
Who hurl'd his victims from the topmost cliff;
Then and then only merciful, so slow,
So subtle were the tortures they endured.
Fearing and fear'd he lived, cursing and cursed
And still the dungeons in the rock breathe out
Darkness, distemper.—Strange, that one so vile
Should from his den strike terror through the world,
Should, where withdrawn in his decrepitude,
Say to the noblest, be they where they might,
"Go from the earth!" and from the earth they went.
Yet such things were—and will be, when mankind,
Losing all virtue, lose all energy;
And for the loss incur the penalty,
Trodden down and trampled.

Let us turn the prow,
And in the track of him who went to die,‡
Traverse this valley of waters, landing where
A waking dream awaits us. At a step
Two thousand years roll backward, and we stand,
Like those so long within that awful place,§
Immovable, nor asking, Can it be?
Once did I linger there alone, till day
Closed, and at length the calm of twilight came,
So grateful, yet so solemn! At the fount,
Just where the three ways meet, I stood and look'd,
('Twas near a noble house, the house of Pansa,)
And all was still as in the long, long night
That follow'd, when the shower of ashes fell,
When they that sought Pompeii, sought in vain;
It was not to be found. But now a ray,
Bright and yet brighter, on the pavement glanced,
And on the wheel-track worn for centuries,
And on the stepping-stones from side to side,
O'er which the maidens, with their water-urns
Were wont to trip so lightly. Full and clear,
The moon was rising, and at once reveal'd
The name of every dweller, and his craft;
Shining throughout with an unusual lustre,
And lighting up this city of the dead.

* Virgil. † The tarantella.

* Capreæ. † Tiberius.
‡ The elder Pliny. § Pompeii.

Here lived a miller; silent and at rest
His millstones now. In old companionship
Still do they stand as on the day he went,
Each ready for its office—but he comes not.
And here, hard by, (where one in idleness
Has stopt to scrawl a ship, an armed man;
And in a tablet on the wall we read
Of shows ere long to be,) a sculptor wrought,
Nor meanly; blocks, half chisell'd into life,
Waiting his call. Here long, as yet attests
The trodden floor, an olive merchant drew
From many an ample jar, no more replenish'd;
And here from his a vintner served his guests
Largely, the stain of his o'erflowing cups
Fresh on the marble. On the bench, beneath,
They sate and quaff'd, and look'd on them that pass'd,
Gravely discussing the last news from Rome.
But lo, engraven on a threshold stone,
That word of courtesy, so sacred once,
Hail! At a master's greeting we may enter.
And lo, a fairy palace! everywhere,
As through the courts and chambers we advance,
Floors of mosaic, walls of arabesque,
And columns clustering in patrician splendour.
But hark, a footstep! May we not intrude?
And now, methinks, I hear a gentle laugh,
And gentle voices mingling as in converse!
—And now a harp-string as struck carelessly,
And now—along the corridor it comes—
I cannot err, a filling as of baths!
—Ah, no, 'tis but a mockery of the sense,
Idle and vain! We are but where we were;
Still wandering in a city of the dead!

XVI.

THE BAG OF GOLD.

I DINE very often with the good old Cardinal *** and, I should add, with his cats; for they always sit at his table, and are much the gravest of the company. His beaming countenance makes us forget his age; nor did I ever see it clouded till yesterday, when, as we were contemplating the sunset from his terrace, he happened, in the course of our conversation, to allude to an affecting circumstance in his early life.

He had just left the university of Palermo and was entering the army, when he became acquainted with a young lady of great beauty and merit, a Sicilian of a family as illustrious as his own. Living near each other, they were often together; and, at an age like theirs, friendship soon turns to love. But his father, for what reason I forget, refused his consent to their union; till, alarmed at the declining health of his son, he promised to oppose it no longer, if, after a separation of three years, they continued as much in love as ever.

Relying on that promise, he said, I set out on a long journey, but in my absence the usual arts were resorted to. Our letters were intercepted; and false rumours were spread—first of my indifference, then of my inconstancy, then of my marriage with a rich heiress of Sienna; and, when at length I returned to make her my own, I found her in a convent of Ursuline nuns. She had taken the veil; and I, said he with a sigh—what else remained for me? —I went into the church.

Yet many, he continued, as if to turn the conversation, very many have been happy, though we were not; and, if I am not abusing an old man's privilege, let me tell you a story with a better catastrophe. It was told to me when a boy; and you may not be unwilling to hear it, for it bears some resemblance to that of the Merchant of Venice.

We were now arrived at a pavilion that commanded one of the noblest prospects imaginable; the mountains, the sea, and the islands illuminated by the last beams of day; and, sitting down there, he proceeded with his usual vivacity; for the sadness, that had come across him, was gone.

There lived in the fourteenth century, near Bologna, a widow lady of the Lambertini family, called Madonna Lucrezia, who in a revolution of the state had known the bitterness of poverty, and had even begged her bread; kneeling day after day like a statue at the gate of the cathedral; her rosary in her left hand and her right held out for charity her long black veil concealing a face that had once adorned a court, and had received the homage of as many sonnets as Petrarch has written on Laura.

But fortune had at last relented; a legacy from a distant relation had come to her relief; and she was now the mistress of a small inn at the foot of the Apennines; where she entertained as well as she could, and where those only stopped who were contented with a little. The house was still standing, when in my youth I passed that way; though the sign of the White Cross, the cross of the Hospitallers, was no longer to be seen over the door; a sign which she had taken, if we may believe the tradition there, in honour of a maternal uncle, a grandmaster of that order, whose achievements in Palestine she would sometimes relate. A mountain stream ran through the garden; and at no great distance, where the road turned on its way to Bologna, stood a little chapel, in which a lamp was always burning before a picture of the virgin, a picture of great antiquity, the work of some Greek artist.

Here she was dwelling, respected by all who knew her; when an event took place, which threw her into the deepest affliction. It was at noonday in September that three foot travellers arrived, and, seating themselves on a bench under her vine trellis, were supplied with a flagon of Aleatico by a lovely girl, her only child, the image of her former self. The eldest spoke like a Venetian, and his beard was short and pointed after the fashion of Venice. In his demeanour he affected great courtesy, but his look inspired little confidence; for when he smiled, which he did continually, it was with his lips only, not with his eyes; and they were always turned from yours. His companions were bluff and frank in their manner, and on their tongues had many a soldier's oath. In their hats they wore a medal, such as in that age was often distributed in war; and they were evidently subalterns in one of those free bands which were always ready to serve in any quarrel, if a service it could be called, where a battle was little more than a mockery; and the slain, as on an opera stage,

were up and fighting to-morrow. Overcome with the heat, they threw aside their cloaks; and, with their gloves tucked under their belts, continued for some time in earnest conversation.

At length they rose to go; and the Venetians thus addressed their hostess. "Excellent lady, may we leave under your roof, for a day or two, this bag of gold?" "You may," she replied gayly. "But remember, we fasten only with a latch. Bars and bolts we have none in our village; and, if we had, where would be your security?"

"In your word, lady."

"But what if I died to-night? where would it be then?" said she, laughing. "The money would go to the church; for none could claim it."

"Perhaps you will favour us with an acknowledgment."

"If you will write it."

An acknowledgment was written accordingly, and she signed it before Master Bartolo, the village physician, who had just called by chance to learn the news of the day; the gold to be delivered when applied for, but to be delivered (these were the words) not to one—nor to two—but to the three; words wisely introduced by those to whom it belonged, knowing what they knew of each other. The gold they had just released from a miser's chest in Perugia; and they were now on a scent that promised more.

They and their shadows were no sooner departed, than the Venetian returned, saying, "Give me leave to set my seal on the bag, as the others have done;" and she placed it on a table before him. But in that moment she was called away to receive a cavalier, who had just dismounted from his horse; and, when she came back, it was gone. The temptation had proved irresistible; and the man and the money had vanished together.

"Wretched woman that I am!" she cried, as in an agony of grief she fell on her daughter's neck; "what will become of us? Are we again to be cast out into the wide world?—Unhappy child, would that thou hadst never been born!" and all day long she lamented; but her tears availed her little. The others were not slow in returning to claim their due; and there were no tidings of the thief: he had fled far away with his plunder. A process against her was instantly begun in Bologna; and what defence could she make?—how release herself from the obligation of the bond? Wilfully or in negligence she had parted with it to one, when she should have kept it for all, and inevitable ruin awaited her!

"Go, Gianetta," said she to her daughter, "take this veil, which your mother has worn and wept under so often, and implore the counsellor Calderino to plead for us on the day of trial. He is generous, and will listen to the unfortunate. But, if he will not, go from door to door; Monaldi cannot refuse us. Make haste, my child; but remember the chapel as you pass by it. Nothing prospers without a prayer."

Alas, she went, but in vain. These were retained against them; those demanded more than they had to give; and all bade them despair. What was to be done? No advocate; and the cause to come on to-morrow!

Now Gianetta had a lover; and he was a studen of the law, a young man of great promise, Lorenzo Martelli. He had studied long and diligently under that learned lawyer, Giovanni Andreas, who, though little of stature, was great in renown, and by his contemporaries was called the Arch-doctor, the Rabbi of Doctors, the Light of the World. Under him he had studied, sitting on the same bench with Petrarch; and also under his daughter, Novella, who would often lecture to the scholars, when her father was otherwise engaged, placing herself behind a small curtain, lest her beauty should divert their thoughts; a precaution in this instance at least unnecessary, Lorenzo having lost his heart to another.*

To him she flies in her necessity; but of what assistance can he be? He has just taken his place at the bar, but he has never spoken; and how stand up alone, unpractised and unprepared as he is, against an array that would alarm the most experienced?—"Were I as mighty as I am weak," said he, "my fears for you would make me as nothing. But I will be there, Gianetta; and may the Friend of the friendless give me strength in that hour! Even now my heart fails me; but, come what will, while I have a loaf to share, you and your mother shall never want. I will beg through the world for you."

The day arrives, and the court assembles. The claim is stated, and the evidence given. And now the defence is called for—but none is made; not a syllable is uttered; and, after a pause and a consultation of some minutes, the judges are proceeding to give judgment, silence having been proclaimed in the court, when Lorenzo rises and thus addresses them.

"Reverend signors. Young as I am, may I venture to speak before you? I would speak in behalf of one who has none else to help her; and I will not keep you long.

"Much has been said; much on the sacred nature of the obligation—and we acknowledge it in its full force. Let it be fulfilled, and to the last letter. It is what we solicit, what we require. But to whom is the bag of gold to be delivered? What says the bond? Not to one—not to two—but to the three. Let the three stand forth and claim it."

From that day, (for who can doubt the issue?) none were sought, none employed, but the subtle, the eloquent Lorenzo. Wealth followed fame; nor need I say how soon he sat at his marriage feast or who sat beside him.

XVII.

A CHARACTER.

One of two things Montrioli may have,
My envy or compassion. Both he cannot.
Yet on he goes, numbering as miseries,
What least of all he would consent to lose,
What most, indeed, he prides himself upon,
And, for not having, most despises me.
"At morn the minister exacts an hour;
At noon the king. Then comes the council board;

* Ce pourroit être, says Bayle, la matière d'un joli problême: on pourroit examiner si cette fille avançoit, ou si elle retardoit le profit de ses auditeurs, en leur cachant son beau visage. Il y auroit cent choses à dire pour et contre là-dessus

And then the chase, the supper. When, an! when,
The leisure and the liberty I sigh for?
Not when at home; at home a miscreant crew,
That now no longer serve me, mine the service.
And then that old hereditary bore,
The steward, his stories longer than his rent-roll,
Who enters, quill in ear, and, one by one,
As though I lived to write and wrote to live,
Unrol's his leases for my signature."
He clanks his fetters to disturb my peace.
Yet who would wear them, and become the slave
Of wealth and power, renouncing willingly
His freedom, and the hours that fly so fast,
A burden or a curse when misemploy'd,
But to the wise how precious!—every day
A little life, a blank to be inscribed
With gentle deeds, such as in after-time
Console, rejoice, whene'er we turn the leaf
To read them? All, wherever in the scale
Have, be they high or low, or rich or poor,
Inherit they a sheep-hook or a sceptré,
Much to be grateful for; but most has he,
Born in that middle sphere, that temperate zone,
Where knowledge lights his lamp, there most secure
And wisdom comes, if ever, she who dwells
Above the clouds, above the firmament,
That seraph sitting in the heaven of heavens.
What men most covet, wealth, distinction, power,
Are baubles nothing worth, that only serve
To rouse us up, as children in the schools
Are roused up to exertion. The reward
Is in the race we run, not in the prize;
And they, the few, that have it ere they earn it,
Having by favour or inheritance,
These dangerous gifts placed in their idle hands,
And all that should await on worth well tried,
All in the glorious days of old reserved
For manhood most mature or reverend age,
Know not, nor ever can, the generous pride
That glows in him who on himself relies,
Entering the lists of life.

XVIII.

SORRENTO.

He who sets sail from Naples, when the wind
Blows fragrance from Posilipo, may soon,
Crossing from side to side that beautiful lake,
Land underneath the cliff, where once among
The children gathering shells along the shore,
One laugh'd and play'd, unconscious of his fate;*
His to drink deep of sorrow, and, through life,
To be the scorn of them that knew him not,
Trampling alike the giver and his gift,
The gift a pearl precious, ineştimable,
A lay divine, a lay of love and war,
To charm, ennoble, and, from age to age,
Sweeten the labour, when the oar was plied
Or on the Adrian or the Tuscan sea.
There would I linger—then go forth again,
And hover round that region unexplored,
Where to Salvator (when, as some relate,
By chance or choice he led a bandit's life,
Yet oft withdrew, alone and unobserved,
To wander through those awful solitudes)
Nature reveal'd herself. Unveil'd she stood,
In all her wildness, all her majesty,
As in that elder time, ere man was made.
There would I linger—then go forth again;
And he who steers due east, doubling the cape,
Discovers, in a crevice of the rock,
The fishing town, Amalfi. Haply there
A heaving bark, an anchor on the strand,
May tell him what it is; but what it was
Cannot be told so soon.
The time has been,
When on the quays along the Syrian coast,
'Twas ask'd, and eagerly, at break of dawn,
"What ships are from Amalfi?" when her coins
Silver and gold, circled from clime to clime;
From Alexandria southward to Sennaar,
And eastward, through Damascus and Cabul
And Samarcand, to thy great wall, Cathay.
Then were the nations by her wisdom sway'd
And every crime on every sea was judged
According to her judgments. In her port
Prows strange, uncouth, from Nile and Niger met
People of various feature, various speech;
And in their countries many a house of prayer,
And many a shelter, where no shelter was,
And many a well, like Jacob's in the wild,
Rose at her bidding. Then in Palestine,
By the way-side, in sober grandeur stood
An hospital, that, night and day, received
The pilgrims of the west; and, when 'twas ask'd
"Who are the noble founders?" every tongue
At once replied, "The merchants of Amalfi."
That hospital, when Godfrey scaled the walls,
Sent forth its holy men in complete steel;
And hence, the cowl relinquish'd for the helm,
That chosen band, valiant, invincible,
So long renown'd as champions of the cross,
In Rhodes, in Malta.
For three hundred years,
There, unapproach'd but from the deep, they dwelt
Assail'd for ever, yet from age to age
Acknowledging no master. From the deep
They gather'd in their harvests; bringing home,
In the same ship, relics of ancient Greece,
That land of glory where their fathers lay,
Grain from the golden vales of Sicily,
And Indian spices. When at length they fell,
Losing their liberty, they left mankind
A legacy, compared with which the wealth
Of eastern kings—what is it in the scale?—
The mariner's compass.
They are now forgot,
And with them all they did, all they endured,
Struggling with fortune. When Sicardi stood,
And, with a shout like thunder, cried, "Come forth,
And serve me in Salerno!" forth they came,
Covering the sea, a mournful spectacle;
The women wailing, and the heavy oar
Falling unheard. Not thus did they return,
The tyrant slain; though then the grass of years
Grew in their streets.
There now to him who sails
Under the shore, a few white villages,
Scatter'd above, below, some in the clouds,
Some on the margin of the dark blue sea,
And glittering through their lemon groves, announce

* Tasso.

The region of Amalfi. Then, half-fallen,
A lonely watch tower on the precipice,
Their ancient land-mark, comes. Long may it last;
And to the seaman in a distant age,
Though now he little thinks how large his debt,
Serve for their monument!

XIX.

PÆSTUM.

They stand between the mountains and the sea
Awful memorials, but of whom we know not!*
The seaman, passing, gazes from the deck.
The buffalo driver, in his shaggy cloak,
Points to the work of magic and moves on.
Time was they stood along the crowded street,
Temples of gods! and on their ample steps
What various habits, various tongues beset
The brazen gates for prayer and sacrifice!
Time was perhaps the third was sought for justice;
And here the accuser stood, and there the accused;
And here the judges sate, and heard, and judged.
All silent now!—as in the ages past,
Trodden under foot and mingled, dust with dust.

How many centuries did the sun go round
From Mount Alburnus to the Tyrrhene sea,
While, by some spell render'd invisible,
Or, if approach'd, approach'd by him alone
Who saw as though he saw not, they remain'd
As in the darkness of a sepulchre,
Waiting the appointed time! All, all within
Proclaims that nature had resumed her right,
And taken to herself what man renounced;
No cornice, triglyph, or worn abacus,
But with thick ivy hung or branching fern;
Their iron-brown o'erspread with brightest verdure!

From my youth upward have I longed to tread
This classic ground—And am I here at last?
Wandering at will through the long porticoes,
And catching, as through some majestic grove,
Now the blue ocean, and now, chaos-like,
Mountains and mountain gulfs, and, halfway up,
Towns like the living rock from which they grew?
A cloudy region, black and desolate,
Where once a slave withstood a world in arms.†

The air is sweet with violets, running wild
'Mid broken friezes and fallen capitals;
Sweet as when Tully, writing down his thoughts,
Those thoughts so precious and so lately lost,
(Turning to thee, divine philosophy,
Ever at hand to calm his troubled soul,)
Sail'd slowly by, two thousand years ago,
For Athens; when a ship, if north-east winds
Blew from the Pæstan gardens, slack'd her course.

On as he moved along the level shore,
These temples, in their splendour eminent
Mid arcs and obelisks, and domes and towers,
Reflecting back the radiance of the west,
Well might he dream of glory!—Now, coil'd up
The serpent sleeps within them; the she-wolf
Suckles her young: and, as alone I stand
In this, the nobler pile, the elements
Of earth and air its only floor and covering,
How solemn is the stillness! Nothing stirs
Save the shrill-voiced cicala flitting round
On the rough pediment to sit and sing;
Or the green lizard rustling through the grass,
And up the fluted shaft with short quick motion,
To vanish in the chinks that time has made.

In such an hour as this, the sun's broad disk
Seen at his setting, and a flood of light
Filling the courts of these old sanctuaries,
(Gigantic shadows, broken and confused,
Across the innumerable columns flung,)
In such an hour he came, who saw and told,
Led by the mighty genius of the place.*

Walls of some capital city first appear'd,
Half razed, half sunk, or scatter'd as in scorn;
—And what within them? what but in the midst
These three in more than their original grandeur,
And, round about, no stone upon another?
As if the spoiler had fallen back in fear,
And, turning, left them to the elements.

'Tis said a stranger in the days of old,
(Some say a Dorian, some a Sybarite;
But distant things are ever lost in clouds,)
'Tis said a stranger came, and, with his plough
Traced out the site; and Posidonia rose,
Severely great, Neptune the tutelar god;
A Homer's language murmuring in her streets,
And in her haven many a mast from Tyre.
Then came another, an unbidden guest.
He knock'd and enter'd with a train in arms;
And all was changed, her very name and language.
The Tyrian merchant, shipping at his door
Ivory and gold, and silk, and frankincense,
Sail'd as before, but sailing, cried, "For Pæstum!"
And now a Virgil, now an Ovid sung
Pæstum's twice-blowing roses; while, within,
Parents and children mourn'd—and every year
('Twas on the day of some old festival)
Met to give way to tears, and once again,
Talk'd in the ancient tongue of things gone by.†
At length an Arab climb'd the battlements,
Slaying the sleepers in the dead of night;
And from all eyes the glorious vision fled!
Leaving a place lonely and dangerous,
Where whom the robber spares, a deadlier foe‡
Strikes at unseen—and at a time when joy
Opens the heart, when summer skies are blue,
And the clear air is soft and delicate;
For then the demon works—then with that air
The thoughtless wretch drinks in a subtle poison
Lulling to sleep; and, when he sleeps, he dies.

But what are these still standing in the midst?
The earth has rock'd beneath; the thunder-stone
Pass'd through and through, and left its traces there
Yet still they stand as by some unknown charter.
O, they are nature's own! and, as allied
To the vast mountains and the eternal sea,
They want no written history; theirs a voice
For ever speaking to the heart of man!

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* The temples of Pæstum are three in number; and have survived, nearly nine centuries, the total destruction of the city. Tradition is silent concerning them; but they must have existed now between two and three thousand years

† Spartacus. See Plutarch in the life of Crassus.

* They are said to have been discovered by accident about the middle of the last century.

† Athenæus, xiv. ‡ The Mal'aria.

XX.

MONTE CASSINO.

"WHAT hangs behind that curtain?"—"Wouldst thou learn?
If thou art wise, thou wouldst not. 'Tis by some
Believed to be his master-work, who look'd
Beyond the grave, and on the chapel wall,
As though the day were come, were come and past,
Drew the last judgment.*—But the wisest err.
He who in secret wrought, and gave it life,
For life is surely there and visible change,
Life, such as none could of himself impart,
(They who behold it, go not as they came,
But meditate for many and many a day,)
Sleeps in the vault beneath. We know not much;
But what we know, we will communicate.
'Tis in an ancient record of the house;
And may it make thee tremble, lest thou fall!
Once—on a Christmas eve—ere yet the roof
Rung with the hymn of the Nativity,
There came a stranger to the convent gate,
And ask'd admittance; ever and anon,
As if he sought what most he fear'd to find
Looking behind him. When within the walls,
These walls so sacred and inviolable,
Still did he look behind him; oft and long,
With haggard eye, and curling, quivering lip,
Catching at vacancy. Between the fits,
For here, 'tis said, he linger'd while he lived,
He would discourse, and with a mastery,
A charm by none resisted, none explain'd,
Unfelt before; but when his cheek grew pale,
All was forgotten. Then, howe'er employ'd,
He would break off, and start as if he caught
A glimpse of something that would not be gone
And turn and gaze, and shrink into himself,
As though the fiend was there, and, face to face,
Scowl'd o'er his shoulder.
Most devout he was;
Most unremitting in the services;
Then, only then, untroubled, unassail'd;
And, to beguile a melancholy hour,
Would sometimes exercise that noble art
He learnt in Florence; with a master's hand,
As to this day the sacristy attests,
Painting the wonders of the Apocalypse.
At length he sunk to rest, and in his cell
Left, when he went, a work in secret done,
The portrait, for a portrait it must be,
That hangs behind the curtain. Whence he drew,
None here can doubt: for they that come to catch
The faintest glimpse—to catch it and be gone,
Gaze as he gazed, then shrink into themselves,
Acting the selfsame part. But why 'twas drawn,
Whether in penance, to atone for guilt,
Or to record the anguish guilt inflicts,
Or haply to familiarize his mind
With what he could not fly from, none can say,
For none could learn the burden of his soul."

XXI.

THE HARPER.

IT was a harper, wandering with his harp,
His only treasure; a majestic man,
By time and grief ennobled, not subdued;
Though from his height descending, day by day,
And, as his upward look at once betray'd,
Blind as old Homer. At a fount he sate,
Well-known to many a weary traveller;
His little guide, a boy not seven years old,
But grave, considerate beyond his years,
Sitting beside him. Each had ate his crust
In silence, drinking of the virgin spring;
And now in silence, as their custom was,
The sun's decline awaited.
But the child
Was worn with travel. Heavy sleep weigh'd down
His eyelids; and the grandsire, when we came,
Embolden'd by his love and by his fear,
His fear lest night o'ertake them on the road,
Humbly besought me to convey them both
A little onward. Such small services
Who can refuse?—Not I; and him who can,
Blest though he be with every earthly gift,
I cannot envy. He, if wealth be his,
Knows not its uses. So from noon till night,
Within a crazed and tatter'd vehicle,
That yet display'd, in old emblazonry,
A shield as splendid as the Bardi wear;
We lumber'd on together; the old man
Beguiling many a league of half its length,
When question'd the adventures of his life,
And all the dangers he had undergone;
His shipwrecks on inhospitable coasts,
And his long warfare.
They were bound, he said,
To a great fair at Reggio; and the boy,
Believing all the world were to be there,
And I among the rest, let loose his tongue,
And promised me much pleasure. His short trance,
Short as it was, had, like a charmed cup,
Restored his spirit, and, as on we crawl'd,
Slow as the snail, (my muleteer dismounting,
And now his mules addressing, now his pipe,
And now Luigi,) he pour'd out his heart,
Largely repaying me. At length the sun
Departed, setting in a sea of gold;
And, as we gazed, he bade me rest assured
That like the setting would the rising be.
Their harp—it had a voice oracular,
And in the desert, in the crowded street,
Spoke when consulted. If the treble chord
Twanged shrill and clear, o'er hill and dale they went,
The grandsire, step by step, led by the child
And not a rain-drop from a passing cloud
Fell on their garments. Thus it spoke to-day
Inspiring joy, and, in the young one's mind,
Brightening a path already full of sunshine.

XXII.

THE FELUCA.

DAY glimmer'd; and beyond the precipice
(Which my mule follow'd as in love with fear
Or as in scorn, yet more and more inclining
To tempt the danger where it menaced most
A sea of vapour roll'd. Methought we went
Along the utmost edge of this, our world;
But soon the surges fled, and we descried,
Nor dimly, though the lark was silent yet,

* Michael Angelo.

Thy gulf, La Spezzia. Ere the morning gun,
Ere the first day-streak, we alighted there;
And not a breath, a murmur! Every sail
Slept in the offing. Yet along the shore
Great was the stir; as at the noontide hour,
None unemploy'd. Where from its native rock
A streamlet, clear and full, ran to the sea,
The maidens knelt and sung as they were wont,
Washing their garments. Where it met the tide,
Sparkling and lost, an ancient pinnace lay
Keel upward, and the fagot blazed, the tar
Fumed from the caldron; while, beyond the fort,
Whither I wander'd, step by step led on,
The fishers dragg'd their net, the fish within
At every heave fluttering and full of life,
At every heave striking their silver fins
'Gainst the dark meshes.
Soon a boatman's shout
Re-echoed; and red bonnets on the beach,
Waving, recall'd me. We embark'd, and left
That noble haven, where, when Genoa reign'd,
A hundred galleys shelter'd—in the day,
When lofty spirits met, and, deck to deck,
Doria, Pisani fought; that narrow field
Ample enough for glory. On we went,
Ruffling with many an oar the crystalline sea,
On from the rising to the setting sun,
In silence—underneath a mountain ridge,
Untamed, untameable, reflecting round
The saddest purple; nothing to be seen
Of life or culture, save where, at the foot,
Some village and its church, a scanty line,
Athwart the wave gleam'd faintly. Fear of ill
Narrow'd our course, fear of the hurricane,
And that yet greater scourge, the crafty Moor,
Who, like a tiger prowling for his prey,
Springs and is gone, and on the adverse coast
(Where Tripoli and Tunis and Algiers
Forge fetters, and white turbans on the mole
Gather, whene'er the crescent comes display'd
Over the cross) his human merchandise
To many a curious, many a cruel eye
Exposes. Ah, how oft where now the sun
Slept on the shore, have ruthless cimeters
Flash'd through the lattice, and a swarthy crew
Dragg'd forth, ere long to number them for sale,
Ere long to part them in their agony,
Parent and child! How oft where now we rode
Over the billow, has a wretched son,
Or yet more wretched sire, grown gray in chains,
Labour'd, his hands upon the oar, his eyes
Upon the land—the land, that gave him birth;
And, as he gazed, his homestall through his tears
Fondly imagined; when a Christian ship
Of war appearing in her bravery,
A voice in anger cried, "Use all your strength!"
But when, ah when, do they that can, forbear
To crush the unresisting? Strange, that men,
Creatures so frail, so soon, alas! to die,
Should have the power, the will to make this world
A dismal prison-house, and life itself,
Life in its prime, a burden and a curse
To him who never wrong'd them! Who that breathes
Would not, when first he heard it, turn away
As from a tale monstrous, incredible?
Surely a sense of our mortality,
A consciousness how soon we shall be gone,
Or, if we linger—but a few short years—
How sure to look upon our brother's grave,
Should of itself incline to pity and love,
And prompt us rather to assist, relieve,
Than aggravate the evils each is heir to.
At length the day departed, and the moon
Rose like another sun, illumining
Waters and woods and cloud-capt promontories,
Glades for a hermit's cell, a lady's bower,
Scenes of elysium, such as night alone
Reveals below, nor often—scenes that fled
As at the waving of a wizard's wand,
And left behind them, as their parting gift,
A thousand nameless odours. All was still;
And now the nightingale her song pour'd forth
In such a torrent of heartfelt delight,
So fast it flow'd, her tongue so voluble,
As if she thought her hearers would be gone
Ere half was told. 'Twas where in the north-west
Still unassail'd and unassailable,
Thy pharos, Genoa, first display'd itself,
Burning in stillness on its craggy seat;
That guiding star, so oft the only one,
When those now glowing in the azure vault
Are dark and silent. 'Twas where o'er the sea,
For we were now within a cable's length,
Delicious gardens hung; green galleries,
And marble terraces in many a flight,
And fairy arches flung from cliff to cliff,
Wildering, enchanting; and, above them all,
A palace, such as somewhere in the east,
In Zenastan or Araby the blest,
Among its golden groves and fruits of gold,
And fountains scattering rainbows in the sun,
Rose, when Aladdin rubb'd the wondrous lamp;
Such, if not fairer; and, when we shot by,
A scene of revelry, in long array
The windows blazing. But we now approach'd
A city far renown'd;* and wonder ceased.

XXIII.

GENOA.

This house was Andrea Doria's. Here he lived
And here at eve relaxing, when ashore,
Held many a pleasant, many a grave discourse
With them that sought him, walking to and fro
As on his deck. 'Tis less in length and breadth
Than many a cabin in a ship of war;
But 'tis of marble, and at once inspires
The reverence due to ancient dignity.
He left it for a better; and 'tis now
A house of trade, the meanest merchandise
Cumbering its floors. Yet, fallen as it is,
'Tis still the noblest dwelling—even in Genoa!
And hadst thou, Andrea, lived there to the last,
Thou hadst done well; for there is that without,
That in the wall, which monarchs could not give,
Nor thou take with thee, that which says aloud,
It was thy country's gift to her deliverer.
'Tis in the heart of Genoa, (he who comes,
Must come on foot,) and in a place of stir;

Men on their daily business, early and late,
Thronging thy very threshold. But when there,
Thou wert among thy fellow citizens,
Thy children, for they hail'd thee as their sire;
And on a spot thou must have loved, for there,
Calling them round, thou gavest them more than life,
Giving what lost, makes life not worth the keeping.
There thou didst do indeed an act divine;
Nor couldst thou leave thy door or enter in,
Without a blessing on thee.
Thou art now
Again among them. Thy brave mariners,
They who had fought so often by thy side,
Staining the mountain billows, bore thee back;
And thou art sleeping in thy funeral chamber.
Thine was a glorious course; but couldst thou there,
Clad in thy cere-cloth—in that silent vault,
Where thou art gather'd to thy ancestors—
Open thy secret heart and tell us all,
Then should we hear thee with a sigh confess,
A sigh how heavy, that thy happiest hours
Were pass'd before these sacred walls were left,
Before the ocean wave thy wealth reflected,
And pomp and power drew envy, stirring up
Th' ambitious man,* that in a perilous hour
Fell from the plank.

A FAREWELL.†

And now farewell to Italy—perhaps
For ever! Yet, methinks, I could not go,
I could not leave it, were it mine to say,
"Farewell for ever!"
Many a courtesy,
That sought no recompense, and met with none
But in the swell of heart with which it came,
Have I experienced; not a cabin door,
Go where I would, but open'd with a smile;
From the first hour, when, in my long descent,
Strange perfumes rose, as if to welcome me,
From flowers that minister'd like unseen spirits;
From the first hour, when vintage songs broke forth,
A grateful earnest, and the southern lakes,
Dazzlingly bright, unfolded at my feet;
They that receive the cataracts, and ere long
Dismiss them, but how changed—onward to roll
From age to age in silent majesty,
Blessing the nations, and reflecting round
The gladness they inspire.
Gentle or rude,
No scene of life but has contributed
Much to remember—from the Polesine,
Where, when the south wind blows, and clouds on clouds
Gather and fall, the peasant freights his bark,
Mindful to migrate when the king of floods‡
Visits his humble dwelling, and the keel,
Slowly uplifted over field and fence,
Floats on a world of waters—from that low,
That level region, where no echo dwells,
Or, if she comes, comes in her saddest plight,
Hoarse, inarticulate—on to where the path
Is lost in rank luxuriance, and to breathe
Is to inhale distemper, if not death;
Where the wild boar retreats, when hunters chafe,
And, when the day-star flames, the buffalo herd,
Afflicted, plunge into the stagnant pool,
Nothing discern'd amid the water leaves,
Save here and there the likeness of a head,
Savage, uncouth; where none in human shape
Come, save the herdsman, levelling his length
Of lance with many a cry, or, Tartar-like,
Urging his steed along the distant hill
As from a danger. There, but not to rest,
I travell'd many a dreary league, nor turn'd
(Ah then least willing, as who had not been?)
When in the south, against the azure sky,
Three temples rose in soberest majesty,
The wondrous work of some heroic race.*
But now a long farewell! Oft, while I live
If once again in England, once again
In my own chimney nook, as night steals on,
With half shut eyes reclining, oft, methinks,
While the wind blusters, and the pelting rain
Clatters without, shall I recall to mind
The scenes, occurrences I met with here,
And wander in elysium; many a note
Of wildest melody, magician-like,
Awakening, such as the Calabrian horn,
Along the mountain side, when all is still,
Pours forth at folding time; and many a chant,
Solemn, sublime, such as at midnight flows
From the full choir, when richest harmonies
Break the deep silence of thy glens, La Cava;
To him who lingers there with listening ear,
Now lost and now descending as from heaven.

* Pæsto. † Written at Susa, May 1, 1822.
‡ The Po.

ODE TO SUPERSTITION.†

I. 1.

Hence, to the realms of night, dire demon, hence!
Thy chain of adamant can bind
That little world, the human mind,
And sink its noblest powers to impotence.
Wake the lion's loudest roar,
Clot his shaggy mane with gore,
With flashing fury bid his eyeballs shine;
Meek is his savage, sullen soul, to thine!
Thy touch, thy deadening touch has steel'd the breast,
Whence, through her April shower, soft pity smiled;
Has closed the heart each godlike virtue bless'd,
To all the silent pleadings of his child.‡
At thy command he plants the dagger deep,
At thy command exults, though nature bids him weep!

I. 2.

When, with a frown that froze the peopled earth,§
Thou dartedst thy huge head from high,
Night waved her banners o'er the sky,
And, brooding, gave her shapeless shadows birth,

* The temples of Pæstum. † Written in early youth.
‡ The sacrifice of Iphigenia. § Lucretius, I. 62.

Rocking on the billowy air,
Ha! what withering phantoms glare!
As blows the blast with many a sudden swell,
At each dead pause, what shrill-toned voices yell!
The sheeted spectre, rising from the tomb,
Points to the murderer's stab, and shudders by;
In every grove is felt a heavier gloom,
That veils its genius from the vulgar eye:
The spirit of the water rides the storm,
And, through the mist, reveals the terrors of his form.

I. 3.

O'er solid seas, where winter reigns,
And holds each mountain wave in chains,
The fur-clad savage, ere he guides his deer
By glistering starlight through the snow,
Breathes softly in her wondering ear
Each potent spell thou badest him know.
By thee inspired, on India's sands,
Full in the sun the Brahmin stands;
And, while the panting tigress hies
To quench her fever in the stream,
His spirit laughs in agonies,
Smit by the scorchings of the noontide beam.
Mark who mounts the sacred pyre,*
Blooming in her bridal vest:
She hurls the torch! she fans the fire!
To die is to be blest:
She clasps her lord to part no more,
And, sighing, sinks! but sinks to soar.
O'ershadowing Scotia's desert coast,
The sisters sail in dusky state,†
And, wrapt in clouds, in tempests tost,
Weave the airy web of fate;
While the lone shepherd, near the shipless main,‡
Sees o'er her hills advance the long-drawn funeral train.

II. 1.

Thou spakest, and lo! a new creation glow'd.
Each unhewn mass of living stone
Was clad in horrors not its own,
And at its base the trembling nations bow'd.
Giant Error, darkly grand,
Grasp'd the globe with iron hand.
Circled with seats of bliss, the lord of light
Saw prostrate worlds adore his golden height.
The statue, waking with immortal powers,§
Springs from its parent earth, and shakes the spheres;
Th' indignant pyramid sublimely towers,
And braves the efforts of a host of years.
Sweet music breathes her soul into the wind;
And bright-eyed painting stamps the image of the mind.

II. 2.

Round their rude ark old Egypt's sorcerers rise!
A timbrell'd anthem swells the gale,
And bids the god of thunders hail;‖
With lowings loud the captive god replies.
Clouds of incense woo thy smile,
Scaly monarch of the Nile!*
But ah! what myriads claim the bended knee!
Go, count the busy drops that swell the sea.
Proud land! what eye can trace thy mystic lore
Lock'd up in characters as dark as night?‡
What eye those long, long labyrinths dare explore,§
To which the parted soul oft wings her flight;
Again to visit her cold cell of clay,
Charm'd with perennial sweets, and smiling a decay.

II. 3.

On yon hoar summit, mildly bright‖
With purple ether's liquid light,
High o'er the world, the white-robed magi gaze
On dazzling bursts of heavenly fire;
Start at each blue, portentous blaze,
Each flame that flits with adverse spire.
But say, what sounds my ear invade
From Delphi's venerable shade?
The temple rocks, the laurel waves!
"The god! the god!" the sibyl cries.¶
Her figure swells, she foams, she raves!
Her figure swells to more than mortal size;
Streams of rapture roll along,
Silver notes ascend the skies:
Wake, echo, wake and catch the song,
O catch it, ere it dies!
The sibyl speaks, the dream is o'er,
The holy harpings charm no more.
In vain she checks the god's control;
His madding spirit fills her frame,
And moulds the features of her soul,
Breathing a prophetic flame.
The cavern frowns! its hundred mouths unclose,
And in the thunder's voice, the fate of empire flows!

III. 1.

Mona, thy Druid rites awake the dead!
Rites thy brown oaks would never dare
E'en whisper to the idle air;
Rites that have chain'd old ocean on his bed.
Shiver'd by thy piercing glance,
Pointless falls the hero's lance.
Thy magic bids th' imperial eagle fly,**
And blasts the laureate wreath of victory.
Hark! the bard's soul inspires the vocal string!
At every pause dread silence hovers o'er:
While murky night sails round on raven wing,
Deepening the tempest's howl, the torrent's roar;
Chased by the morn from Snowdon's awful brow,
Where late she sate and scowl'd on the black wave below.

* The funeral rite of the Hindoos.
† The fates of the northern mythology. See Mallet's Antiquities.
‡ An allusion to the second-sight.
§ See that fine description of the sudden animation of the Palladium, in the second book of the Æneid.
‖ The bull, Apis.

* The crocodile.
† According to an ancient proverb, it was less difficult in Egypt to find a god than a man.
‡ The hieroglyphics.
§ The catacombs.
‖ "The Persians," says Herodotus, "have no temples, altars, or statues. They sacrifice on the tops of the highest mountains." I. 131.
¶ Æn. VI. 46, etc.
** See Tacitus, l. xiv. c. 29.

III. 2.

Lo, steel-clad war his gorgeous standard rears!
The red cross squadrons madly rage,*
And mow through infancy and age;
Then kiss the sacred dust and melt in tears.
Veiling from the eye of day,
Penance dreams her life away;
In cloister'd solitude she sits and sighs,
While from each shrine still, small responses rise.
Hear, with what heartfelt beat, the midnight bell
Swings its slow summons through the hollow pile!
The weak, wan votarist leaves her twilight cell,
To walk, with taper dim, the winding aisle;
With choral chantings vainly to aspire,
Beyond this nether sphere, on rapture's wing of fire.

III. 3.

Lord of each pang the nerves can feel,
Hence with the rack and reeking wheel.
Faith hits the soul above this little ball!
While gleams of glory open round,
And circling choirs of angels call,
Canst thou, with all thy terrors crown'd,
Hope to obscure that latent spark,
Destined to shine when suns are dark?
Thy triumphs cease! through every land,
Hark! truth proclaims, thy triumphs cease!
Her heavenly form, with glowing hand,
Benignly points to piety and peace.
Flush'd with youth, her looks impart
Each fine feeling as it flows;
Her voice the echo of a heart
Pure as the mountain snows:
Celestial transports round her play
And softly, sweetly die away.
She smiles! and where is now the cloud
That blacken'd o'er thy baleful reign?
Grim darkness furls his leaden shroud,
Shrinking from her glance in vain.
Her touch unlocks the day-spring from above,
And lo! it visits man with beams of light and love.

VERSES

WRITTEN TO BE SPOKEN BY MRS. SIDDONS.†

Yes, 'tis the pulse of life! my fears were vain;
I wake, I breathe, and am myself again.
Still in this nether world; no seraph yet!
Nor walks my spirit, when the sun is set,
With troubled step to haunt the fatal board,
Where I died last—by poison or the sword;
Blanching each honest cheek with deeds of night,
Done here so oft by dim and doubtful light.
—To drop all metaphor, that little bell
Call'd back reality, and broke the spell.
No heroine claims your tears with tragic tone;
A very woman—scarce restrains her own!
Can she, with fiction, charm the cheated mind
When to be grateful is the part assign'd?
Ah no! she scorns the trappings of her art;
No theme but truth, no prompter but the heart.
But, ladies, say, must I alone unmask?
Is here no other actress? let me ask.
Believe me, those, who best the heart dissect,
Know every woman studies stage effect.
She moulds her manners to the part she fills,
As instinct teaches, or as humour wills;
And as the grave or gay her talent calls,
Acts in the drama till the curtain falls.
First, how her little breast with triumph swells
When the red coral rings its golden bells!
To play in pantomime is then the *rage*,
Along the carpet's many-colour'd stage;
Or lisp her merry thoughts with loud endeavour,
Now here, now there—in noise and mischief ever.
A school-girl next, she curls her hair in papers,
And mimics father's gout, and mother's vapours;
Discards her doll, bribes Betty for romances;
Playful at church, and serious when she dances;
Tramples alike on customs and on toes,
And whispers all she hears to all she knows;
Terror of caps, and wigs, and sober notions!
A romp! that *longest* of perpetual motions!
—Till tamed and tortured into foreign graces,
She sports her lovely face at public places;
And with blue, laughing eyes, behind her fan,
First acts her part with that great actor, man.
Too soon a flirt, approach her and she flies!
Frowns when pursued, and, when entreated, sighs!
Plays with unhappy men as cats with mice;
Till fading beauty hints the late advice.
Her prudence dictates what her pride disdain'd,
And now she sues to slaves herself had chain'd!
Then comes that good old character, a wife,
With all the dear, distracting cares of life;
A thousand cards a day at doors to leave,
And, in return, a thousand cards receive;
Rouge high, play deep, to lead the ton aspire,
With nightly blaze set Portland-place on fire;
Snatch half a glimpse at concert, opera, ball,
A meteor, traced by none, though seen by all;
And, when her shatter'd nerves forbid to roam,
In very spleen—rehearse the girls at home.
Last, the gray dowager, in ancient flounces,
With snuff and spectacles the age denounces;
Boasts how the sires of this degenerate isle
Knelt for a look, and duell'd for a smile.
The scourge and ridicule of Goth and Vandal,
Her tea she sweetens, as she sips, with scandal;
With modern belles eternal warfare wages,
Like her own birds that clamour from their cages;
And shuffles round to bear her tale to all,
Like some old ruin, "nodding to its fall!"
Thus woman makes her entrance and her exit;
Not least an actress, when she least suspects it.
Yet nature oft peeps out and mars the plot,
Each lesson lost, each poor pretence forgot;
Full oft, with energy that scorns control,
At once lights up the features of the soul;
Unlocks each thought chain'd down by coward art,
And to full day the latent passions start!
—And she, whose first, best wish is your applause,
Herself exemplifies the truth she draws.

* This remarkable event happened at the siege and sack of Jerusalem, in the last year of the eleventh century. Matth. Paris, p. 34.

† After a tragedy, performed for her benefit, at the Theatre Royal in Drury-lane, April 27, 1795.

Born on the stage—through every shifting scene,
Obscure or bright, tempestuous or serene,
Still has your smile her trembling spirit fired!
And can she act, with thoughts like these inspired?
Thus from her mind all artifice she flings,
All skill, all practice, now unmeaning things!
To you, uncheck'd, each genuine feeling flows;
For all that life endears—to you she owes.

ON ——— ASLEEP.

Sleep on, and dream of heaven a while.
Though shut so close thy laughing eyes,
Thy rosy lips still wear a smile,
And move, and breathe delicious sighs!—

Ah, now soft blushes tinge her cheeks,
And mantle o'er her neck of snow.
Ah, now she murmurs, now she speaks
What most I wish—and fear to know.

She starts, she trembles, and she weeps!
Her fair hands folded on her breast.
—And now, how like a saint she sleeps!
A seraph in the realms of rest!

Sleep on secure! Above control,
Thy thoughts belong to heaven and thee!
And may the secret of thy soul
Remain within its sanctuary!

TO ———.

Go—you may call it madness, folly;
You shall not chase my gloom away.
There's such a charm in melancholy,
I would not, if I could, be gay.

O, if you knew the pensive pleasure
That fills my bosom when I sigh,
You would not rob me of a treasure
Monarchs are too poor to buy.

FROM EURIPIDES.

There is a streamlet issuing from a rock.
The village girls, singing wild madrigals,
Dip their white vestments in its waters clear,
And hang them to the sun. There first I saw her.
Her dark and eloquent eyes, mild, full of fire,
'Twas heaven to look upon; and her sweet voice,
As tunable as harp of many strings,
At once spoke joy and sadness to my soul!

Dear is that valley to the murmuring bees;
And all, who know it, come and come again.
The small birds build there; and, at summer noon,
Oft have I heard a child, gay among flowers,
As in the shining grass she sate conceal'd,
Sing to herself * * *

CAPTIVITY.

Caged in old woods, whose reverend echoes wake
When the hern screams along the distant lake,
Her little heart oft flutters to be free,
Oft sighs to turn the unrelenting key.
In vain! the nurse that rusted relic wears,
Nor moved by gold—nor to be moved by tears;
And terraced walls their black reflection throw
On the green mantled moat that sleeps below.

THE SAILOR.

The sailor sighs as sinks his native shore,
As all its lessening turrets bluely fade;
He climbs the mast to feast his eye once more,
And busy fancy fondly lends her aid.

Ah! now each dear, domestic scene he knew
Recall'd and cherish'd in a foreign clime,
Charms with the magic of a moonlight view;
Its colours mellow'd, not impair'd, by time.

True as the needle, homeward points his heart,
Through all the horrors of the stormy main;
This, the last wish that would with life depart,
To see the smile of her he loves again.

When morn first faintly draws her silver line,
Or eve's gray cloud descends to drink the wave;
When sea and sky in midnight darkness join,
Still, still he views the parting look she gave.

Her gentle spirit, lightly hovering o'er,
Attends his little bark from pole to pole;
And when the beating billows round him roar,
Whispers sweet hope to soothe his troubled soul.

Carved is her name in many a spicy grove,
In many a plantain forest, waving wide;
Where dusky youths in painted plumage rove,
And giant palms o'erarch the golden tide.

But lo, at last he comes with crowded sail!
Lo, o'er the cliff what eager figures bend!
And hark, what mingled murmurs swell the gale!
In each he hears the welcome of a friend.

—'Tis she, 'tis she herself! she waves her hand!
Soon is the anchor cast, the canvass furl'd;
Soon through the whitening surge he springs to land,
And clasps the maid he singled from the world.

TO AN OLD OAK.

Immota manet; multosque nepotes,
Multir virûm volvens durando sæcula, vincit.—*Virg.*

Round thee, alas, no shadows move!
From thee no sacred murmurs breathe!
Yet within thee, thyself a grove,
Once did the eagle scream above,
And the wolf howl beneath.

There once the steel-clad knight reclined,
His sable plumage tempest toss'd;
And, as the death-bell smote the wind,
From towers long fled by human kind
His brow the hero cross'd!

Then culture came, and days serene;
And village sports, and garlands gay.
Full many a pathway cross'd the green;
And maids and shepherd youths were seen
To celebrate the May.

Father of many a forest deep,
Whence many a navy thunder fraught
Erst in thy acorn-cells asleep,
Soon destined o'er the world to sweep,
Opening new spheres of thought!

Wont in the night of woods to dwell,
The holy Druid saw thee rise;
And, planting there the guardian spell,
Sung forth, the dreadful pomp to swell
Of human sacrifice!

Thy singed top and branches bare
Now straggle in the evening sky;
And the wan moon wheels round to glare
On the long corse that shivers there
Of him who came to die!

TO TWO SISTERS.*

Well may you sit within, and, fond of grief,
Look in each other's face, and melt in tears.
Well may you shun all counsel, all relief.
O, she was great in mind, though young in years!

Changed is that lovely countenance, which shed
Light when she spoke, and kindled sweet surprise,
As o'er her frame each warm emotion spread,
Play'd round her lips, and sparkled in her eyes.

Those lips so pure, that moved but to persuade,
Still to the last enliven'd and endear'd.
Those eyes at once her secret soul convey'd,
And ever beam'd delight when you appear'd.

Yet has she fled the life of bliss below,
That youthful hope in bright perspective drew?
False were the tints! false as the feverish glow
That o'er her burning cheek distemper threw!

And now in joy she dwells, in glory moves!
(Glory and joy reserved for you to share.)
Far, far more blest in blessing those she loves
Than they, alas! unconscious of her care.

ON A TEAR.

O! that the chymist's magic art
Could crystallize this sacred treasure!
Long should it glitter near my heart
A secret source of pensive pleasure.

The little brilliant, ere it fell,
Its lustre caught from Chloe's eye;
Then, trembling, left its coral cell—
The spring of sensibility!

Sweet drop of pure and pearly light!
In thee the rays of virtue shine;
More calmly clear, more mildly bright,
Than any gem that gilds the mine.

Benign restorer of the soul!
Who ever fly'st to bring relief,
When first we feel the rude control
Of love or pity, joy or grief.

The sage's and the poet's theme,
In every clime, in every age;
Thou charm'st in fancy's idle dream,
In reason's philosophic page.

That very law* which moulds a tear,
And bids it trickle from its source,
That law preserves the earth a sphere,
And guides the planets in their course.

TO A VOICE THAT HAD BEEN LOST.†

Vane, quid affectas faciem mihi ponere, pictor?
Ærris et linguæ sum filia;
Et, si vis similem pingere, pinge sonum.—*Anacreon*

Once more, enchantress of the soul,
Once more we hail thy soft control.
—Yet whither, whither didst thou fly?
To what bright region of the sky?
Say, in what distant star to dwell?
(Of other worlds thou seem'st to tell)
Or trembling, fluttering here below,
Resolved and unresolved to go,
In secret didst thou still impart
Thy raptures to the pure in heart?
Perhaps to many a desert shore,
Thee, in his rage, the tempest bore;
Thy broken murmurs swept along,
'Mid echoes yet untuned by song;
Arrested in the realms of frost,
Or in the wilds of ether lost.
Far happier thou! 'twas thine to soar
Careering on the winged wind.
Thy triumphs who shall dare explore?
Suns and their systems left behind.
No tract of space, no distant star,
No shock of elements at war,
Did thee detain. Thy wing of fire
Bore thee amidst the cherub-choir;
And there a while to thee 'twas given
Once more that voice‡ beloved to join,
Which taught thee first a flight divine,
And nursed thy infant years with many a strain from heaven!

FROM A GREEK EPIGRAM.

While on the cliff with calm delight she kneels,
And the blue vales a thousand joys recall,
See, to the last, last verge her infant steals!
O fly—yet stir not, speak not, lest it fall.
Far better taught, she lays her bosom bare,
And the fond boy springs back to nestle there.

*On the death of a younger sister.

*The law of gravitation. †In the winter of 1805
‡Mrs. Sheridan's.

TO THE

FRAGMENT OF A STATUE OF HERCULES, COMMONLY CALLED THE TORSO.

And dost thou still, thou mass of breathing stone,
(Thy giant limbs to night and chaos hurl'd,)
Still sit as on the fragment of a world;
Surviving all, majestic and alone?
What though the spirits of the north, that swept
Rome from the earth, when in her pomp she slept,
Smote thee with fury, and thy headless trunk
Deep in the dust 'mid tower and temple sunk;
Soon to subdue mankind 'twas thine to rise,
Still, still unquell'd thy glorious energies!
Aspiring minds, with thee conversing, caught*
Bright revelations of the good they sought;
By thee that long-lost spell† in secret given,
To draw down gods, and lift the soul to heaven!

TO ———.‡

Ah! little thought she, when, with mild delight,
By many a torrent's shining track she flew,
When mountain-glens and caverns full of night
O'er her young mind divine enchantment threw,

That in her veins a secret horror slept,
That her light footsteps should be heard no more,
That she should die—nor watch'd, alas! nor wept
By thee, unconscious of the pangs she bore.

Yet round her couch indulgent fancy drew
The kindred forms her closing eye required.
There didst thou stand—there, with the smile she knew,
She moved her lips to bless thee, and expired.

And now to thee she comes; still, still the same
As in the hours gone unregarded by!
To thee, how changed! comes as she ever came
Health on her cheek, and pleasure in her eye!

Nor less, less oft, as on that day, appears,
When lingering, as prophetic of the truth,
By the way-side she shed her parting tears—
For ever lovely in the light of youth!

WRITTEN IN A SICK CHAMBER.

There, in that bed so closely curtain'd round,
Worn to a shade, and wan with slow decay,
A father sleeps! O hush'd be every sound!
Soft may we breathe the midnight hours away!

He stirs—yet still he sleeps. May heavenly dreams
Long o'er his smooth and settled pillow rise;
Till through the shutter'd pane the morning streams
And on the hearth the glimmering rushlight dies.

* In the gardens of the Vatican, where it was placed by Julius II., it was long the favourite study of those great men to whom we owe the revival of the arts, Michael Angelo, Raphael, and the Carracci.

† Once in the possession of Praxiteles, if we may believe an ancient epigram on the Guidian Venus.—Analecta Vet Poetarum, III. 200.

‡ On the death of her sister.

THE BOY OF EGREMOND.*

"Say, what remains when hope is fled?"
She answer'd, "Endless weeping!"
For in the herdsman's eye she read
Who in his shroud lay sleeping.
At Embsay rung the matin-bell,
The stag was roused on Barden fell;
The mingled sounds were swelling, dying,
And down the Wharfe a hern was flying;
When near the cabin in the wood,
In tartan clad and forest green,
With hound in leash and hawk in hood,
The Boy of Egremond was seen,
Blithe was his song, a song of yore;
But where the rock is rent in two,
And the river rushes through,
His voice was heard no more!
'Twas but a step! the gulf he pass'd
But that step—it was his last!
As through the mist he wing'd his way,
(A cloud that hovers night and day,)
The hound hung back, and back he drew
The master and his merlin too.
That narrow place of noise and strife
Received their little all of life!
There now the matin-bell is rung;
The "Miserere!" duly sung;
And holy men in cowl and hood
Are wandering up and down the wood.
But what avail they? Ruthless lord,
Thou didst not shudder when the sword
Here on the young its fury spent,
The helpless and the innocent.
Sit now and answer groan for groan,
The child before thee is thy own.
And she who wildly wanders there
The mother in her long despair,
Shall oft remind thee, waking, sleeping,
Of those who by the Wharfe were weeping;
Of those who would not be consoled
When red with blood the river roll'd.

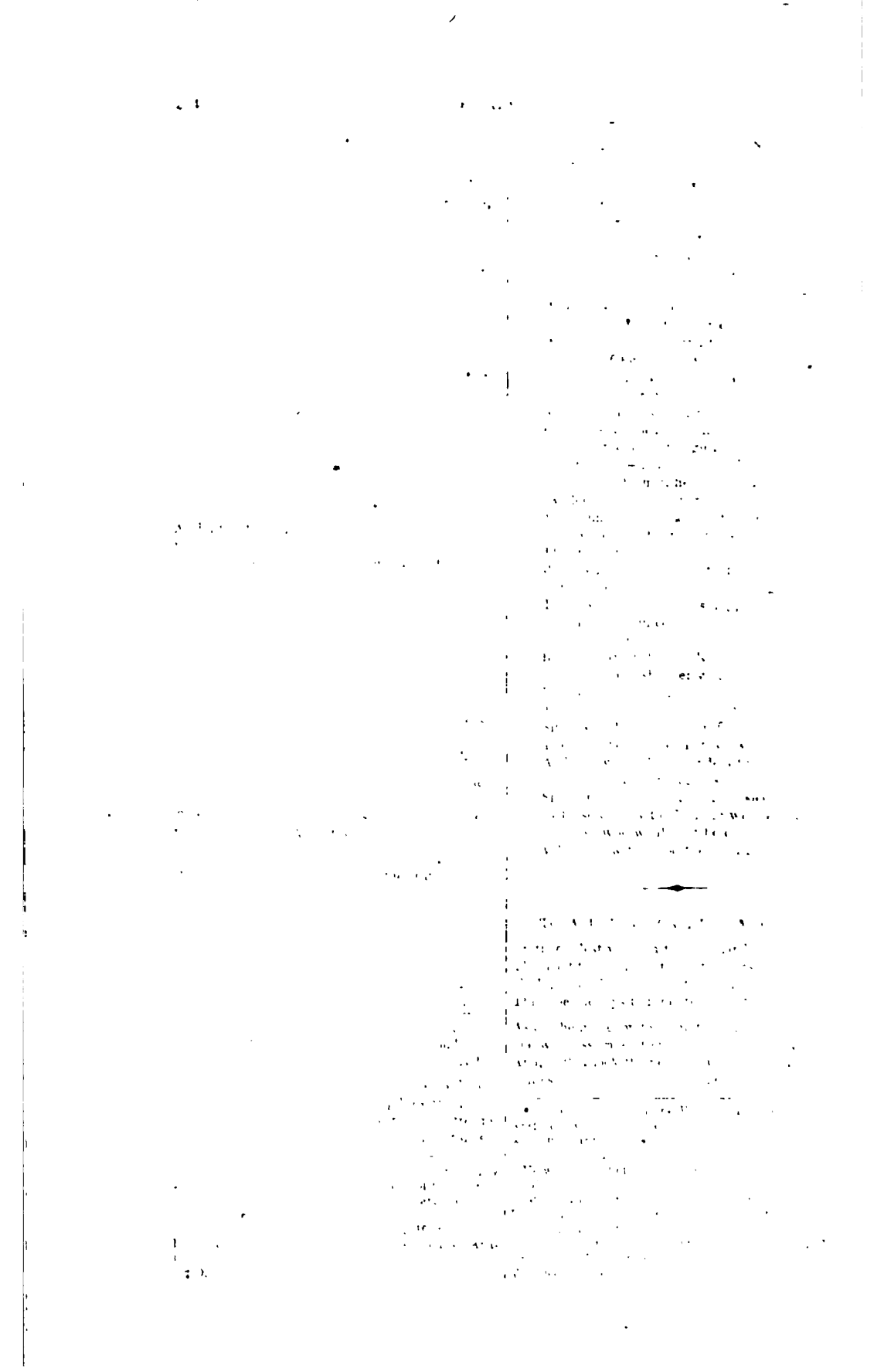
TO A FRIEND ON HIS MARRIAGE.

On thee, blest youth, a father's hand confers
The maid thy earliest, fondest wishes knew.
Each soft enchantment of the soul is hers;
Thine be the joys to firm attachment due.

As on she moves with hesitating grace,
She wins assurance from his soothing voice;
And, with a look the pencil could not trace,
Smiles through her blushes, and confirms the choice.

* In the twelfth century William Fitz-Duncan laid waste the valleys of Craven with fire and sword; and was afterward established there by his uncle, David, King of Scotland.

He was the last of the race; his son, commonly called the Boy of Egremond, dying before him in the manner here related; when a priory was removed from Embsay to Bolton, that it might be as near as possible to the place where the accident happened. That place is still known by the name of the Strid; and the mother's answer, as given in the first stanza, is to this day often repeated in Wharfedale.—See Whitaker's Hist. of Craven.



SICK CHAMBER.

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

Spare the fine tremors of her feeling frame!
To thee she turns—forgive a virgin's fears!
To thee she turns with surest, tenderest claim:
Weakness that charms, reluctance that endears!

At each response the sacred rite requires,
From her full bosom bursts th' unbidden sigh.
A strange, mysterious awe the scene inspires;
And on her lips the trembling accents die.

O'er her fair face what wild emotions play!
What lights and shades in sweet confusion blend!
Soon shall they fly, glad harbingers of day,
And settled sunshine on her soul descend!

Ah soon, thine own confest, ecstatic thought!
That hand shall strew thy summer path with flowers;
And those blue eyes, with mildest lustre fraught,
Gild the calm current of domestic hours!

THE ALPS AT DAYBREAK.

The sunbeams streak the azure skies,
And line with light the mountain's brow:
With hounds and horns the hunters rise,
And chase the roe-buck through the snow.

From rock to rock, with giant bound,
High on their iron poles they pass;
Mute, lest the air, convulsed by sound,
Rend from above a frozen mass.*

The goats wind slow their wonted way,
Up craggy steeps and ridges rude;
Mark'd by the wild wolf for his prey,
From desert cave or hanging wood.

And while the torrent thunders loud,
And as the echoing cliffs reply,
The huts peep o'er the morning cloud,
Perch'd, like an eagle's nest, on high.

IMITATION OF AN ITALIAN SONNET.

Love, under friendship's vesture white,
Laughs, his little limbs concealing;
And oft in sport, and oft in spite,
Like pity meets the dazzled sight,
Smiles through his tears revealing.
But now as rage the god appears!
He frowns, and tempests shake his frame!—
Frowning, or smiling, or in tears,
'Tis love; and love is still the same.

A CHARACTER.

As through the hedge-row shade the violet steals,
And the sweet air its modest leaf reveals;
Her softer charms, but by their influence known,
Surprise all hearts, and mould them to her own.

* There are passes in the Alps, where the guides tell you to move on with speed, and say nothing, lest the agitation of the air should loosen the snows above.

TO THE

YOUNGEST DAUGHTER OF LADY ****.

Ah, why with tell-tale tongue reveal*
What most her blushes would conceal?
Why lift that modest veil to trace
The seraph sweetness of her face?
Some fairer, better sport prefer;
And feel for us, if not for her.
For this presumption, soon or late,
Know thine shall be a kindred fate.
Another shall in vengeance rise—
Sing Harriet's cheeks, and Harriet's eyes;
And, echoing back her wood-notes wild,
—Trace all the mother in the child!

AN EPITAPH† ON A ROBIN-REDBREAST

Tread lightly here; for here, 'tis said,
When piping winds are hush'd around,
A small note wakes from under ground,
Where now his tiny bones are laid.
No more in lone and leafless groves,
With ruffled wing and faded breast,
His friendless, homeless spirit roves;
—Gone to the world where birds are blest!
Where never cat glides o'er the green,
Or schoolboy's giant form is seen;
But love, and joy, and smiling spring,
Inspire their little souls to sing!

TO THE GNAT.

When by the greenwood side, at summer eve,
Poetic visions charm my closing eye;
And fairy scenes, that fancy loves to weave,
Shift to wild notes of sweetest minstrelsy;
'Tis thine to range in busy quest of prey,
Thy feathery antlers quivering with delight,
Brush from my lids the hues of heaven away,
And all is solitude, and all is night!
—Ah now thy barbed shaft, relentless fly,
Unsheathes its terrors in the sultry air;
No guardian sylph, in golden panoply,
Lifts the broad shield, and points the glittering spear.
Now near and nearer rush thy whirring wings,
Thy dragon scales still wet with human gore.
Hark, thy shrill horn its fearful larum flings!
—I wake in horror, and dare sleep no more!

A WISH

Mine be a cot beside the hill,
A bee-hive's hum shall soothe my ear;
A willowy brook, that turns a mill,
With many a fall, shall linger near.

* Alluding to some verses which she had written on an elder sister.

† Inscribed on an urn in the flower-garden at Hafod.

The swallow, oft, beneath my thatch
Shall twitter from her clay-built nest;
Oft shall the pilgrim lift the latch,
And share my meal, a welcome guest.

Around my ivied porch shall spring
Each fragrant flower that drinks the dew;
And Lucy, at her wheel, shall sing
In russet gown and apron blue.

The village church, among the trees,
Where first our marriage vows were given,
With merry peals shall swell the breeze,
And point with taper spire to heaven.

WRITTEN AT MIDNIGHT, 1786.

While through the broken pane the tempest sighs,
And my step falters on the faithless floor,
Shades of departed joys around me rise,
With many a face that smiles on me no more;
With many a voice that thrills of transport gave,
Now silent as the grass that tufts their grave!

AN ITALIAN SONG.

Dear is my little native vale,
The ring-dove builds and murmurs there;
Close by my cot she tells her tale
To every passing villager.
The squirrel leaps from tree to tree,
And shells his nuts at liberty.

In orange groves and myrtle bowers,
That breathe a gale of fragrance round,
I charm the fairy-footed hours
With my loved lute's romantic sound;
Or crowns of living laurel weave,
For those that win the race at eve.

The shepherd's horn at break of day,
The ballet danced in twilight glade,
The canzonet and roundelay
Sung in the silent greenwood shade,
These simple joys, that never fail,
Shall bind me to my native vale.

AN INSCRIPTION.

Shepherd, or huntsman, or worn mariner,
Whate'er thou art, who wouldst allay thy thirst,
Drink and be glad. This cistern of white stone,
Arch'd, and o'erwrought with many a sacred verse,
This iron cup chain'd for the general use,
And these rude seats of earth within the grove,
Were given by Fatima. Borne hence a bride,
'Twas here she turn'd from her beloved sire,
To see his face no more.* O, if thou canst,
('Tis not far off,) visit his tomb with flowers;
And with a drop of this sweet water fill
The two small cells scoop'd in the marble there,
That birds may come and drink upon his grave,
Making it holy!" . . . . . .

* See an anecdote related by Pausanias, iii. 20.

WRITTEN IN THE HIGHLANDS OF SCOTLAND, SEPTEMBER 2, 1812.

Blue was the loch, the clouds were gone,
Ben Lomond in his glory shone,
When, Luss, I left thee; when the breeze
Bore me from thy silver sands,
Thy kirk-yard wall among the trees,
Where, gray with age, the dial stands;
That dial so well known to me:
—Though many a shadow it had shed,
Beloved sister, since with thee
The legend on the stone was read.
The fairy isles fled far away;
That with its woods and uplands green
Where shepherd huts are dimly seen,
And songs are heard at close of day;
That, too, the deer's wild covert, fled,
And that, th' asylum of the dead:
While, as the boat went merrily,
Much of Rob Roy† the boatman told;
His arm, that fell below his knee,
His cattle ford and mountain hold.
Tarbat,‡ thy shore I climb'd at last,
And, thy shady region pass'd,
Upon another shore I stood,
And look'd upon another flood;§
Great ocean's self! ('Tis he who fills
That vast and awful depth of hills;)
Where many an elf was playing round,
Who treads unshod his classic ground;
And speaks, his native rocks among,
As Fingal spoke, and Ossian sung.
Night fell; and dark and darker grew
That narrow sea, that narrow sky,
As o'er the glimmering waves we flew;
The sea-bird rustling, wailing by.
And now the grampus, half descried,
Black and huge above the tide,
The cliffs and promontories there,
Front to front, and broad and bare;
Each beyond each, with giant feet
Advancing as in haste to meet;
The shatter'd fortress, whence the Dane
Blew his shrill blast, nor rush'd in vain,
Tyrant of the drear domain:
All into midnight shadow sweep,
When day springs upward from the deep!‖
Kindling the waters in its flight,
The prow wakes splendour; and the oar,
That rose and fell unseen before,
Flashes in a sea of light!
Glad sign, and sure for now we hail
Thy flowers, Glenfinnart, in the gale;
And bright indeed the path should be
That leads to friendship and to thee!

* A Turkish superstition.
† A famous outlaw.
‡ Signifying, in the Erse language, an isthmus.
§ Loch Long.
‖ A phenomenon described by many navigators.

O blest retreat, and sacred too!
Sacred as when the bell of prayer
Toll'd duly on the desert air,
And crosses deck'd thy summits blue.
Oft, like some loved romantic tale,
Oft shall my weary mind recall,
Amid the hum and stir of men,
Thy beechen grove and waterfall,
Thy ferry with its gliding sail,
And her—the lady of the glen!

A FAREWELL.

Once more, enchanting maid, adieu!
I must be gone while yet I may;
Oft shall I weep to think of you,
But here I will not, cannot stay.

The sweet expression of that face,
For ever changing, yet the same,
Ah no, I dare not turn to trace—
It melts my soul, it fires my frame!

Yet give me, give me, ere I go,
One little lock of those so blest,
That lend your cheek a warmer glow,
And on your white neck love to rest.

—Say, when to kindle soft delight,
That hand has chanced with mine to meet,
How could its thrilling touch excite
A sigh so short, and yet so sweet?

O say—but no, it must not be.
Adieu! a long, a long adieu!
—Yet still, methinks, you frown on me,
Or never could I fly from you.

INSCRIPTION FOR A TEMPLE.

DEDICATED TO THE GRACES.*

Approach with reverence. There are those within
Whose dwelling-place is heaven. Daughters of Jove,
From them flow all the decencies of life;
Without them nothing pleases, virtue's self
Admired, not loved; and those on whom they smile,
Great though they be, and wise, and beautiful,
Shine forth with double lustre.

TO THE BUTTERFLY.

Child of the sun! pursue thy rapturous flight,
Mingling with her thou lovest in fields of light;
And, where the flowers of paradise unfold,
Quaff fragrant nectar from their cups of gold.
There shall thy wings, rich as an evening sky,
Expand and shut with silent ecstasy!
—Yet wert thou once a worm, a thing that crept
On the bare earth, then wrought a tomb and slept.
And such is man; soon from his cell of clay
To burst a seraph in the blaze of day!

* At Woburn Abbey.

WRITTEN IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

OCTOBER 10, 1806.*

Whoe'er thou art, approach, and, with a sigh,
Mark where the small remains of greatness lie.†
There sleeps the dust of Fox, for ever gone:
How dear the place where late his glory shone!
And, though no more ascends the voice of prayer
Though the last footsteps cease to linger there,
Still, like an awful dream that comes again,
Alas! at best as transient and as vain,
Still do I see (while through the vaults of night
The funeral song once more proclaims the rite)
The moving pomp along the shadowy aisle,
That, like a darkness, fill'd the solemn pile;
Th' illustrious line, that in long order led,
Of those that loved him living, mourn'd him dead;
Of those the few, that for their country stood
Round him who dared be singularly good:
All, of all ranks, that claim'd him for their own;
And nothing wanting—but himself alone!‡

O say, of him now rests there but a name;
Wont, as he was, to breathe ethereal flame?
Friend of the absent, guardian of the dead!§
Who but would here their sacred sorrows shed?
(Such as he shed on Nelson's closing grave;
How soon to claim the sympathy he gave!)
In him, resentful of another's wrong,
The dumb were eloquent, the feeble strong.
Truth from his lips a charm celestial drew—
Ah, who so mighty and so gentle too?‖

What though with war the madding nations rung,
"Peace," when he spoke, was ever on his tongue!
Amidst the frowns of power, the tricks of state,
Fearless, resolved, and negligently great!
In vain malignant vapours gather'd round;
He walk'd, erect, on consecrated ground.
The clouds, that rise to quench the orb of day,
Reflect its splendour, and dissolve away!

When in retreat he laid his thunder by,
For letter'd ease and calm philosophy,
Blest were his hours within the silent grove,
Where still his godlike spirit deigns to rove;
Blest by the orphan's smile, the widow's prayer,
For many a deed, long done in secret there.
There shone his lamp on Homer's hallow'd page;
There, listening, sate the hero and the sage
And they, by virtue and by blood allied,
Whom most he loved, and in whose arms he died.

Friend of all human kind! not here alone
(The voice that speaks, was not to thee unknown)
Wilt thou be miss'd. O'er every land and sea,
Long, long shall England be revered in thee!
And, when the storm is hush'd—in distant years—
Foes on thy grave shall meet, and mingle tears!

* After the funeral of the Right Hon. Charles James Fox.

† Venez voir le peu qui nous reste de tant de grandeur. etc.—*Bossuet. Oraison funèbre de Louis de Bourbon.*

‡ Et rien enfin ne manque dans tous ces honneurs, que celui à qui on les rend.—*Ibid.*

§ Alluding particularly to his speech on moving a new writ for the borough of Tavistock, March 16, 1802.

‖ See that admirable delineation of his character by Sir James Mackintosh, which first appeared in the Bombay Courier, January 17, 1807.

JAMES GRAHAME.

THE poem of The Sabbath will long endear the name of JAMES GRAHAME to all who love the due observance of Sunday, and are acquainted with the devout thoughts and poetic feeling which it inspires. Nor will he be remembered for this alone; his British Georgics and his Birds of Scotland, rank with those productions whose images and sentiments take silent possession of the mind, and abide there when more startling and obtrusive things are forgotten. There is a quiet natural ease about all his descriptions; a light and shade both of landscape and character in all his pictures, and a truth and beauty which prove that he copied from his own emotions, and painted with the aid of his own eyes, without looking, as Dryden said, through the spectacles of books. To his fervent piety as well as poetic spirit the public has borne testimony, by purchasing many copies of his works. The Birds of Scotland is a fine series of pictures, giving the form, the plumage, the haunts, and habits of each individual bird, with a graphic fidelity rivalling the labours of Wilson. His drama of Mary Stuart wants that passionate and happy vigour which the stage requires; some of his songs are natural and elegant; his Sabbath Walks, Biblical Pictures, and Rural Calendar, are all alike remarkable for accuracy of description and an original turn of thought. He was born at Glasgow, 22d April, 1765; his father, who was a writer, educated him for the bar, but he showed an early leaning to the Muses, and such a love of truth and honour as hindered him from accepting briefs which were likely to lead him out of the paths of equity and justice. His Sabbath was written and published in secret, and he had the pleasure of finding the lady whom he had married among its warmest admirers; nor did her admiration lessen when she discovered the author. His health declined; he accepted the living of Sedgeware, near Durham, and performed his duties diligently and well till within a short time of his death, which took place 14th September, 1811.

The great charm of Mr. Grahame's poetry, (says a writer in the Edinburgh Review,) appears to us to consist in its moral character; in that natural expression of kindness and tenderness of heart, which gives such a peculiar air of paternal goodness and patriarchal simplicity to his writings; and that earnest and intimate sympathy with the objects of his compassion, which assures us at once that he is not making a theatrical display of sensibility, but merely giving vent to the familiar sentiments of his bosom. We can trace here, in short, and with the same pleasing effect, that entire absence of art, effort, and affectation, which we have already noticed as the most remarkable distinction of his attempts in description. Almost all the other poets with whom we are acquainted, appear but too obviously to put their feelings and affections, as well as their fancies and phrases, into a sort of studied dress, before they venture to present them to the crowded assembly of the public: and though the style and fashion of this dress varies according to the taste and ability of the inventors, still it serves almost equally to hide their native proportions, and to prove that they were a little ashamed or afraid to exhibit them as they really were. Now, Mr. Grahame, we think, has got over this general nervousness and shyness about showing the natural and simple feelings with which the contemplation of human emotion should affect us; or rather, has been too seriously occupied, and too constantly engrossed with the feelings themselves, to think how the confession of them might be taken by the generality of his readers, to concern himself about the contempt of the fastidious, or the derision of the unfeeling. In his poetry, therefore, we meet neither with the Musidoras and Damons of Thomson, nor the gipsy-women and Ellen Orfords of Crabbe; and still less with the Matthew Schoolmasters, Alice Fells, or Martha Raes of Mr. Wordsworth;—but we meet with the ordinary peasants of Scotland in their ordinary situations, and with a touching and simple expression of concern for their sufferings, and of generous indulgence for their faults. He is not ashamed of his kindness and condescension, on the one hand; nor is he ostentatious or vain of it, on the other; but gives expression in the most plain and unaffected manner to sentiments that are neither counterfeited nor disguised. We do not know any poetry, indeed, that lets us in so directly to the heart of the writer, and produces so full and pleasing a conviction that it is dictated by the genuine feelings which it aims at communicating to the reader. If there be less fire and elevation than in the strains of some of his contemporaries, there is more truth and tenderness than is commonly found along with those qualities, and less getting up either of language or of sentiment than we recollect to have met with in any modern composition.

THE SABBATH.

ARGUMENT.

Description of a Sabbath morning in the country. The labourer at home. The town mechanic's morning walk; his meditation. The sound of bells. Crowd proceeding to church. Interval before the service begins. Scottish service. English service. Scriptures read. The organ, with the voices of the people. The sound borne to the sick man's couch: his wish. The worship of God in the solitude of the woods. The shepherd boy among the hills. People seen on the heights returning from church. Contrast of the present times with those immediately preceding the Revolution. The persecution of the Covenanters: A Sabbath conventicle: Cameron: Renwick: Psalms. Night conventicles during storms. A funeral according to the rites of the church of England. A female character. The suicide. Expostulation. The incurable of an hospital. A prison scene. Debtors. Divine service in the prison hall. Persons under sentence of death. The public guilt of inflicting capital punishments on persons who have been left destitute of religious and moral instruction. Children proceeding to a Sunday-school. The father. The impress. Appeal on the indiscriminate severity of criminal law. Comparative mildness of the Jewish law. The year of jubilee. Description of the commencement of the jubilee. The sound of the trumpets through the land. The bondman and his family returning from their servitude to take possession of their inheritance. Emigrants to the wilds of America. Their Sabbath worship. The whole inhabitants of Highland districts who have emigrated together, still regret their country. Even the blind man regrets the objects with which he had been conversant. An emigrant's contrast between the tropical climates and Scotland. The boy who had been born on the voyage. Description of a person on a desert island. His Sabbath. His release. Missionary ship. The Pacific ocean. Defence of missionaries. Effects of the conversion of the primitive Christians. Transition to the slave trade. The Sabbath in a slave ship. Appeal to England on the subject of her encouragement to this horrible complication of crimes. Transition to war. Unfortunate issue of the late war—in France—in Switzerland. Apostrophe to TELL. The attempt to resist too late. The treacherous foes already in possession of the passes. Their devastating progress. Desolation. Address to Scotland. Happiness of seclusion from the world. Description of a Sabbath evening in Scotland. Psalmody. An aged man. Description of an industrious female reduced to poverty by old age and disease. Disinterested virtuous conduct to be found chiefly in the lower walks of life. Test of charity in the opulent. Recommendation to the rich to devote a portion of the Sabbath to the duty of visiting the sick. Invocation to health—to music. The Beguine nuns. Lazarus. The Resurrection. Dawnings of faith—its progress—consummation.

How still the morning of the hallow'd day!
Mute is the voice of rural labour, hush'd
The ploughboy's whistle, and the milkmaid's song.
The scythe lies glittering in the dewy wreath
Of tedded grass, mingled with fading flowers,
That yester-morn bloom'd waving in the breeze.
Sounds the most faint attract the ear—the hum
Of early bee, the trickling of the dew,
The distant bleating midway up the hill.
Calmness sits throned on yon unmoving cloud.
To him who wanders o'er the upland leas,
The blackbird's note comes mellower from the dale;
And sweeter from the sky the gladsome lark
Warbles his heaven-tuned song; the lulling brook
Murmurs more gently down the deep-worn glen;
While from yon lowly roof, whose curling smoke
O'ermounts the mist, is heard, at intervals,
The voice of psalms—the simple song of praise.
With dove-like wings, peace o'er yon village broods;
The dizzying mill-wheel rests; the anvil's din
Hath ceased; all, all around is quietness.
Less fearful on this day, the limping hare
Stops, and looks back, and stops, and looks on man,
Her deadliest foe. The toil-worn horse, set free,
Unheedful of the pasture, roams at large;
And, as his stiff unwieldy bulk he rolls,
His iron-armed hoofs gleam in the morning ray.
But chiefly man the day of rest enjoys.
Hail, Sabbath! thee I hail, the poor man's day.
On other days the man of toil is doom'd
To eat his joyless bread, lonely; the ground
Both seat and board; screen'd from the winter's cold
And summer's heat, by neighbouring hedge or tree;
But on this day, imbosom'd in his home,
He shares the frugal meal with those he loves;
With those he loves he shares the heartfelt joy
Of giving thanks to God—not thanks of form,
A word and a grimace, but reverently,
With cover'd face and upward earnest eye.
Hail, Sabbath! thee I hail, the poor man's day.
The pale mechanic now has leave to breathe
The morning air, pure from the city's smoke;
While, wandering slowly up the river-side,
He meditates on Him, whose power he marks
In each green tree that proudly spreads the bough,
As in the tiny dew-bent flowers that bloom
Around its roots; and while he thus surveys,
With elevated joy, each rural charm,
He hopes, yet fears presumption in the hope,
That heaven may be one Sabbath without end.
But now his steps a welcome sound recalls:
Solemn the knell, from yonder ancient pile,
Fills all the air, inspiring joyful awe:
Slowly the throng moves o'er the tomb-paved ground.
The aged man, the bowed down, the blind
Led by the thoughtless boy, and he who breathes
With pain, and eyes the new-made grave well pleased;
These, mingled with the young, the gay, approach
The house of God; these, spite of all their ills,
A glow of gladness feel; with silent praise
They enter in. A placid stillness reigns,
Until the man of God, worthy the name,
Arise and read the anointed shepherd's lays.
His locks of snow, his brow serene, his look
Of love, it speaks, 'Ye are my children all;
The gray-hair'd man, stooping upon his staff,
As well as he, the giddy child, whose eye
Pursues the swallow flitting thwart the dome."
Loud swells the song: O how that simple song,
Though rudely chanted, how it melts the heart,
Commingling soul with soul in one full tide
Of praise, of thankfulness, of humble trust!
Next comes the unpremeditated prayer,
Breathed from the inmost heart, in accents low
But earnest.—Alter'd is the tone; to man
Are now address'd the sacred speaker's words.
Instruction, admonition, comfort, peace,
Flow from his tongue: O chief let comfort be-

It is most needed in this vale of tears:
Yes, make the widow's heart to sing for joy;
The stranger to discern th' Almighty's shield
Held o'er his friendless head; the orphan child
Feel, 'mid his tears, I have a father still!
'Tis done. But hark that infant querulous voice
Plaint not discordant to a parent's ear;
And see the father raise the white-robed babe
In solemn dedication to the Lord:
The holy man sprinkles with forth-stretch'd hand
The face of innocence; then earnest turns,
And prays a blessing in the name of Him
Who said, *Let little children come to me; Forbid them not:** the infant is replaced
Among the happy band: they, smilingly,
In gay attire, hie to the house of mirth,
The poor man's festival, a jubilee day,
Remember'd long.

Nor would I leave unsung
The lofty ritual of our sister land:
In vestment white, the minister of God
Opens the book, and reverentially
The stated portion reads. A pause ensues.
The organ breathes its distant thunder-notes,
Then swells into a diapason full:
The people rising, sing, *With harp, with harp, And voice of psalms;* harmoniously attuned
The various voices blend; the long drawn aisles,
At every close, the lingering strain prolong.
And now the tubes a mellow'd stop controls,
In softer harmony the people join,
While liquid whispers from yon orphan band
Recall the soul from adoration's trance,
And fill the eye with pity's gentle tears.
Again the organ-peal, loud-rolling, meets
The hallelujahs of the choir: Sublime,
A thousand notes symphoniously ascend,
As if the whole were one, suspended high
In air, soaring heavenward: afar they float,
Wafting glad tidings to the sick man's couch:
Raised on his arm, he lists the cadence close,
Yet thinks he hears it still: his heart is cheer'd;
He smiles on death; but, ah! a wish will rise,—
"Would I were now beneath that echoing roof!
No lukewarm accents from my lips should flow;
My heart would sing; and many a Sabbath-day
My steps should thither turn; or, wandering far
In solitary paths, where wild flowers blow,
There would I bless his name, who led me forth
From death's dark vale, to walk amid those sweets,
Who gives the bloom of health once more to glow
Upon this cheek, and lights this languid eye."
It is not only in the sacred fane
That homage should be paid to the Most High;
There is a temple, one not made with hands—
The vaulted firmament: Far in the woods,
Almost beyond the sound of city chime,
At intervals heard through the breezeless air;
When not the limberest leaf is seen to move,
Save where the linnet lights upon the spray;
When not a floweret bends its little stalk,
Save where the bee alights upon the bloom;—
There, rapt in gratitude, in joy, and love,
The man of God will pass the Sabbath noon;
Silence his praise; his disembodied thoughts,
Loosed from the load of words, will high ascend
Beyond the empyrean.—
Nor yet less pleasing at the heavenly throne,
The Sabbath-service of the shepherd-boy.
In some lone glen, where every sound is lull'd
To slumber, save the tinkling of the rill,
Or bleat of lamb, or hovering falcon's cry,
Stretch'd on the sward, he reads of Jesse's son;
Or sheds a tear o'er him to Egypt sold,
And wonders why he weeps; the volume closed,
With thyme-sprig laid between the leaves, he sings
The sacred lays, his weekly lesson, conn'd
With meikle care beneath the lowly roof,
Where humble lore is learnt, where humble worth
Pines unrewarded by a thankless state.
Thus reading, hymning, all alone, unseen,
The shepherd-boy the Sabbath holy keeps,
Till on the heights he marks the straggling bands
Returning homeward from the house of prayer.
In peace they home resort. O blissful days!
When all men worship God as conscience wills.
Far other times our fathers' grandsires knew,
A virtuous race, to godliness devote.
What though the skeptic's scorn hath dared to soil
The record of their fame! what though the men
Of worldly minds have dared to stigmatize
The sister-cause, religion and the law,
With superstition's name! yet, yet their deeds,
Their constancy in torture and in death,—
These on tradition's tongue still live; these shall
On history's honest page be pictured bright
To latest times. Perhaps some bard, whose muse
Disdains the servile strain of fashion's quire,
May celebrate their unambitious names.
With them each day was holy, every hour
They stood prepared to die, a people doom'd
To death;—old men, and youths, and simple maids.
With them each day was holy; but that morn
On which the angel said, *See where the Lord Was laid*, joyous arose; to die that day
Was bliss. Long ere the dawn, by devious ways,
O'er hills, through woods, o'er dreary wastes, they sought
The upland muirs, where rivers, there but brooks,
Dispart to different seas: Fast by such brooks
A little glen is sometimes scoop'd, a plat
With green sward gay, and flowers that strangers seem
Amid the heathery wild, that all around
Fatigues the eye; in solitudes like these,
They persecuted children, Scotia, foil'd
A tyrant's and a bigot's bloody laws:
There, leaning on his spear, (one of the array,
Whose gleam, in former days, had scathed the rose
On England's banner, and had powerless struck
The infatuate monarch and his wavering host,)
The lyart veteran heard the word of God

* "And they brought young children to him that he should touch them; and his disciples rebuked those that brought them. But when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily, I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein. And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them." Mark x. 13—16.

By Cameron thunder'd, or by Renwick pour'd
In gentle stream; then rose the song, the loud
Acclaim of praise. The wheeling plover ceased
Her plaint; the solitary place was glad,
And on the distant cairns the watcher's ear*
Caught doubtfully at times the breeze-borne note,
But years more gloomy follow'd; and no more
Th' assembled people dared, in face of day,
To worship God, or even at the dead
Of night, save when the wintry storm raved fierce,
And thunder-peals compell'd the men of blood
To couch within their dens: then dauntlessly
The scatter'd few would meet, in some deep dell
By rocks o'er-canopied, to hear the voice,
Their faithful pastor's voice: He by the gleam
Of sheeted lightning oped the sacred book,
And words of comfort spake: Over their souls
His accents soothing came,—as to her young
The heathfowl's plumes, when, at the close of eve,
She gathers in, mournful, her brood dispersed
By murderous sport, and o'er the remnant spreads
Fondly her wings; close nestling 'neath her breast,
They, cherish'd, cower amid the purple blooms.

But wood and wild, the mountain and the dale,
The house of prayer itself,—no place inspires
Emotions more accordant with the day,
Than does the field of graves, the land of rest:—
Oft at the close of evening prayer, the toll,
The solemn funeral toll, pausing, proclaims
The service of the tomb: the homeward crowds
Divide on either hand; the pomp draws near:
The choir to meet the dead go forth, and sing,
I am the resurrection and the life.
Ah me! these youthful bearers robed in white,
They tell a mournful tale; some blooming friend
Is gone, dead in her prime of years:—'Twas she,
The poor man's friend, who, when she could not give,
With angel tongue pleaded to those who could;
With angel tongue and mild beseeching eye,
That ne'er besought in vain, save when she pray'd
For longer life, with heart resign'd to die,—
Rejoiced to die; for happy visions bless'd
Her voyage's last days,† and hovering round,
Alighted on her soul, giving presage
That heaven was nigh:——O what a burst
Of rapture from her lips! what tears of joy
Her heaven-ward eyes suffused! Those eyes are closed;
But all her loveliness is not yet flown:
She smiled in death, and still her cold, pale face
Retains that smile; as when a waveless lake,
In which the wintry stars all bright appear,
Is sheeted by a nightly frost with ice,
Still it reflects the face of heaven unchanged,
Unruffled by the breeze or sweeping blast.
Again that knell! The slow procession stops:
The pall withdrawn, death's altar, thick emboss'd
With melancholy ornaments—(the name,
The record of her blossoming age)—appears
Unveil'd, and on it dust to dust is thrown,
The final rite. O! hark that sullen sound!
Upon the lower'd bier the shovell'd clay
Falls fast, and fills the void.—
But who is he
That stands aloof, with haggard, wistful eye,
As if he coveted the closing grave?
And he does covet it—his wish is death:
The dread resolve is fix'd; his own right-hand
Is sworn to do the deed: The day of rest
No peace, no comfort brings his wo-worn spirit:
Self-cursed, the hallow'd dome he dreads to enter
He dares not pray; he dares not sigh a hope;
Annihilation is his only heaven.
Loathsome the converse of his friends: he shuns
The human face; in every careless eye
Suspicion of his purpose seems to lurk.
Deep piny shades he loves, where no sweet note
Is warbled, where the rook unceasing caws:
Or far in moors, remote from house or hut,
Where animated nature seems extinct.
Where e'en the hum of wandering bee ne'er breaks
The quiet slumber of the level waste;
Where vegetation's traces almost fail,
Save where the leafless cannachs wave their tufts
Of silky white, or massy oaken trunks
Half buried lie, and tell where greenwoods grew,—
There on the heathless moss outstretch'd he broods
O'er all his ever-changing plans of death:
The time, place, means, sweep like a stormy rack,
In fleet succession, o'er his clouded soul;—
The poniard,—and the opium draught, that brings
Death by degrees, but leaves an awful chasm
Between the act and consequence,—the flash
Sulphureous, fraught with instantaneous death;—
The ruin'd tower perch'd on some jutting rock,
So high that, 'tween the leap and dash below,
The breath might take its flight in midway air,—
This pleases for a while; but on the brink,
Back from the toppling edge his fancy shrinks
In horror: sleep at last his breast becalms,—
He dreams 'tis done; but starting wild awakes,
Resigning to despair his dream of joy.
Then hope, faint hope, revives—hope, that despair
May to his aid let loose the demon frenzy,
To lead scared conscience blindfold o'er the brink
Of self-destruction's cataract of blood.
Most miserable, most incongruous wretch!
Darest thou to spurn thy life, the boon of God,
Yet dreadest to approach his holy place?
O dare to enter in! maybe some word,
Or sweetly chanted strain, will in thy heart
Awake a chord in unison with life.
What are thy fancied woes to his, whose fate
Is (sentence dire!) incurable disease,—
The outcast of a lazar house, homeless,
Or with a home where eyes do scowl on him!
Yet he, e'en he, with feeble steps draws near,
With trembling voice joins in the song of praise.
Patient he waits the hour of his release;
He knows he has a home beyond the grave.

Or turn thee to that house with studded doors,
And iron-visor'd windows; even there
The Sabbath sheds a beam of bliss, though faint;

* Sentinels were placed on the surrounding hills to give warning of the approach of the military.

† Towards the end of Columbus's voyage to the new world, when he was already near, but not in sight of land, the drooping hopes of his mariners (for his own confidence seems to have remained unmoved) were revived by the appearance of birds, at first hovering round the ship, and then alighting on the rigging.

The debtor's friends (for still he has some friends)
Have time to visit him; the blossoming pea,
That climbs the rust-worn bars, seems fresher tinged;
And on the little turf, this day renew'd,
The lark, his prison mate, quivers the wing
With more than wonted joy. See, through the bars
That pallid face retreating from the view,
That glittering eye following, with hopeless look,
The friends of former years, now passing by
In peaceful fellowship to worship God:
With them, in days of youthful years, he roam'd
O'er hill and dale, o'er broomy knowe; and wist
As little as the blithest of the band
Of this his lot; condemn'd, condemn'd unheard,
The party for his judge;—among the throng,
The Pharisaical hard-hearted man
He sees pass on, to join the heaven-taught prayer,
Forgive our debts as we forgive our debtors:
From unforgiving lips most impious prayer!
O happier far the victim than the hand
That deals the legal stab! The *injured* man
Enjoys internal, settled calm; to him
The Sabbath bell sounds peace; he loves to meet
His fellow sufferers to pray and praise:
And many a prayer, as pure as e'er was breathed
In holy fanes, is sigh'd in prison halls.
Ah me! that clank of chains, as kneel and rise
The death-doom'd row. But see, a smile illumes
The face of some; perhaps they're guiltless: O!
And must high-minded honesty endure
The ignominy of a felon's fate!
No, 'tis not ignominious to be wrong'd:
No; conscious exultation swells their hearts
To think the day draws nigh, when in the view
Of angels, and of just men perfect made,
The mark which rashness branded on their names
Shall be effaced;—when wafted on life's storm,
Their souls shall reach the Sabbath of the skies;—
As birds from bleak Norwegia's wintry coast
Blown out to sea, strive to regain the shore,
But, vainly striving, yield them to the blast.—
Swept o'er the deep to Albion's genial isle,
Amazed they light amid the bloomy sprays
Of some green vale, there to enjoy new loves,
And join in harmony unheard before.

The land is groaning 'neath the guilt of blood
Spilt wantonly: for every death-doom'd man,
Who, in his boyhood, has been left untaught
That wisdom's ways are ways of pleasantness,
And all her paths are peace, unjustly dies.
But, ah! how many are thus left untaught,—
How many would be left, but for the band
United to keep holy to the Lord
A portion of his day, by teaching those
Whom Jesus loved with forth-stretch'd hand to bless!
Behold yon motley train, by two and two,
Each with a Bible 'neath its little arm,
Approach well pleased, as if they went to play,
The dome where simple lore is learnt unbought:
And mark the father 'mid the sideway throng;
Well do I know him by his glistening eye,
That follows steadfastly one of the line,
A dark seafaring man he looks to be;
And much it glads his boding heart to think,
That when once more he sails the valley'd deep,
His child shall still receive instruction's boon.
But hark,—a noise,—a cry,—a gleam of swords!—
Resistance is in vain,—he's borne away,
Nor is allow'd to clasp his weeping child.

My innocent, so helpless, yet so gay!
How could I bear to be thus rudely torn
From thee;—to see thee lift thy little arm,
And impotently strike the ruffian man,—
To hear thee bid him chidingly—begone!

O ye who live at home, and kiss each eve
Your sleeping infants ere you go to rest,
And, waken'd by their call, lift up your eyes
Upon their morning smile,—think, think of those,
Who, torn away without one farewell word
To wife or children, sigh the day of life
In banishment from all that's dear to man;—
O raise your voices in one general peal
Remonstrant, for th' oppress'd. And ye, who sit
Month after month devising impost laws,
Give some small portion of your midnight vigils
To mitigate, if not remove, the wrong.

Relentless justice! with fate-furrow'd brow;
Wherefore to various crimes of various guilt,
One penalty, the most severe, allot?
Why, pall'd in state, and mitred with a wreath
Of nightshade, dost thou sit portentously,
Beneath a cloudy canopy of sighs,
Of fears, of trembling hopes, of boding doubts;
Death's dart thy mace!—Why are the laws of God
Statutes promulged in characters of fire,*
Despised in deep concerns, where heavenly guidance
Is most required? The murderer—let *him* die,
And him who lifts his arm against his parent,
His country,—or his voice against his God.
Let crimes less heinous dooms less dreadful meet
Than loss of life! so said the law divine:
That law beneficent, which mildly stretch'd,
To men forgotten and forlorn, the hand
Of *restitution:* Yes, the trumpet's voice
The Sabbath of the jubilee† announced:
The freedom-freighted blast, through all the land
At once, in every city, echoing rings,
From Lebanon to Carmel's woody cliffs,
So loud, that far within the desert's verge
The couching lion starts, and glares around.
Free as the bondman now, each one returns
To his inheritance: The man, grown old
In servitude far from his native fields,
Hastes joyous on his way; no hills are steep,
Smooth is each rugged path; his little ones

* "And it came to pass, on the third day in the morning that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; so that all the people that was in the camp trembled." Exod. xix. 16.

† "And thou shalt number seven Sabbaths of years unto thee, seven times seven years; and the space of the seven Sabbaths of years shall be unto thee forty and nine years. Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubilee to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month; in the day of atonement shall ye make the trumpet sound throughout all your land. And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubilee unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family." Lev. xxv 8—10.

Sport as they go, while oft the mother chides
The lingering step, lured by the way-side flowers:
At length the hill, from which a farewell look,
And still another parting look, he cast
On his paternal vale, appears in view:
The summit gain'd, throbs hard his heart with joy
And sorrow blent, to see that vale once more;
Instant his eager eye darts to the roof
Where first he saw the light; his youngest born
He lifts, and, pointing to the much-loved spot,
Says—"There thy fathers lived, and there they sleep."
Onward he wends; near and more near he draws:
How sweet the tinkle of the palm-bower'd brook!
The sunbeam slanting through the cedar grove
How lovely, and how mild! But lovelier still
The welcome in the eye of ancient friends,
Scarce known at first!—and dear the fig-tree shade
'Neath which on Sabbath eve his father told*
Of Israel from the house of bondage freed,
Led through the desert to the promised land;—
With eager arms the aged stem he clasps,
And with his tears the furrow'd bark bedews:
And still, at midnight hour, he thinks he hears
The blissful sound that brake the bondman's chains,
The glorious peal of freedom and of joy!
Did ever law of *man* a power like this
Display? power marvellous as merciful,
Which, though in *other* ordinances still
Most plainly seen, is yet but little mark'd
For what it truly is,—a miracle!
Stupendous, ever new, perform'd at once
In every region,—yea, on every sea
Which Europe's navies plough;—yes, in all lands
From pole to pole, or civilized to rude,
People there are, to whom the *Sabbath* morn
Dawns, shedding dews into their drooping hearts:
Yes, far beyond the high-heaved western wave,
Amid Columbia's wildernesses vast,
The words which God in thunder from the mount
Of Sinai spake, are heard, and are obey'd.
Thy children, Scotia, in the desert land,
Driven from their homes by fell monopoly,
Keep holy to the Lord the seventh day.
Assembled under loftiest canopy
Of trees primeval, soon to be laid low
They sing, *By Babel's streams we sat and wept.*
What strong mysterious links enchain the heart
To regions where the morn of life is spent!
In foreign lands, though happier be the clime,
Though round our board smile all the friends we love,
The face of nature wears a stranger's look.
Yea, though the valley which we loved be swept
Of its inhabitants, none left behind,
Not e'en the poor blind man who sought his bread
From door to door, still, still there is a want;
Yes, even he, round whom a night that knows
No dawn is ever spread, whose native vale
Presented to his closed eyes a blank,
Deplores its distance now. There well he knew
Each object, though unseen; there could he wend
His way, guideless, through wilds and mazy woods;
Each aged tree, spared when the forest fell,
Was his familiar friend, from the smooth birch,
With rind of silken touch, to the rough elm:
The three gray stones that mark'd where heroes lay
Mourn'd by the harp, mourn'd by the melting voice
Of Cona, oft his resting-place had been;
Oft had they told him that his home was near:
The tinkle of the rill, the murmuring
So gentle of the brook the torrent's rush,
The cataract's din, the ocean's distant roar,
The echo's answer to his foot or voice,—
All spoke a language which he understood,
All warn'd him of his way. But most he feels,
Upon the hallow'd morn, the saddening change:
No more he hears the gladsome village bell
Ring the bless'd summons to the house of God:
And—for the voice of psalms, loud, solemn, grand,
That cheer'd his darkling path, as with slow step
And feeble, he toil'd up the spire-topt hill,—
A few faint notes ascend among the trees.
What though the cluster'd vine there hardly tempts
The traveller's hand; though birds of dazzling plume
Perch on the loaded boughs;—"Give me thy woods,
(Exclaims the banish'd man,) thy barren woods,
Poor Scotland! Sweeter there the reddening haw,
The sloe, or rowan's* bitter bunch, than here
The purple grape; dearer the redbreast's note,
That mourns the fading year in Scotia's vales,
Than Philomel's, where spring is ever new;
More dear to me the redbreast's sober suit,
So like a wither'd leaflet, than the glare
Of gaudy wings, that make the iris dim."
Nor is regret exclusive to the old:
The boy, whose birth was midway o'er the main,
A ship his cradle, by the billows rock'd,—
"The nursling of the storm,"—although he claims
No native land, yet does he wistful hear
Of some far distant country still call'd *home*,
Where lambs of whitest fleece sport on the hills;
Where gold-speck'd fishes wanton in the streams:
Where little birds, when snow-flakes dim the air,
Light on the floor, and peck the table crumbs,
And with their singing cheer the winter day.
But what the loss of country to the woes
Of banishment and solitude combined!
O! my heart bleeds to think there now may live
One hapless man, the remnant of a wreck,
Cast on some desert island of that main
Immense, which stretches from the Cochin shore
To Acapulco. Motionless he sits,
As is the rock his seat, gazing whole days,
With wandering eye, o'er all the watery waste·
Now striving to believe the albatross
A sail appearing on the horizon's verge;
Now vowing ne'er to cherish other hope
Than hope of death. Thus pass his weary hours
Till welcome evening warn him that 'tis time
Upon the shell-notch'd calendar to mark

* "And these words which I command thee this day shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. Thou shalt say unto thy son, We were Pharaoh's bondmen in Egypt; and the Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand." Deut. vi. 6, 7. 21.

* Mountain ash.

Another day, another dreary day,—
Changeless;—for, in these regions of the sun,
The wholesome law that dooms mankind to toil,
Bestowing grateful interchange of rest
And labour, is annull'd; for there the trees,
Adorn'd at once with bud, and flower, and fruit,
Drop, as the breezes blow, a shower of bread
And blossoms on the ground. But yet by him,
The hermit of the deep, not unobserved
The Sabbath passes. 'Tis his great delight.
Each seventh eve he marks the farewell ray,
And loves, and sighs to think,—that setting sun
Is now impurpling Scotland's mountain tops,
Or, higher risen, slants athwart her vales,
Tinting with yellow light the quivering throat
Of day-spring lark, while woodland birds below
Chant in the dewy shade. Thus all night long
He watches, while the rising moon describes
The progress of the day in happier lands.
And now he almost fancies that he hears
The chiming from his native village church;
And now he sings, and fondly hopes the strain
May be the same that sweet ascends at home
In congregation full,—where, not without a tear
They are remember'd who in ships behold
The wonders of the deep:* he sees the hand,
The widow'd hand, that veils the eye suffused;
He sees his orphan'd boy look up, and strive
The widow'd heart to soothe. His spirit leans
On God. Nor does he leave his weekly vigil
Though tempests ride o'er welkin-lashing waves
On winds of cloudless wing;† though lightnings burst
So vivid, that the stars are hid and seen
In awful alternation: Calm he views
The far exploding firmament, and dares
To hope—one bolt in mercy is reserved
For his release: and yet he is resign'd
To live; because full well he is assured,
Thy hand does lead him, thy right hand upholds.‡
And thy right hand does lead him. Lo! at last,
One sacred eve, he hears, faint from the deep,
Music remote, swelling at intervals,
As if th' imbodied spirit of such sounds
Came slowly floating on the shoreward wave:
The cadence well he knows,—a hymn of old,
Where sweetly is rehearsed the lowly state
Of Jesus, when his birth was first announced,
In midnight music, by an angel choir,
To Bethlehem's shepherds,§ as they watch'd their flocks.

Breathless, the man forlorn listens, and thinks
It is a dream. Fuller the voices swell.
He looks, and starts to see, moving along,
A fiery wave,* (so seems it,) crescent form'd,
Approaching to the land: straightway he sees
A towering whiteness; 'tis the heaven-fill'd sails
That waft the mission'd men, who have renounced
Their homes, their country, nay, almost the world
Bearing glad tidings to the farthest isles
Of ocean, that *the dead shall rise again.*
Forward the gleam-girt castle coastwise glides;
It seems as it would pass away. To cry
The wretched man in vain attempts, in vain,
Powerless his voice as in a fearful dream:
Not so his hand: he strikes the flint,—a blaze
Mounts from the ready heap of wither'd leaves:
The music ceases, accents harsh succeed,
Harsh, but most grateful: "downward drop the sails;
Ingulf'd the anchor sinks; the boat is launch'd;
But cautious lies aloof till morning dawn:
O then the transport of the man unused
To other human voice besides his own,—
His native tongue to hear! he breathes at home,
Though earth's diameter is interposed.
Of perils of the sea he has no dread,
Full well assured the mission'd bark is safe,
Held in the hollow of th' Almighty's hand.
(And signal thy deliverances have been
Of these thy messengers of peace and joy.)
From storms that loudly threaten to unfix
Islands rock-rooted in the ocean's bed,
Thou dost deliver them,—and from the calm,
More dreadful than the storm, when motionless
Upon the purple deep the vessel lies
For days, for nights, illumed by phosphor lamps
When sea-birds seem in nests of flame to float
When backward starts the boldest mariner
To see, while o'er the side he leans, his face
As if deep tinged with blood.—
Let worldly men
The cause and combatants contemptuous scorn,
And call fanatics them who hazard health
And life in testifying of the truth,
Who joy and glory in the cross of Christ!
What were the Galilean fishermen
But messengers, commission'd to announce
The resurrection, and the life to come!
They too, though clothed with power of mighty works
Miraculous, were oft received with scorn;
Oft did their words fall powerless, though enforced
By deeds that mark'd Omnipotence their friend:
But, when their efforts fail'd, unweariedly
They onward went, rejoicing in their course.

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* "They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters; these see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep." Psal. cvii.

† In the tropical regions, the sky during storms is often without a cloud.

‡ "If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me." Psal. cxxxix.

§ "And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flocks by night. And lo! the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them, and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not, for, behold! I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you, Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling-clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." Luke ii. 8—14.

* "In some seas, as particularly about the coast of Malabar, as a ship floats along, it seems during the night to be surrounded with fire, and to leave a long track of light behind it. Whenever the sea is gently agitated, it seems converted into little stars: every drop as it breaks emits light, like bodies electrified in the dark."—*Darwin*

Like helianthus,* borne on downy wings
To distant realms, they frequent fell on soils
Barren and thankless; yet oft-times they saw
Their labours crown'd with fruit a hundred fold,
Saw the new converts testify their faith
By works of love,—the slave set free, the sick
Attended, prisoners visited, the poor
Received as brothers at the rich man's board.
Alas! how different now the deeds of men
Nursed in the faith of Christ!—The free made slaves!
Torn from their country, borne across the deep,
Enchain'd, endungeon'd, forced by stripes to live,
Doom'd to behold their wives, their little ones,
Tremble beneath the white man's fiend-like frown!
Yet e'en to scenes like these the Sabbath brings
Alleviation of th' enormous wo:—
The oft reiterated stroke is still;
The clotted scourge hangs hardening in the shrouds.
But see, the demon man, whose trade is blood,
With dauntless front convene his ruffian crew
To hear the sacred service read. Accursed,
The wretch's bile-tinged lips profane the word
Of God: Accursed, he ventures to pronounce
The decalogue, nor falters at that law
Wherein 'tis written, *Thou shalt do no murder:*
Perhaps, while yet the words are on his lips,
He hears a dying mother's parting groan;
He hears her orphan'd child, with lisping plaint,
Attempt to rouse her from the sleep of death.

O England! England! wash thy purpled hands
Of this foul sin, and never dip them more
In guilt so damnable! *then* lift them up
In supplication to that God, whose name
Is Mercy; then thou mayest, without the risk
Of drawing vengeance from the surcharged clouds,
Implore protection to thy menaced shores;
Then God will blast the tyrant's arm that grasps
The thunderbolt of ruin o'er thy head:
Then will he turn the wolvish race to prey
Upon each other; then will he arrest
The lava torrent, causing it regorge
Back to its source with fiery desolation.

Of all the murderous trades by mortals plied,
'Tis war alone that never violates
The hallow'd day by simulate respect,—
By hypocritic rest: No, no, the work proceeds.
From sacred pinnacles are hung the flags,†
That give the sign to slip the leash from slaughter.
The bells, whose knoll a ho[illegible] calmness pour'd
Into the good man's breast,—whose sound solaced
The sick, the poor, the old—perversion dire—
Pealing with sulphurous tongues, speak death-fraught words:
From morn to eve destruction revels frenzied,
Till at the hour when peaceful vesper-chimes
Were wont to soothe the ear, the trumpet sounds
Pursuit and flight altern; and for the song
Of larks, descending to their grass-bower'd homes,
The croak of flesh-gorged ravens, as they slake
Their thirst in hoof-prints fill'd with gore, disturbs
The stupor of the dying man; while death
Triumphantly sails down th' ensanguined stream,
On corses throned, and crown'd with shiver'd boughs
That erst hung imaged in the crystal tide.*

And what the harvest of these bloody fields?
A double weight of fetters to the slave,
And chains on arms that wielded freedom's sword,
Spirit of Tell! and art thou doom'd to see
Thy mountains, that confess'd no other chains
Than what the wintry elements had forged,—
Thy vales, where freedom, and her stern compeer,
Proud, virtuous poverty, their noble state
Maintain'd, amid surrounding threats of wealth,
Of superstition, and tyrannic sway—
Spirit of Tell! and art thou doom'd to see
That land subdued by slavery's basest slaves;
By men, whose lips pronounce the sacred name
Of liberty, then kiss the despot's foot?
Helvetia! hadst thou to thyself been true,
Thy dying sons had triumph'd as they fell:
But 'twas a glorious effort, though in vain.
Aloft thy genius, 'mid the sweeping clouds,
The flag of freedom spread; bright in the storm
The streaming meteor waved, and far it gleam'd:
But, ah! 'twas transient, as the Iris' arch,
Glanced from leviathan's ascending shower,
When 'mid the mountain waves heaving his head.
Already had the friendly-seeming foe
Possess'd the snow piled ramparts of the land:
Down like an avalanche they roll'd, they crush'd
The temple, palace, cottage, every work
Of art and nature, in one common ruin.
The dreadful crash is o'er, and peace ensues,—
The peace of desolation, gloomy, still:
Each day is hush'd as Sabbath; but, alas!
No Sabbath service glads the seventh day!
No more the happy villagers are seen
Winding adown the rock-hewn paths, that wont
To lead their footsteps to the house of prayer;
But, far apart, assembled in the depth
Of solitudes, perhaps a little group
Of aged men, and orphan boys, and maids,
Bereft, list to the breathings of the holy man,
Who spurns an oath of fealty to the power
Of rulers chosen by a tyrant's nod.
No more, as dies the rustling of the breeze,
Is heard the distant vesper hymn; no more
At gloamin hour, the plaintive strain, that links
His country to the Switzer's heart, delights
The loosening team; or if some shepherd boy
Attempt the strain, his voice soon faltering stops;
He feels his country now a foreign land.

O Scotland! canst thou for a moment brook
The mere imagination, that a fate
Like this should e'er be thine! that o'er these hills
And dear-bought vales, whence Wallace, Douglas, Bruce,
Repell'd proud Edward's multitudinous hordes,
A Gallic foe, that abject race, should rule!
No, no! let never hostile standard touch
Thy shore: rush, rush into the dashing brine,
And crest each wave with steel; and should the stamp

* Sunflower. "The seeds of many plants of this kind are furnished with a plume, by which admirable mechanism they are disseminated far from their parent stem." —*Darwin.*

† Church steeples are frequently used as signal posts.

* After a heavy cannonade, the shivered branches of trees, and the corpses of the killed, are seen floating together down the rivers.

Of slavery's footstep violate the strand,
Let not the tardy tide efface the mark;
Sweep off the stigma with a sea of blood!
Thrice happy he, who, far in Scottish glen
Retired, (yet ready at his country's call,)
Has left the restless emmet-hill of man:
He never longs to read the saddening tale
Of endless wars; and seldom does he hear
The tale of wo; and ere it reaches him,
Rumour, so loud when new, has died away
Into a whisper, on the memory borne
Of casual traveller:—as on the deep,
Far from the sight of land, when all around
Is waveless calm, the sudden tremulous swell,
That gently heaves the ship, tells, as it rolls,
Of earthquakes dread, and cities overthrown.
O Scotland! much I love thy tranquil dales:
But most on Sabbath eve, when low the sun
Slants through the upland copse, 'tis my delight,
Wandering, and stopping oft, to hear the song
Of kindred praise arise from humble roofs;
Or, when the simple service ends, to hear
The lifted latch, and mark the gray-hair'd man,
The father and the priest, walk forth alone
Into his garden-plat, or little field,
To commune with his God in secret prayer,—
To bless the Lord, that in his downward years
His children are about him: Sweet, meantime,
The thrush, that sings upon the aged thorn,
Brings to his view the days of youthful years,
When that same aged thorn was but a bush.
Nor is the contrast between youth and age
To him a painful thought; he joys to think
His journey near a close,—heaven is his home.
More happy far that man, though bowed down,
Though feeble be his gait, and dim his eye,
Than they, the favourites of youth and health,
Of riches, and of fame, who have renounced
The glorious promise of the life to come,
Clinging to death.—
Or mark that female face,
The faded picture of its former self,—
The garments coarse, but clean;—frequent at church
I've noted such a one, feeble and pale,
Yet standing, with a look of mild content,
Till beckon'd by some kindly hand to sit.
She had seen better days; there was a time
Her hands could earn her bread, and freely give
To those who were in want; but now old age,
And lingering disease, have made her helpless.
Yet she is happy, ay, and she is wise,
(Philosophers may sneer, and pedants frown,)
Although her Bible is her only book;
And she is rich, although her only wealth
Is recollection of a well-spent life—
Is expectation of the life to come.
Examine here, explore the narrow path
In which she walks; look not for virtuous deeds
In history's arena, where the prize
Of fame, or power, prompts to heroic acts.
Peruse the *lives* themselves of men obscure:—
There charity, that robs itself to give;
There fortitude in sickness, nursed by want;
There courage, that expects no tongue to praise;
There virtue lurks, like purest gold deep hid,
With no alloy of selfish motive mix'd.
The poor man's boon, that stints him of his bread,
Is prized more highly in the sight of Him
Who sees the heart, than golden gifts from hands
That scarce can know their countless treasures less:*
Yea, the deep sigh that heaves the poor man's breast
To see distress, and feel his willing arm
Palsied by penury, ascends to heaven;
While ponderous bequests of lands and goods
Ne'er rise above their earthly origin.
And should all bounty that is clothed with power
Be deem'd unworthy?—Far be such a thought!
E'en when the rich bestow, there are sure tests
Of genuine charity;—Yes, yes, let wealth
Give other alms than silver or than gold,—
Time, trouble, toil, attendance, watchfulness,
Exposure to disease;—yes, let the rich
Be often seen beneath the sick man's roof;
Or cheering, with inquiries from the heart,
And hopes of health, the melancholy range
Of couches in the public wards of wo:
There let them often bless the sick man's bed,
With kind assurances that all is well
At home, that plenty smiles upon the board,—
The while the hand that earn'd the frugal meal
Can hardly raise itself in sign of thanks.
Above all duties, let the rich man search
Into the cause he knoweth not, nor spurn
The suppliant wretch as guilty of a crime.
Ye, bless'd with *wealth!* (another name for *power*
Of doing good,) O would ye but devote
A little portion of each seventh day
To acts of *justice* to your fellow men!
The house of mourning silently invites:
Shun not the crowded alley; prompt descent
Into the half-sunk cell, darksome and damp;
Nor seem impatient to be gone: Inquire,
Console, instruct, encourage, soothe, assist;
Read, pray, and sing a new song to the Lord;
Make tears of joy down grief-worn furrows flow.
O health! thou sun of life, without whose beam
The fairest scenes of nature seem involved
In darkness, shine upon my dreary path
Once more; or, with thy faintest dawn, give hope,
That I may yet enjoy thy vital ray!
Though transient be the hope, 'twill be most sweet,
Like midnight music, stealing on the ear,
Then gliding past, and dying slow away.
Music! thou soothing power, thy charm is proved
Most vividly when clouds o'ercast the soul;
So light its loveliest effect displays
In lowering skies, when through the murky rack
A slanting sunbeam shoots, and instant limns

* "And Jesus sat over against the treasury, and beheld how the people cast money into the treasury: and many that were rich cast in much. And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing. And he called unto him his disciples, and saith unto them, Verily, I say unto you, that this poor widow hath cast more in than all they which have cast into the treasury: For all they did cast in of their abundance, but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living." Mark xii. 41—44

The ethereal curve of seven harmonious dyes,
Eliciting a splendour from the gloom:
O music! still vouchsafe to tranquillize
This breast perturb'd; thy voice, though mournful, soothes;
And mournful aye are thy most beauteous lays,
Like fall of blossoms from the orchard boughs,—
The autumn of the spring. Enchanting power!
Who, by thy airy spell, canst whirl the mind
Far from the busy haunts of men, to vales
Where Tweed or Yarrow flows; or, spurning time
Recall red Flodden field; or suddenly
Transport, with alter'd strain, the deafen'd ear
To Linden's plain!—But what the pastoral lay,
The melting dirge, the battle's trumpet peal,
Compared to notes with sacred numbers link'd
In union, solemn, grand! O then the spirit,
Upborne on pinions of celestial sound,
Soars to the throne of God, and ravish'd hears
Ten thousand times ten thousand voices rise
In hallelujahs;—voices, that erewhile
Were feebly tuned perhaps to low-breathed hymns
Of solace in the chambers of the poor,—
The Sabbath worship of the friendless sick.
Bless'd be the female votaries, whose days
No Sabbath of their pious labours prove,
Whose lives are consecrated to the toil
Of ministering around the uncurtain'd couch
Of pain and poverty! Bless'd be the hands,
The lovely hands, (for beauty, youth, and grace,
Are oft conceal'd by pity's closest veil,)
That mix the cup medicinal, that bind
The wounds which ruthless warfare and disease
Have to the loathsome lazar-house consign'd.
Fierce superstition of the mitred king!
Almost I could forget thy torch and stake,
When I this blessed sisterhood survey,—
Compassion's priestesses, disciples true
Of him whose touch was health, whose single word
Electrified with life the palsied arm,—
Of him who said, *Take up thy bed and walk*,—
Of him who cried to Lazarus, *Come forth*.
And he who cried to Lazarus, *Come forth*,
Will, when the Sabbath of the tomb is past,
Call forth the dead, and reunite the dust
(Transform'd and purified) to angel souls.
Ecstatic hope! belief! conviction firm!
How grateful 'tis to recollect the time
When hope arose to faith! Faintly at first
The heavenly voice is heard; then, by degrees,
Its music sounds perpetual in the heart.
Thus he, who all the gloomy winter long
Has dwelt in city crowds, wandering a field
Betimes on Sabbath morn, ere yet the spring
Unfold the daisy's bud, delighted hears
The first lark's note, faint yet, and short the song,
Check'd by the chill ungenial northern breeze;
But, as the sun ascends, another springs,
And still another soars on loftier wing,
Till all o'erhead, the joyous choir unseen,
Poised welkin high, harmonious fills the air,
As if it were a link 'tween earth and heaven.

SABBATH WALKS.

A SPRING SABBATH WALK.

More earnest was his voice! most mild his look,
As with raised hands he bless'd his parting flock.
He is a faithful pastor of the poor;—
He thinks not of himself; his Master's words,
*Feed, feed my sheep** are ever at his heart,
The cross of Christ is aye before his eyes.
O, how I love, with melted soul, to leave
The house of prayer, and wander in the fields
Alone! What though the opening spring be chill,
Although the lark, check'd in his airy path
Eke out his song, perch'd on the fallow clod,
That still o'ertops the blade! Although no branch
Have spread its foliage, save the willow wand
That dips its pale leaves in the swollen stream!
What though the clouds oft lower! Their threats but end
In sunny showers, that scarcely fill the folds
Of moss-couch'd violet, or interrupt
The merle's dulcet pipe,—melodious bird!
He, hid behind the milk-white slow-thorn spray,
(Whose early flowers anticipate the leaf,)
Welcomes the time of buds, the infant year.
Sweet is the sunny nook, to which my steps
Have brought me, hardly conscious where I roam'd
Unheeding where,—so lovely all around
The works of God, array'd in vernal smile!
Oft at this season, musing, I prolong
My devious range, till, sunk from view, the sun
Emblaze, with upward-slanting ray, the breast,
And wing unquivering of the wheeling lark,
Descending, vocal, from her latest flight;
While, disregardful of yon lonely star,—
The harbinger of chill night's glittering host,—
Sweet Redbreast, Scotia's Philomela, chants,
In desultory strains, his evening hymn.

A SUMMER SABBATH WALK.

Delightful is this loneliness: it calms
My heart: pleasant the cool beneath these elms,
That throw across the stream a moveless shade.
Here nature in her midnoon whisper speaks;
How peaceful every sound!—the ring-dove's plaint,
Moan'd from the twilight centre of the grove,
While every other woodland lay is mute,
Save when the wren flits from her down-coved nest,
And from the root-sprig trills her ditty clear,—
The grasshopper's oft pausing chirp,—the buzz,
Angrily shrill, of moss-entangled bee,

* "So when he had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. He saith to him again the second time. Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep. He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved, because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep." John xxi 15—17.

That, soon as loosed, booms with full twang away,
The sudden rushing of the minnow shoal,
Scared from the shallows by my passing tread.
Dimpling the water glides, with here and there
A glossy fly, skimming in circlets gay
The treacherous surface, while the quick-eyed trout
Watches his time to spring; or from above,
Some feather'd dam, surveying midst the boughs,
Darts from her perch, and to her plumeless brood
Bears off the prize:—Sad emblem of man's lot!
He, giddy insect, from his native leaf,
(Where safe and happily he might have lurk'd,)
Elate upon ambition's gaudy wings,
Forgetful of his origin, and, worse,
Unthinking of his end, flies to the stream;
And if from hostile vigilance he 'scape,
Buoyant he flutters but a little while,
Mistakes th' inverted image of the sky
For heaven itself, and, sinking, meets his fate.
Now let me trace the stream up to its source
Among the hills; its runnel by degrees
Diminishing, the murmur turns a tinkle.
Closer and closer still the banks approach,
Tangled so thick with pleaching bramble shoots,
With brier, and hazel branch, and hawthorn spray,
That, fain to quit the dangle, glad I mount
Into the open air: Grateful the breeze
That fans my throbbing temples! smiles the plain
Spread wide below: how sweet the placid view!
But, O! more sweet the thought, heart-soothing thought,
That thousands, and ten thousands of the sons
Of toil, partake this day the common joy
Of rest, of peace, of viewing hill and dale,
Of breathing in the silence of the woods,
And blessing Him who gave the Sabbath day.
Yes, my heart flutters with a freer throb,
To think that now the townsman wanders forth
Among the fields and meadows to enjoy
The coolness of the day's decline; to see
His children sport around, and simply pull
The flower and weed promiscuous, as a boon,
Which proudly in his breast they smiling fix.
Again I turn me to the hill, and trace
The wizard stream, now scarce to be discern'd;
Woodless its banks, but green with ferny leaves,
And thinly strew'd with heath-bells up and down.
Now, when the downward sun has left the glens,
Each mountain's rugged lineaments are trace.
Upon the adverse slope, where stalks gigantic
The shepherd's shadow thrown athwart the chasm,
As on the topmost ridge he homeward hies.
How deep the hush! the torrent's channel dry,
Presents a stony steep, the echo's haunt.
But, hark, a plaintive sound floating along!
'Tis from yon heath-roof'd shielin; now it dies
Away, now rises full; it is the song
Which He,—who listens to the hallelujahs
Of choiring seraphim,—delights to hear;
It is the music of the heart, the voice
Of venerable age,—of guileless youth,
In kindly circle seated on the ground
Before their wicker door. Behold the man!
The grandsire and the saint; his silvery locks
Beam in the parting ray: before him lies,
Upon the smooth cropt sward, the open book,
His comfort, stay, and ever new delight!
While, heedless, at his side, the lisping boy
Fondles the lamb that nightly shares his couch.

AN AUTUMN SABBATH WALK.

When homeward bands their several ways disperse,
I love to linger in the narrow field
Of rest, to wander round from tomb to tomb,
And think of some who silent sleep below.
Sad sighs the wind, that from those ancient elms
Shakes showers of leaves upon the wither'd grass:
The sere and yellow wreaths, with eddying sweep,
Fill up the furrows 'tween the hillock'd graves.
But list that moan! 'tis the poor blind man's dog,
His guide for many a day, now come to mourn
The master and the friend—conjunction rare!
A man indeed he was of gentle soul,
Though bred to brave the deep: the lightning's flash
Had dimm'd, not closed, his mild, but sightless eyes
He was a welcome guest through all his range
(It was not wide:) no dog would bay at him;
Children would run to meet him on his way,
And lead him to a sunny seat, and climb
His knee, and wonder at his oft-told tales.
Then would he teach the elfins how to plait
The rushy cap and crown, or sedgy ship;
And I have seen him lay his tremulous hand
Upon their heads, while silent moved his lips.
Peace to thy spirit! that now looks on me
Perhaps with greater pity than I felt
To see thee wandering darkling on thy way.
But let me quit this melancholy spot,
And roam where nature gives a parting smile.
As yet the blue-bells linger on the sod
That copes the sheepfold ring; and in the woods
A second blow of many flowers appears;
Flowers faintly tinged, and breathing no perfume.
But fruits, not blossoms, form the woodland wreath
That circles Autumn's brow: the ruddy haws
Now clothe the half-leaved thorn; the bramble bends
Beneath its jetty load; the hazel hangs
With auburn branches, dipping in the stream
That sweeps along, and threatens to o'erflow
The leaf-strewn banks: oft, statue-like, I gaze,
In vacancy of thought, upon that stream,
And chase, with dreaming eye, the eddying foam;
Or rowan's cluster'd branch, or harvest sheaf,
Borne rapidly adown the dizzying flood.

A WINTER SABBATH WALK.

How dazzling white the snowy scene! deep, deep
The stillness of the winter Sabbath day,—
Not even a foot-fall heard.—Smooth are the fields,
Each hollow pathway level with the plain:
Hid are the bushes, save that, here and there,
Are seen the topmost shoots of brier or broom.
High-ridged, the whirled drift has almost reach'd
The powder'd key-stone of the churchyard porch
Mute hangs the hooded bell; the tombs lie buried.
No step approaches to the house of prayer.
The flickering fall is o'er; the clouds disperse,
And show the sun, hung o'er the welkin's verge;
Shooting a bright but ineffectual beam

On all the sparkling waste. Now is the time,
To visit nature in her grand attire;
Though perilous the mountainous ascent,
A noble recompense the danger brings.
How beautiful the plain stretch'd far below!
Unvaried though it be, save by yon stream
With azure windings, or the leafless wood.
But what the beauty of the plain, compared
To that sublimity which reigns inthroned,
Holding joint rule with solitude divine,
Among yon rocky fells, that bid defiance
To steps the most adventurously bold!
There silence dwells profound; or if the cry
Of high-poised eagle break at times the calm,
The mantled echoes no response return.
But let me now explore the deep sunk dell.
No foot-print, save the covey's or the flock's,
Is seen along the rill, where marshy springs
Still rear the grassy blade of vivid green.
Beware, ye shepherds, of these treacherous haunts,
Nor linger there too long: the wintry day
Soon closes; and full oft a heavier fall
Heap'd by the blast, fills up the shelter'd glen,
While, gurgling deep below, the buried rill
Mines for itself a snow-coved way. O! then,
Your helpless charge drive from the tempting spot,
And keep them on the bleak hill's stormy side,
Where night-winds sweep the gathering drift
away:—
So the great Shepherd leads the heavenly flock
From faithless pleasures, full into the storms
Of life, where long they bear the bitter blast,
Until at length the vernal sun looks forth,
Bedimm'd with showers: Then to the pastures
green
He brings them, where the quiet waters glide,
The streams of life, the Siloah of the soul.

BIBLICAL PICTURES.

THE FIRST SABBATH.

Six days the heavenly host, in circle vast,
Like that untouching cincture which enzones
The globe of Saturn, compass'd wide this orb,
And with the forming mass floated along,
In rapid course, through yet untravell'd space,
Beholding God's stupendous power,—a world
Bursting from chaos at the omnific will,
And perfect ere the sixth day's evening star
On Paradise arose. Blessed that eve!
The Sabbath's harbinger, when, all complete,
In freshest beauty from Jehovah's hand,
Creation bloom'd; when Eden's twilight face
Smiled like a sleeping babe. The voice divine
A holy calm breathed o'er the goodly work;
Mildly the sun, upon the loftiest trees,
Shed mellowly a sloping beam. Peace reign'd,
And love, and gratitude; the human pair
Their orisons pour'd forth; love, concord, reign'd;
The falcon, perch'd upon the blooming bough
With Philomela, listen'd to her lay;
Among the antler'd herd, the tiger couch'd
Harmless; the lion's mane no terror spread
Among the careless ruminating flock.
Silence was o'er the deep; the noiseless surge,
The last subsiding wave,—of that dread tumult
Which raged, when ocean, at the mute command,
Rush'd furiously into his new-cleft bed,—
Was gently rippling on the pebbled shore;
While, on the swell, the sea-bird with her head
Wing-veil'd, slept tranquilly. The host of heaven,
Entranced in new delight, speechless adored;
Nor stopp'd their fleet career, nor changed their
form
Encircular, till on that hemisphere,
In which the blissful garden sweet exhaled
Its incense, odorous clouds,—the Sabbath dawn
Arose; then wide the flying circle oped,
And soar'd, in semblance of a mighty rainbow
Silent ascend the choirs of seraphim;
No harp resounds, mute is each voice; the burst
Of joy and praise reluctant they repress,—
For love and concord all things so attuned
To harmony, that earth must have received
The grand vibration, and to the centre shook:
But soon as to the starry altitudes
They reach'd, then what a storm of sound tremen
dous
Swell'd through the realms of space! The morn-
ing stars
Together sang, and all the sons of God
Shouted for joy! Loud was the peal; so loud
As would have quite o'erwhelm'd the human sense;
But to the earth it came a gentle strain,
Like softest fall breathed from Æolian lute,
When 'mid the chords the evening gale expires.
Day of the Lord! creation's hallow'd close!
Day of the Lord! (prophetical they sang,)
Benignant mitigation of that doom
Which must, ere long, consign the fallen race,
Dwellers in yonder star, to toil and wo!

THE FINDING OF MOSES.

Slow glides the Nile: amid the margin flags,
Closed in a bulrush ark, the babe is left,—
Left by a mother's hand. His sister waits
Far off; and pale, 'tween hope and fear, beholds
The royal maid, surrounded by her train,
Approach the river bank,—approach the spot
Where sleeps the innocent: She sees them stoop
With meeting plumes; the rushy lid is oped,
And wakes the infant, smiling in his tears,
As when along a little mountain lake
The summer south-wind breathes, with gentle sigh,
And parts the reeds, unveiling, as they bend,
A water-lily floating on the wave.

JACOB AND PHARAOH.

Pharaoh upon a gorgeous throne of state
Was seated; while around him stood submiss
His servants, watchful of his lofty looks.
The patriarch enters, leaning on the arm
Of Benjamin. Unmoved by all the glare
Of royalty, he scarcely throws a glance
Upon the pageant show; for from his youth
A shepherd's life he led, and view'd each night
The starry host; and still, where'er he went,
He felt himself in presence of the Lord

His eye is bent on Joseph, him pursues.
Sudden the king descends; and, bending, kneels
Before the aged man, and supplicates
A blessing from his lips! the aged man
Lays on the ground his staff, and stretching forth
His tremulous hand o'er Pharaoh's uncrown'd head,
Prays that the Lord would bless him and his land.

JEPHTHAH'S VOW.

From conquest Jephthah came, with faltering step
And troubled eye; his home appears in view;
He trembles at the sight. Sad he forbodes,—
His vow will meet a victim in his child:
For well he knows, that, from her earliest years,
She still was first to meet his homeward steps:
Well he remembers, how, with tottering gait,
She ran, and clasp'd his knees, and lisp'd, and look'd
Her joy; and how, when garlanding with flowers
His helm, fearful, her infant hand would shrink
Back from the lion couch'd beneath the crest.
What sound is that, which, from the palm-tree grove,
Floats now with choral swell, now fainter falls
Upon the ear? It is, it is the song
He loved to hear,—a song of thanks and praise,
Sung by the patriarch for his ransom'd son.
Hope from the omen springs: O blessed hope!
It may not be her voice!—Fain would he think
'Twas not his daughter's voice that still approach'd,
Blent with the timbrel's note. Forth from the grove
She foremost glides of all the minstrel band:
Moveless he stands; then grasps his hilt, still red
With hostile gore, but, shuddering, quits the hold:
And clasps in agony his hands, and cries,
"Alas, my daughter! thou hast brought me low."—
The timbrel at her rooted feet resounds.

SAUL AND DAVID.

Deep was the furrow in the royal brow,
When David's hand, lightly as vernal gales
Rippling the brook of Kedron, skimm'd the lyre:
He sung of Jacob's youngest born,—the child
Of his old age,—sold to the Ishmaelite;
His exaltation to the second power
In Pharaoh's realm; his brethren thither sent;
Suppliant they stood before his face, well known,
Unknowing,—till Joseph fell upon the neck
Of Benjamin, his mother's son, and wept.
Unconsciously the warlike shepherd paused;
But when he saw, down the yet quivering string,
The tear-drop trembling glide, abash'd, he check'd,
Indignant at himself, the bursting flood,
And, with a sweep impetuous, struck the chords:
From side to side his hands transversely glance,
Like lightning 'thwart a stormy sea; his voice
Arises 'mid the clang, and straightway calms
The harmonious tempest, to a solemn swell
Majestical, triumphant; for he sings
Of Arad's mighty host by Israel's arm
Subdued; of Israel through the desert led
He sings; of him who was their leader, call'd
By God himself, from keeping Jethro's flock,
To be a ruler o'er the chosen race.
Kindles the eye of Saul; his arm is poised;—
Harmless the javelin quivers in the wall.

ELIJAH FED BY RAVENS.

Sore was the famine throughout all the bounds
Of Israel, when Elijah, by command
Of God, journeyed to Cherith's failing brook.
No rain-drops fall, no dew-fraught cloud, at morn
Or closing eve, creeps slowly up the vale;
The withering herbage dies; among the palms
The shrivell'd leaves send to the summer gale
An autumn rustle; no sweet songster's lay
Is warbled from the branches; scarce is heard
The rill's faint brawl. The prophet looks around
And trusts in God, and lays his silver'd head
Upon the flowerless bank; serene he sleeps,
Nor wakes till dawning: then with hands enclasp'd,
And heavenward face, and eyelids closed, he prays
To Him who manna on the desert shower'd,
To Him who from the rock made fountains gush:
Entranced the man of God remains: till roused
By sound of wheeling wings, with grateful heart,
He sees the ravens fearless by his side
Alight, and leave the heaven-provided food.

THE BIRTH OF JESUS ANNOUNCED.

Deep was the midnight silence in the fields
Of Bethlehem; hush'd the folds; save that at times
Was heard the lamb's faint bleat: the shepherds, stretch'd
On the green sward, survey'd the starry vault.
The heavens declare the glory of the Lord,
The firmament shows forth thy handy-work:
Thus they, their hearts attuned to the Most High—
When suddenly a splendid cloud appear'd,
As if a portion of the milky way
Descended slowly in the spiral course.
Near and more near it draws; then, hovering, floats
High as the soar of eagle, shedding bright,
Upon the folded flocks, a heavenly radiance,
From whence was utter'd loud, yet sweet, a voice,—
Fear not, I bring good tidings of great joy;
For unto you is born this day a Saviour!
And this shall be a sign to you,—the babe,
Laid lowly in a manger, ye shall find.—
The angel spake; when, lo! upon the cloud,
A multitude of seraphim, enthroned,
Sang praises, saying,—*Glory to the Lord*
On high; on earth be peace, good will to men.
With sweet response harmoniously they choir'd,
And while, with heavenly harmony, the song
Arose to God, more bright the buoyant throne
Illumed the land: the prowling lion stops,
Awe-struck, with mane uprear'd, and flatten'd head;
And, without turning, backward on his steps
Recoils, aghast, into the desert gloom.
A trembling joy th' astonish'd shepherds prove,
As heavenward reascends the vocal blaze
Triumphantly; while by degrees the strain
Dies on the ear, that, self-deluded, listens—
As if a sound so sweet could never die.

BEHOLD MY MOTHER AND MY BRETHREN.

Who is my mother, or my brethren?
He spake, and look'd on them who sat around,
With a meek smile of pity blent with love,

More melting than e'er gleam'd from human face,—
As when a sunbeam, through a summer shower,
Shines mildly on a little hill-side flock;
And with that look of love he said, Behold
My mother and my brethren; for I say,
That whosoe'er shall do the will of God,
He is my brother, sister, mother, all.

BARTIMEUS RESTORED TO SIGHT.

Blind, poor, and helpless Bartimeus sat,
Listening the foot of the wayfaring man,
Still hoping that the next, and still the next,
Would put an alms into his trembling hand.
He thinks he hears the coming breeze faint rustle
Among the sycamores; it is the tread
Of thousand steps; it is the hum of tongues
Innumerable: But when the sightless man
Heard that the Nazarene was passing by
He cried, and said,—"Jesus, thou Son of David,
Have mercy upon me!" and, when rebuked,
He cried the more, "Have mercy upon me!"—
Thy faith has made thee whole, so Jesus spake,
And straight the blind BEHELD THE FACE OF GOD.

LITTLE CHILDREN BROUGHT TO JESUS.

Suffer that little children come to me,
Forbid them not. Imbolden'd by his words,
The mothers onward press; but finding vain
Th' attempt to reach the Lord, they trust their babes
To strangers' hands; The innocents, alarm'd
Amid the throng of faces all unknown,
Shrink, trembling,—till their wandering eyes discern
The countenance of Jesus, beaming love
And pity; eager then they stretch their arms,
And, cowering, lay their heads upon his breast.

JESUS CALMS THE TEMPEST.

The roaring tumult of the billow'd sea
Awakes him not: high on the crested surge
Now heaved, his locks flow streaming in the blast,
And now, descending 'tween the sheltering waves,
The falling tresses veil the face divine;
Meek through that veil, a momentary gleam
Benignant shines; he dreams that he beholds
The opening eyes,—that long hopeless had roll'd
In darkness,—look around bedimm'd with tears
Of joy; but suddenly the voice of fear
Dispell'd the happy vision: Awful he rose,
Rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea,
Peace, be thou still! and straight there was a calm.
With terror-mingled gladness in their looks,
The mariners exclaim,—*What man is this,*
That e'en the wind and sea obey his voice!

JESUS WALKS ON THE SEA, AND CALMS THE STORM.

Loud blew the storm of night; the thwarting surge
Dash'd, boiling, on the labouring bark: dismay,
From face to face reflected, spread around:—
When, lo! upon a towering wave is seen
The semblance of a foamy wreath, upright,
Move onward to the ship: The helmsman starts,
And quits his hold; the voyagers, appall'd,
Shrink from the fancied Spirit of the Flood:
But when the voice of Jesus with the storm
Soft mingled, *It is I, be not afraid;*
Fear fled, and joy lighten'd from eye to eye.
Up he ascends, and, from the rolling side,
Surveys the tumult of the sea and sky
With transient look severe: the tempest, awed,
Sinks to a sudden calm; the clouds disperse;
The moonbeam trembles on the face divine,
Reflected mildly in th' unruffled deep.

THE DUMB CURED.

His eyes uplifted, and his hands close clasp'd,
The dumb man, with a supplicating look,
Turn'd as the Lord pass'd by: Jesus beheld,
And on him bent a pitying look, and spake:
His moving lips are by the suppliant seen,
And the last accents of the healing sentence
Ring in that ear which never heard before.
Prostrate the man restored falls to the earth,
And uses first the gift, the gift sublime
Of speech, in giving thanks to him, whose voice
Was never utter'd but in doing good.

THE DEATH OF JESUS.

'Tis finished: he spake the words, and bow'd
His head, and died.—Beholding him far off,
They who had minister'd unto him hope.
'Tis his last agony: The temple's vail
Is rent; revealing the most holy place,
Wherein the cherubim their wings extend,
O'ershadowing the mercy-seat of God.
Appall'd the leaning soldier feels the spear
Shake in his grasp; the planted standard falls
Upon the heaving ground; the sun is dimm'd,
And darkness shrouds the body of the Lord.

THE RESURRECTION.

The setting orb of night her level ray
Shed o'er the land, and on the dewy sward
The lengthen'd shadows of the triple cross
Were laid far-stretch'd,—when in the east arose,
Last of the stars, day's harbinger: No sound
Was heard, save of the watching soldier's foot:
Within the rock-barr'd sepulchre, the gloom
Of deepest midnight brooded o'er the dead,
The Holy One: but, lo! a radiance faint
Began to dawn around his sacred brow:
The linen vesture seem'd a snowy wreath,
Drifted by storms into a mountain cave:
Bright and more bright, the circling halo beam'd
Upon that face, clothed in a smile benign,
Though yet exanimate. Nor long the reign
Of death; the eyes that wept for human griefs
Unclose, and look around with conscious joy.
Yes; with returning life, the first emotion
That glow'd in Jesus' breast of love was joy
At man's redemption, now complete; at death
Disarm'd; the grave transform'd into the couch
Of faith; the resurrection and the life.
Majestical he rose: trembled the earth;
The ponderous gate of stone was roll'd away;
The keepers fell; the angel, awe-struck, sunk

Into invisibility, while forth
The Saviour of the world walk'd, and stood
Before the sepulchre, and view'd the clouds
Impurpled glorious by the rising sun.

JESUS APPEARS TO THE DISCIPLES.

The evening of that day, which saw the Lord
Rise from the chambers of the dead, was come.
His faithful followers, assembled, sang
A hymn, low-breathed; a hymn of sorrow, blent
With hope; when, in the midst, sudden he stood;
The awe-struck circle backward shrink; he looks
Around with a benignant smile of love,
And says, *Peace be unto you:* Faith and joy
Spread o'er each face, amazed; as when the moon,
Pavilion'd in dark clouds, mildly comes forth,
Silvering a circlet in the fleecy ranks.

PAUL ACCUSED BEFORE THE TRIBUNAL OF THE AREOPAGUS.

Listen that voice! upon the hill of Mars,
Rolling in bolder thunders than e'er peal'd
From lips that shook the Macedonian throne;
Behold his dauntless outstretch'd arm, his face
Illumed of heaven:—he knoweth not the fear
Of man, of principalities, of powers.
The stoic's moveless frown; the vacant stare
Of Epicurus' herd; the scowl and gnash malign
Of superstition, stopping both her ears;
The Areopagite tribunal dread,
From whence the doom of Socrates was utter'd;—
This hostile throng dismays him not: he seems
As if no worldly object could inspire
A terror in his soul; as if the vision,
Which, when he journey'd to Damascus, shone
From heaven, still swam before his eyes,
Outdazzling all things earthly; as if the voice,
That spake from out th' effulgence, ever rang
Within his ear, inspiring him with words,
Burning, majestic, lofty, as his theme,—
The resurrection, and the life to come.

PAUL ACCUSED BEFORE THE ROMAN GOVERNOR OF JUDEA.

The judge ascended to the judgment-seat;
Amid a gleam of spears th' apostle stood.
Dauntless he forward came, and look'd around,
And raised his voice, at first in accents low,
Yet clear; a whisper spread among the throng:—
So when the thunder mutters, still the breeze
Is heard, at times, to sigh; but when the peal
Tremendous, louder rolls, a silence dead
Succeeds each pause,—moveless the aspen leaf.
Thus fix'd and motionless, the listening band
Of soldiers forward lean'd, as from the man
Inspired of God, truth's awful thunders roll'd.
No more he feels, upon his high-raised arm,
The ponderous chain, than does the playful child
The bracelet, form'd of many a flowery link.
Heedless of self, forgetful that his life
Is now to be defended by his words,
He only thinks of doing good to them
Who seek his life; and while he reasons high
Of justice, temperance, and the life to come,
The judge shrinks trembling at the prisoner's voice.

PARAPHRASE.

Who healeth all thy diseases: who redeemeth thy life from destruction: who crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender mercies.—Psalm ciii. 3, 4.

These eyes, that were half-closed in death,
Now dare the noontide blaze;
My voice, that scarce could speak my wants,
Now hymns Jehovah's praise.

How pleasant to my feet unused,
To tread the daisied ground!
How sweet to my unwonted ear
The streamlet's lulling sound.

How soft the first breath of the breeze
That on my temples play'd!
How sweet the woodland evening song,
Full floating down the glade!

But sweeter far the lark that soars
Through morning's blushing ray;
For then unseen, unheard, I join
His lonely heavenward lay.

And sweeter still that infant voice,
'With all its artless charms;—
'Twas such as he that Jesus took,
And cherish'd in his arms.

O Lord my God! all these delights
I to thy mercy owe;
For thou hast raised me from the couch
Of sickness, pain, and wo.

'Twas thou that from the whelming wave
My sinking soul redeem'd;
'Twas thou that o'er destruction's storm
A calming radiance beam'd.

ON VISITING MELROSE,

AFTER AN ABSENCE OF SIXTEEN YEARS.

Ye setting sun, that slowly disappears,
Gleams a memento of departed years:
Ay, many a year is gone, and many a friend,
Since here I saw the autumn sun descend.
Ah! one is gone, whose hand was lock'd in mine,
In this, that traces now the sorrowing line:
And now alone I scan the mouldering tombs,
Alone I wander through the vaulted glooms,
And list, as if the echoes might retain
One lingering cadence of her varied strain.
Alas! I heard that melting voice decay,
Heard seraph tones in whispers die away;
I mark'd the tear presageful fill her eye,
And quivering speak,—I am resign'd to die.
Ye stars that through the fretted windows shed
A glimmering beam athwart the mighty dead,
Say to what sphere her sainted spirit flew,
That thither I may turn my longing view,
And wish, and hope, some tedious seasons o'er,
To join a long lost friend, to part no more

THE WILD DUCK AND HER BROOD.

How calm that little lake! no breath of wind
Sighs through the reeds; a clear abyss it seems,
Held in the concave of th' inverted sky,—
In which is seen the rook's dull flagging wing
Move o'er the silvery clouds. How peaceful sails
Yon little fleet, the wild duck and her brood!
Fearless of harm, they row their easy way;
The water-lily neath the plumy prows,
Dips, reappearing in their dimpled track.
Yet, e'en amid that scene of peace, the noise
Of war, unequal, dastard war, intrudes.
Yon revel rout of men, and boys, and dogs,
Boisterous approach; the spaniel dashes in;
Quick he descries the prey; and faster swims,
And eager barks; the harmless flock dismay'd,
Hasten to gain the thickest grove of reeds.
All but the parent pair; they, floating, wait
To lure the foe, and lead him from their young;
But soon themselves are forced to seek the shore.
Vain then the buoyant wing; the leaden storm
Arrests their flight; they, fluttering, bleeding, fall,
And tinge the troubled bosom of the lake.

TO A REDBREAST, THAT FLEW IN AT MY WINDOW.

From snowy plains, and icy sprays,
From moonless nights, and sunless days,
Welcome, poor bird! I'll cherish thee;
I love thee, for thou trustest me.
Thrice welcome, helpless, panting guest!
Fondly I'll warm thee in my breast:—
How quick thy little heart is beating!
As if its brother flutterer greeting.
Thou need'st not dread a captive's doom;
No: freely flutter round my room;
Perch on my lute's remaining string,
And sweetly of sweet summer sing.
That note, that summer note, I know;
It wakes at once, and soothes my wo;
I see those woods, I see that stream,
I see,—ah, still prolong the dream!
Still with thy song those scenes renew,
Though through my tears they reach my view.
No more now, at my lonely meal,
While thou art by, alone I'll feel;
For soon, devoid of all distrust,
Thou'lt nibbling share my humble crust;
Or on my finger, pert and spruce,
Thou'lt learn to sip the sparkling juice;
And when (our short collation o'er)
Some favourite volume I explore,
Be't work of poet or of sage,
Safe thou shalt hop across the page;
Uncheck'd, shall flit o'er Virgil's groves,
Or flutter 'mid Tibullus' loves.
Thus, heedless of the raving blast,
Thou'lt dwell with me till winter's past;
And when the primrose tells 'tis spring,
And when the thrush begins to sing,
Soon as I hear the woodland song,
Freed, thou shalt join the vocal throng.

EPITAPH ON A BLACKBIRD KILLED BY A HAWK.

Winter was o'er, and spring-flowers deck'd the glade;
The blackbird's note among the wild woods rung:
Ah, short-lived note! the songster now is laid
Beneath the bush on which so sweet he sung.

Thy jetty plumes, by ruthless falcon rent,
Are now all soil'd among the mouldering clay;
A primrosed turf is all thy monument,
And for thy dirge the redbreast lends his lay.

THE POOR MAN'S FUNERAL.

Yon motley, sable-suited throng, that wait
Around the poor man's door, announce a tale
Of wo; the husband, parent, is no more.
Contending with disease, he labour'd long,
By penury compell'd; yielding at last,
He laid him down to die; but, lingering on
From day to day, he from his sick-bed saw,
Heart-broken quite, his children's looks of want
Veil'd in a clouded smile; alas! he heard
The elder lispingly attempt to still
The younger's plaint,—languid he raised his head
And thought he yet could toil, but sunk
Into the arms of death, the poor man's friend!
The coffin is borne out; the humble pomp
Moves slowly on; the orphan mourner's hand
(Poor helpless child!) just reaches to the pall.
And now they pass into the field of graves,
And now around the narrow house they stand,
And view the plain black board sink from the sight.
Hollow the mansion of the dead resounds,
As falls each spadeful of the bone-mix'd mould.
The turf is spread; uncover'd is each head,—
A last farewell: all turn their several ways.
Wo's me! those tear-dimm'd eyes, that sobbing breast!
Poor child! thou thinkest of the kindly hand
That wont to lead thee home: No more that hand
Shall aid thy feeble gait, or gentle stroke
Thy sun-bleach'd head and downy cheek.
But go, a mother waits thy homeward steps;
In vain her eyes dwell on the sacred page,—
Her thoughts are in the grave; 'tis thou alone,
Her first-born child, canst rouse that statue gaze
Of wo profound. Haste to the widow'd arms;
Look with thy father's look, speak with his voice,
And melt a heart that else will break with grief.

THE THANKSGIVING OFF CAPE TRAFALGAR.

Upon the high, yet gently rolling wave,
The floating tomb that heaves above the brave,
Soft sighs the gale, that late tremendous roar'd,
Whelming the wretched remnants of the sword.
And now the cannon's peaceful thunder calls
The victor bands to mount their wooden walls,
And from the ramparts, while their comrades fell,
The mingled strain of joy and grief to swell:

Fast they ascend, from stem to stern they spread,
And crowd the engines, whence the lightnings sped:
The white-robed priest his upraised hands extends:
Hush'd is each voice, attention leaning bends;
Then from each prow the grand hosannas rise,
Float o'er the deep, and hover to the skies.
Heaven fills each heart; yet home will oft intrude,
And tears of love celestial joys exclude.
The wounded man, who hears the soaring strain,
Lifts his pale visage, and forgets his pain;
While parting spirits, mingling with the lay,
On hallelujahs wing their heavenward way.

TO MY SON.

Twice has the sun commenced his annual round,
Since first thy footsteps totter'd o'er the ground,
Since first thy tongue was tuned to bless mine ear,
By faltering out the name to fathers dear.
O! nature's language, with her looks combined
More precious far than periods thrice refined!
O! sportive looks of love, devoid of guile,
I prize you more than beauty's magic smile:
Yes, in that face, unconscious of its charm
I gaze with bliss, unmingled with alarm.
Ah, no! full oft a boding horror flies
Athwart my fancy, uttering fateful cries.
Almighty Power! his harmless life defend,
And if we part, 'gainst me the mandate send.
And yet a wish will rise,—would I might live
Till added years his memory firmness give!
For, O! it would a joy in death impart,
To think I still survived within his heart;
To think he'll cast, midway the vale of years,
A retrospective look, bedimm'd with tears;
And tell, regretful, how I look'd and spoke;
What walks I loved; where grew my favourite oak
How gently I would lead him by the hand;
How gently use the accent of command;
What lore I taught him, roaming wood and wild,
And how the man descended to the child;
How well I loved with him, on Sabbath morn,
To hear the anthem of the vocal thorn;
To teach religion, unallied to strife,
And trace to him the way, the truth, the life.
But far and farther still my view I bend,—
And now I see a child thy steps attend;—
To yonder churchyard wall thou takest thy way,
While round thee, pleased, thou seest the infant play.
Then lifting him, while tears suffuse thine eyes,
Pointing, thou tell'st him, *There thy grandsire lies*

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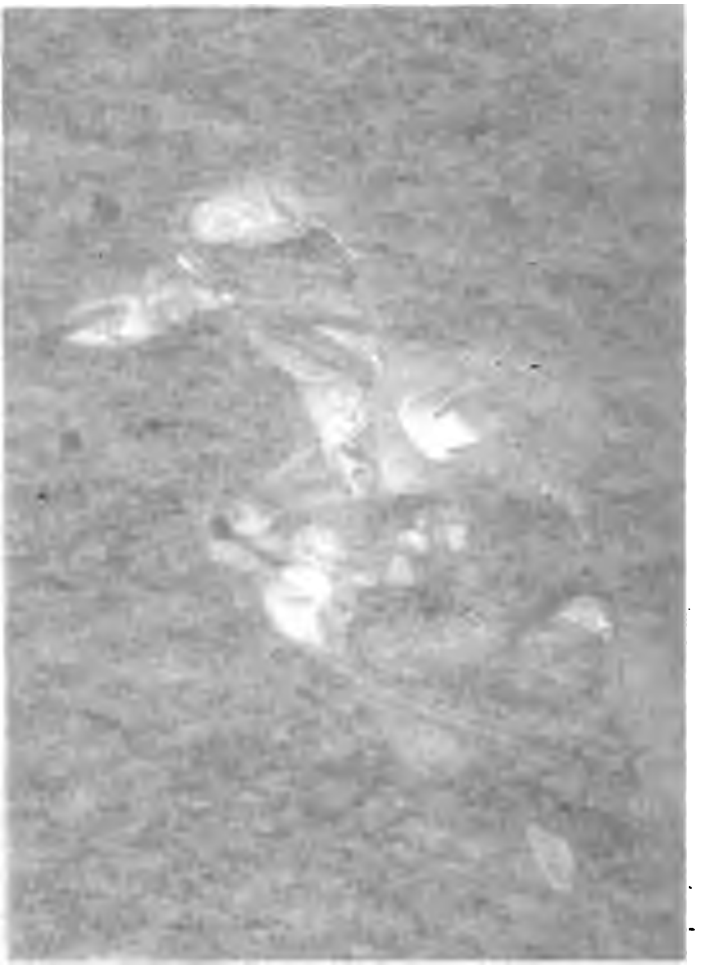
BASIL.



JOANNA BAILLIE.

JOANNA BAILLIE, sister of the celebrated Dr. Matthew Baillie, was born at Bothwell, in Scotland, about the year 1765. We have been unable to collect any particulars of her life, but she is well known to the public as one of the most successful female writers of the present age. Her most celebrated production is her Plays of the Passions; a series in which each passion is made the subject of a tragedy and a comedy. These procured her great reputation, particularly her tragedies, which evince strong conceptions of character, vivid imagery, and a masterly delineation of the various passions. Her plays, however, have not the transcendent *dramatic* merit which has been claimed for them by some of her admirers. She is by no means a Shakspeare. One of her most recent publications is, A View of the general Tenor of the New Testament, regarding the Nature and Dignity of Jesus Christ. She is also the author of The Family Legend, a tragedy; Metrical Legends, or Exalted Characters; two dramas, entitled, respectively,—The Martyr, and The Bride; and a volume of dramas, very recently published.

BASIL.

PERSONS OF THE DRAMA.

MEN.

COUNT BASIL,	*a general in the emperor's service.*
COUNT ROSINBERG,	*his friend.*
DUKE OF MANTUA.	
GAURICHIO,	*his minister.*
VALTOMER, FREDERICK,	*Two officers of* Basil's *troops.*
GEOFFRY,	*an old soldier very much maimed in the wars.*
MIRANDO,	*a little boy, favourite to* Victoria.

WOMEN.

VICTORIA,	*daughter to the Duke of* Mantua.
COUNTESS OF ALBINI,	*friend and governess to* Victoria.
ISABELLA,	*a lady attending upon* Victoria.

Officers, soldiers, *and* attendants, masks, dancers, *&c.*

*** *The scene is in* Mantua *and its environs. Time supposed to be the sixteenth century, when* Charles the Fifth *defeated* Francis the First, *at the battle of* Pavia.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—AN OPEN STREET, CROWDED WITH PEOPLE WHO SEEM TO BE WAITING IN EXPECTATION OF SOME SHOW.

Enter a CITIZEN.

First Man. Well, friend, what tidings of the grand procession?

Cit. I left it passing by the northern gate.

Second Man. I've waited long, I'm glad it comes at last.

Young Man. And does the princess look so wondrous fair
As fame reports?

Cit. She is the fairest lady of the train,—
Yet all the fairest beauties of the court
Are in her train.

Old Man. Bears she such offerings to St. Francis' shrine,
So rich, so marvellous rich, as rumour says?
—'Twill drain the treasury!

Cit. Since she, in all this splendid pomp, returns
Her public thanks to the good patron saint,
Who from his sick-bed hath restored her father,
Thou wouldst not have her go with empty hands?
She loves magnificence—
(*Discovering among the crowd old* Geoffry,)
Ha! art thou here, old remnant of the wars?
Thou art not come to see this courtly show,
Which sets the young agape?

Geof. I come not for the show; and yet, methinks,
It were a better jest upon me still,
If thou didst truly know mine errand here.

Cit. I prithee say.

Geof. What, must I tell it thee?
As o'er my evening fire I musing sat,
Some few days since, my mind's eye backward turn'd
Upon the various changes I have pass'd—
How in my youth, with gay attire allured,
And all the grand accoutrements of war,
I left my peaceful home: Then my first battles,
When clashing arms and sights of blood were new:
Then all the after chances of the war:
Ay, and that field, a well-fought field it was,
When with an arm (I speak not of it oft)
Which now (*pointing to his empty sleeve*) thou seest is no arm of mine,
In a straight pass I stopp'd a thousand foes,
And turn'd my flying comrades to the charge,
For which good service, in his tented court,
My prince bestow'd a mark of favour on me;
Whilst his fair consort, seated by his side,
The fairest lady e'er mine eyes beheld,
Gave me what more than all besides I prized—
Methinks I see her still—a gracious smile—

'Twas a heart-kindling smile,—a smile of praise—
Well, musing thus on all my fortunes past,
A neighbour drew the latchet of my door,
And full of news from town, in many words
Big with rich names, told of this grand procession;
E'en as he spoke a fancy seized my soul
To see the princess pass, if in her looks
I yet might trace some semblance of her mother.
This is the simple truth; laugh as thou wilt.
I came not for the show.

Enter an OFFICER.

Officer to Geof. Make way that the procession may have room:
Stand you aside, and let this man have place.
(*Pushing* Geof. *and endeavouring to put another in his place.*)

Geof. But that thou art the prince's officer,
I'd give thee back thy push with better blows.

Officer. What, wilt thou not give place? the prince is near:
I will complain to him, and have thee caged.

Geof. Yes, do complain, I pray; and when thou dost,
Say that the private of the tenth brigade,
Who saved his army on the Danube's bank,
And since that time a private hath remain'd,
Dares, as a citizen, his right maintain
Against thy insolence. Go tell him this,
And ask him then what dungeon of his tower
He'll have me thrust into.

Cit. to Officer. This is old Geoffry of the tenth brigade.

Offi. I knew him not: you should have told me sooner. [EXIT, *looking much ashamed.*

Martial music heard at a distance.

Cit. Hark, this is music of a warlike kind.

Enter Second CITIZEN.

To Sec. Cit. What sounds are these, good friend, which this way bear?

Sec. Cit. The brave Count Basil is upon his march,
To join the emperor with some chosen troops,
And as an ally doth through Mantua pass.

Geof. I've heard a good report of this young soldier.

Sec. Cit. 'Tis said he disciplines his men severely,
And over-much the old commander is,
Which seems ungracious in so young a man.

Geof. I know he loves not ease and revelry;
He makes them soldiers at no dearer rate
Than he himself hath paid. What, dost thou think,
That e'en the very meanest simple craft
Cannot without due diligence be learn'd,
And yet the noble art of soldiership
May be attain'd by loitering in the sun?
Some men are born to feast, and not to fight;
Whose sluggish minds, e'en in fair honour's field,
Still on their dinner turn—
Let such pot-boiling varlets stay at home,
And wield a flesh-hook rather than a sword.
In times of easy service, true it is,
An easy, careless chief all soldiers love;
But O! how gladly in the day of battle
Would they their jolly bottle-chief desert,
And follow such a leader as Count Basil!
So gathering herds, at pressing danger's call,
Confess the master deer.

(*Music is heard again, and nearer.* Geoffry *walks up and down with a military triumphant step.*)

Cit. What moves thee thus?

Geof. I've march'd to this same tune in glorious days.
My very limbs catch motion from the sound,
As they were young again.

Sec. Cit But here they come.

Enter Count BASIL, officers and soldiers in procession, with colours flying, and martial music. When they have marched halfway over the stage, an officer of the duke's enters from the opposite side, and speaks to BASIL, upon which he gives a sign with his hand, and the martial music ceases; soft music is heard at a little distance, and VICTORIA, with a long procession of ladies, enters from the opposite side. General, &c. pay obeisance to her, as she passes; she stops to return it, and then goes off with her train. After which, the military procession moves on, and exeunt.

Cit. to Geof. What think'st thou of the princess?

Geof. She is fair,
But not so fair as her good mother was. [EXEUNT.

SCENE II.—A PUBLIC WALK ON THE RAMPARTS OF THE TOWN.

Enter Count ROSINBERG, VALTOMER, and FREDERICK.—VALTOMER enters by the opposite side of the stage, and meets them.

Valt. O what a jolly town for way-worn soldiers!
Rich steaming pots, and smell of dainty fare,
From every house salutes you as you pass:
Light feats and juggler's tricks attract the eye;
Music and merriment in every street;
Whilst pretty damsels, in their best attire,
Trip on in wanton groups, then look behind,
To spy the fools a gazing after them.

Fred. But short will be the season of our ease,
For Basil is of flinty matter made,
And cannot be allured—
'Faith, Rosinberg, I would thou didst command us.
Thou art his kinsman, of a rank as noble,
Some years his elder too—How has it been
That he should be preferr'd? I see not why.

Ros. Ah! but I see it, and allow it well;
He is too much my pride to wake my envy.

Fred. Nay, count, it is thy foolish admiration
Which raises him to such superior height;
And truly thou hast so infected us,
That I at times have felt me awed before him,
I knew not why. 'Tis cursed folly this.
Thou art as brave, of as good parts as he.

Ros. Our talents of a different nature are;
Mine for the daily intercourse of life,
And his for higher things.

Fred. Well, praise him as thou wilt; I see it not
I'm sure I am as brave a man as he.

Ros. Yes, brave thou art, but 'tis subaltern bravery,
And doth respect thyself. Thou'lt bleed as well,
Give and receive as deep a wound as he.
When Basil fights he wields a thousand swords;
For 'tis their trust in his unshaken mind,
O'erwatching all the changes of the field,
Calm and inventive midst the battle's storm,
Which makes his soldiers bold.—
There have been those, in early manhood slain,
Whose great heroic souls have yet inspired

With such a noble zeal their generous troops,
That to their latest day of bearing arms,
Their gray-hair'd soldiers have all dangers braved
Of desperate service, claim'd with boastful pride,
As those who fought beneath them in their youth.
Such men have been; of whom it may be said,
Their spirits conquer'd when their clay was cold.

Valt. Yes, I have seen in the eventful field,
When new occasion mock'd all rules of art,
E'en old commanders hold experience cheap,
And look to Basil ere his chin was dark.

Ros. One fault he has; I know but only one;
His too great love of military fame
Absorbs his thoughts, and makes him oft appear
Unsocial and severe.

Fred. Well, feel I not undaunted in the field?
As much enthusiastic love of glory?
Why am I not as good a man as he?

Ros. He's form'd for great occasions, thou for small.

Valt. But small occasions in the path of life
Lie thickly sown, while great are rarely scatter'd.

Ros. By which you would infer that men like Frederick
Should on the whole a better figure make,
Than men of higher parts. It is not so;
For some show well, and fair applauses gain,
Where want of skill in other men is graceful.
Pray do not frown, good Frederick, no offence:
Thou canst not make a great man of thyself;
Yet wisely deign to use thy native powers,
And prove an honour'd courtly gentleman.
But hush! no more of this; here Basil comes.

Enter BASIL, who returns their salute without speaking.

Ros. What think'st thou, Valtomer, of Mantua's princess?

Valt. Fame praised her much, but hath not praised her more
Than on a better proof the eye consents to.
With all that grace and nobleness of mien,
She might do honour to an emperor's throne;
She is too noble for a petty court. [*assent.*)
Is it not so, my lord?—(*To* Basil, *who only bows*
Nay, she demeans herself with so much grace,
Such easy state, such gay magnificence,
She should be queen of revelry and show.

Fred. She's charming as the goddess of delight.

Valt. But after her, she most attracted me
Who wore the yellow scarf and walk'd the last;
For though Victoria is a lovely woman—

Fred. Nay, it is treason but to call her woman;
She's a divinity, and should be worshipp'd.
But on my life, since now we talk of worship,
She worshipp'd Francis with right noble gifts!
They sparkled so with gold and precious gems—
Their value must be great; some thousand crowns.

Ros. I would not rate them at a price so mean;
The cup alone, with precious stones beset,
Would fetch a sum as great. That olive branch
The princess bore herself, of fretted gold,
Was exquisitely wrought. I mark'd it more,
Because she held it in so white a hand.

Bas. (*in a quick voice.*) Mark'd you her hand?
I did not see her hand.
And yet she waved it twice.

Ros. It is a fair one, though you mark'd it not.

Valt. I wish some painter's eye had view'd the group,
As she and all her lovely damsels pass'd;
He would have found wherewith t' enrich his art.

Ros. I wish so too; for oft their fancied beauties
Have so much cold perfection in their parts,
'Tis plain they ne'er belong'd to flesh and blood.
This is not truth, and doth not please so well
As the varieties of liberal nature,
Where every kind of beauty charms the eye;
Large and small featured, flat and prominent,
Ay, by the mass! and snub-nosed beauties too.
'Faith, every woman hath some witching charm,
If that she be not proud, or captious.

Valt. Demure, or over-wise, or given to freaks.

Ros. Or given to freaks! hold, hold, good Valtomer!
Thou'lt leave no woman handsome under heaven.

Valt. But I must leave you for an hour or so;
I mean to view the town.

Fred. I'll go with thee.

Ros. And so will I.

[EXEUNT *Valt. Fred. and Ros.*

Re-enter ROSISBERG.

Ros. I have repented me, I will not go;
They will be too long absent.—(*Pauses, and looks at* Basil, *who remains still musing without seeing him.*)
What mighty thoughts engage my pensive friend?

Bas. O it is admirable!

Ros. How runs thy fancy? what is admirable?

Bas. Her form, her face, her motion, every thing!

Ros. The princess? yes, have we not praised her much?

Bas. I know you praised her, and her offerings too!
She might have given the treasures of the east,
Ere I had known it.
O! didst thou mark her when she first appear'd?
Still distant, slowly moving with her train;
Her robe and tresses floating on the wind,
Like some light figure in a morning cloud?
Then, as she onward to the eye became
The more distinct, how lovelier still she grew!
That graceful bearing of her slender form;
Her roundly spreading breast, her towering neck,
Her face tinged sweetly with the bloom of youth—
But when approaching near, she towards us turn'd,
Kind mercy! what a countenance was there!
And when to our salute she gently bow'd,
Didst mark that smile rise from her parting lips?
Soft swell'd her glowing cheek, her eyes smiled too:
O how they smiled! 'twas like the beams of heaven!
I felt my roused soul within me start,
Like something waked from sleep.

Ros. The beams of heaven do many slumberers wake
To care and misery!

Bas. There's something grave and solemn in your voice
As you pronounce these words. What dost thou mean?
Thou wouldst not sound my knell?

Ros. No, not for all beneath the vaulted sky!
But to be plain, thus warmly from your lips,
Her praise displeases me. To men like you,
If love should come, he proves no easy guest.
Bas. What, dost thou think I am beside myself,
And cannot view the fairness of perfection
With that delight which lovely beauty gives,
Without tormenting me with fruitless wishes,
Like the poor child who sees its brighten'd face,
And whimpers for the moon? Thou art not serious.
From early youth, war has my mistress been,
And though a rugged one, I'll constant prove,
And not forsake her now. There may be joys
Which, to the strange o'erwhelming of the soul,
Visit the lover's breast beyond all others;
E'en now, how dearly do I feel there may!
But what of them? they are not made for me—
The hasty flashes of contending steel
Must serve instead of glances from my love,
And for soft breathing sighs the cannon's roar.
Ros. (*taking his hand.*) Now I am satisfied.
Forgive me, Basil.
Bas. I'm glad thou art; we'll talk of her no more;
Why should I vex my friend?
Ros. Thou hast not issued orders for the march.
Bas. I'll do it soon; thou need'st not be afraid,
To morrow's sun shall bear us far from hence,
Never perhaps to pass these gates again.
Ros. With last night's close, did you not curse this town
That would one single day your troops retard?
And now, methinks, you talk of leaving it,
As though it were the place that gave you birth;
As though you had around these strangers' walls
Your infant gambols play'd.
Bas. The sight of what may be but little prized,
Doth cause a solemn sadness in the mind,
When view'd as that we ne'er shall see again.
Ros. No, not a whit to wandering men like us.
No, not a whit! What custom hath endear'd
We part with sadly, though we prize it not:
But what is new some powerful charm must own,
Thus to affect the mind.
Bas. (*hastily.*) We'll let it pass—It hath no consequence:
Thou art impatient.
Ros. I'm not impatient. 'Faith, I only wish
Some other route our destined march had been,
That still thou mightst thy glorious course pursue
With an untroubled mind.
Bas. O! wish it, wish it not! bless'd be that route!
What we have seen to-day, I must remember—
I should be brutish if I could forget it.
Oft in the watchful post, or weary march,
Oft in the nightly silence of my tent,
My fixed mind shall gaze upon it still;
But it will pass before my fancy's eye,
Like some delightful vision of the soul,
To soothe, not trouble it.
Ros. What! midst the dangers of eventful war,
Still let thy mind be haunted by a woman?
Who would, perhaps, hear of thy fall in battle,
As Dutchmen read of earthquakes in Calabria,
And never stop to cry 'alack-a-day!'
For me there is but one of all the sex,
Who still shall hold her station in my breast,
Midst all the changes of inconstant fortune;
Because I'm passing sure she loves me well,
And for my sake a sleepless pillow finds
When rumour tells bad tidings of the war;
Because I know her love will never change,
Nor make me prove uneasy jealousy.
Bas. Happy art thou! who is this wondrous woman?
Ros. It is mine own good mother, faith and truth!
Bas. (*smiling.*) Give me thy hand; I love her dearly too.
Rivals we are not, though our love is one.
Ros. And yet I might be jealous of her love,
For she bestows too much of it on thee,
Who hast no claim but to a nephew's share.
Bas. (*going.*) I'll meet thee some time hence. I must to court.
Ros. A private conference will not stay thee long
I'll wait thy coming near the palace gate.
Bas. 'Tis to the public court I mean to go.
Ros. I thought you had determined otherwise.
Bas. Yes, but on farther thought it did appear
As though it would be failing in respect
At such a time—That look doth wrong me, Rosinberg!
For on my life, I had determined thus,
Ere I beheld—before we enter'd Mantua.
But wilt thou change that soldier's dusty garb,
And go with me thyself?
Ros. Yes, I will go.
(*As they are going* Ros. *stops, and looks at* Basil.)
Bas. Why dost thou stop?
Ros. 'Tis for my wonted caution,
Which first thou gavest me—I shall ne'er forget it.
'Twas at Vienna, on a public day;
Thou but a youth, I then a man full form'd;
Thy stripling's brow graced with its first cockade,
Thy mighty bosom swell'd with mighty thoughts.
"Thou'rt for the court, dear Rosinberg," quoth thou!
"Now pray thee be not caught with some gay dame
To laugh and ogle, and befool thyself:
It is offensive in the public eye,
And suits not with a man of thy endowments."
So said your serious lordship to me then,
And have on like occasions, often since,
In other terms repeated.—
But I must go to-day without my caution.
Bas. Nay, Rosinberg, I am impatient now:
Did I not say we'd talk of her no more?
Ros. Well, my good friend, God grant we keep our word!

[Exeunt.

End of the First Act.

Note.—My first idea, when I wrote this play, was to represent Basil as having seen Victoria for the first time in the procession, that I might show more perfectly the passion from its first beginning, and also its sudden power over the mind; but I was induced from the criticism of one, whose judgment I very much respect, to alter it, and represent him as having formerly seen and loved her. The first review that took notice of this work objected to Basil's having seen her before as a defect; and, as we are all easily determined to follow our own opinion, I have

upon after-consideration, given the play in this edition, [*third*,] as far as this is concerned, exactly in its original state. Strong internal evidence of this will be discovered by any one, who will take the trouble of reading attentively the second scenes of the first and second acts in the present and former editions of this book. Had Basil seen and loved Victoria before, his first speech, in which he describes her to Rosinberg as walking in the procession, would not be natural; and there are, I think, other little things besides, which will show that the circumstance of his former meeting with her is an interpolation.

The blame of this, however, I take entirely upon myself: the critics, whose opinion I have mentioned, judged of the piece entirely as an unconnected play, and knew nothing of the general plan of this work, which ought to have been communicated to him. Had it been, indeed, an unconnected play, and had I put this additional circumstance to it with proper judgment and skill, I am inclined to think it would have been an improvement.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—A ROOM OF STATE.

The DUKE of MANTUA, BASIL, ROSINBERG, and a number of Courtiers, Attendants, &c. The DUKE and BASIL appear talking together on the front of the stage.

Duke. But our opinions differ widely there;
From the position of the rival armies,
I cannot think they'll join in battle soon.
Bas. I am indeed beholden to your highness,
But though unwillingly, we must depart.
The foes are near, the time is critical;
A soldier's reputation is too fine
To be exposed e'en to the smallest cloud.
Duke. An untried soldier's is; but yours, my lord,
Nursed with the bloody showers of many a field,
And brightest sunshine of successful fortune,
A plant of such a hardy stem hath grown,
E'en envy's sharpest blasts assail it not.
Yet after all, by the bless'd holy cross!
I feel too warm an interest in the cause
To stay your progress here a single hour,
Did I not know your soldiers are fatigued,
And two days' rest would much recruit their strength.
Bas. Your highness will be pleased to pardon me;
My troops are not o'ermarch'd, and one day's rest
Is all our needs require.
Duke. Ah! hadst thou come
Unfetter'd with the duties of command,
I then had well retained thee for my guest,
With claims too strong, too sacred for denial.
Thy noble sire my fellow soldier was;
Together many a rough campaign we served;
I loved him well, and much it pleases me
A son of his beneath my roof to see.
Bas. Were I indeed free master of myself,
Strong inclination would detain me here;
No other tie were wanting.
These gracious tokens of your princely favour
I'll treasure with my best remembrances;
For he who shows them for my father's sake,
Does something sacred in his kindness bear,
As though he shed a blessing on my head.
Duke. Well, bear my greetings to the brave Piscaro,
And say how warmly I embrace the cause.
Your third day's march will to his presence bring
Your valiant troops: said you not so, my lord?

Enter VICTORIA, the COUNTESS of ALBINI, ISABELLA, and Ladies.

Bas. (*who changes countenance upon seeing them.*)
Yes, I believe—I think—I know not well—
Yes, please your grace, we march by break of day.
Duke. Nay, that I know. I ask'd you, noble count,
When you expect th' imperial force to join.
Bas. When it shall please your grace—I crave your pardon—
I somewhat have mistaken of your words.
Duke. You are not well: your colour changes,
What is the matter?
Bas. A dizzy mist that swims before my sight—
A ringing in my ears—'tis strange enough—
'Tis slight—'tis nothing worth—'tis gone already.
Duke. I'm glad it is. Look to your friend, Count Rosinberg,
It may return again.—(*To* Rosinberg, *who stands at a little distance, looking earnestly at* Basil. Duke *leaves them, and joins* Victoria's *party.*)
Ros. Good heavens, Basil, is it thus with thee!
Thy hand shakes too: (*taking his hand.*)
Would we were far from hence!
Bas. I'm well again, thou need'st not be afraid.
'Tis like enough my frame is indisposed
With some slight weakness from our weary march.
Nay, look not on me thus, it is unkindly—
I cannot bear thine eyes.

The DUKE, with VICTORIA and her Ladies, advance to the front of the stage to BASIL.

Duke. Victoria, welcome here the brave Count Basil.
His kinsman too, the gallant Rosinberg.
May you, and these fair ladies so prevail,
Such gentle suitors cannot plead in vain,
To make them grace my court another day.
I shall not be offended when I see
Your power surpasses mine.
Vict. Our feeble efforts will presumptuous seem
Attempting that in which your highness fails.
Duke. There's honour in th' attempt; success attend ye.—(Duke *retires and mixes with the Courtiers at the bottom of the stage.*)
Vict. I fear we incommoded you, my lord,
With the slow tedious length of our procession.
E'en as I pass'd, against my heart it went
To stop so long upon their weary way
Your tired troops.—
Bas. Ah! madam, all too short!
Time never bears such moments on his wing,
But when he flies too swiftly to be mark'd.
Vict. Ah! surely then you make too good amends
By marking now his after-progress well.
To-day must seem a weary length to him
Who is so eager to be gone to-morrow.
Ros. They must not linger who would quit these walls;
For if they do, a thousand masked foes;
Some under show of rich luxurious feasts,
Gay, sprightly pastime, and high-zested game;—

Nay, some, my gentle ladies, true it is,
The very worst and fellest of the crew,
In fair alluring shape of beauteous dames,
Do such a barrier form to oppose their way
As few men may o'ercome.

Isab. From this last wicked foe should we infer
Yourself have suffer'd much?

Albin. No, Isabella, these are common words,
To please you with false notions of your power.
So all men talk of ladies and of love.

Vict. 'Tis even so. If love a tyrant be,
How dare his humble chained votaries
To tell such rude and wicked tales of him?

Bas. Because they most of lover's ills complain
Who but affect it as a courtly grace,
Whilst he who feels is silent.

Ros. But there you wrong me; I have felt it oft.
Oft has it made me sigh at ladies' fee
Soft ditties sing, and dismal sonnets scrawl.

Albin. In all its strange effects, most worthy Rosinberg,
Has it e'er made thee in a corner sit,
Sad, lonely, moping sit, and hold thy tongue?

Ros. No, 'faith, it never has.

Albin. Ha, ha, ha, ha! then thou hast never loved.

Ros. Nay, but I have, and felt love's bondage too.

Vict. Fy! it is pedantry to call it bondage!
Love-marring wisdom, reason full of bars,
Deserve, methinks, that appellation more.
Is it not so, my lord?—(*To* Basil.)

Bas. O surely, madam!
That 's not bondage which the soul inthrall'd
So gladly bears, and quits not but with anguish.
Stern honour's laws, the fair report of men,
These are the fetters that enchain the mind,
But such as must not, cannot be unloosed.

Vict. No, not unloosed, but yet one day relax'd,
To grant a lady's suit, unused to sue.

Ros. Your highness deals severely with us now,
And proves indeed our freedom is but small,
Who are constrain'd when such a lady sues,
To say, It cannot be.

Vict. It cannot be! Count Basil says not so.

Ros. For that I am his friend, to save him pain
I take th' ungracious office on myself.

Vict. How ill thy face is suited to thine office!

Ros. (*smiling.*) Would I could suit mine office to my face,
If that would please your highness.

Vict. No, you are obstinate and perverse all,
And would not grant it if you had the power.
Albini, I'll retire; come, Isabella.

Bas. (*aside to* Ros.) Ah, Rosinberg! thou hast too far presumed;
She is offended with us.

Ros. No, she is not—
What dost thou fear? Be firm, and let us go.

Vict. (*pointing to a door leading to other apartments, by which she is ready to go out.*)
These are apartments strangers love to see:
Some famous paintings do their walls adorn:
They lead you also to the palace court
As quickly as the way by which you came.

[Exit Vict. *led out by* Ros. *and followed by* Isab.

Bas. (*aside, looking after them.*) O! what a fool am I! where fled my thoughts?
I might as well as he, now, by her side,
Have held her precious hand enclosed in mine
As well as he, who cares not for it neither.
O but he does! that were impossible!

Albin. You stay behind, my lord.

Bas. Your pardon, madam; honour me so far—
[Exeunt, *handing out* Albini.

SCENE II.—A GALLERY HUNG WITH PICTURES.

VICTORIA discovered in conversation with ROSINBERG BASIL, ALBINI, and ISABELLA.

Vict. (*to* Ros.) It is indeed a work of wondrous art.
(*To* Isab.) You call'd Francisco here?

Isab. He comes even now.

Enter ATTENDANT.

Vict. (*to* Ros.) He will conduct you to the northern gallery;
Its striking shades will call upon the eye,
To point its place there needs no other guide.
[Exeunt Ros. *and* Attendant.
(*To* Bas.) Loves not Count Basil too this charming art?
It is in ancient painting much admired.

Bas. Ah! do not banish me these few short moments:
Too soon they will be gone! for ever gone!

Vict. If they are precious to you, say not so,
But add to them another precious day.
A lady asks it.

Bas. Ah, madam! ask the life-blood from my heart.
Ask all but what a soldier may not give.

Vict. 'Tis ever thus when favours are denied;
All had been granted but the thing we beg;
And still some great unlikely substitute,
Your life, your soul, your all of earthly good,
Is proffer'd in the room of one small boon.
So keep your life-blood, generous, valiant lord,
And may it long your noble heart enrich,
Until I wish it shed. (Bas. *attempts to speak.*)
Nay frame no new excuse;
I will not hear it.
(*She puts out her hand as if she would shut his mouth, but at a distance from it;* Bas. *runs eagerly up to her, and presses it to his lips.*)

Bas. Let this sweet hand indeed its threat perform,
And make it heaven to be for ever dumb!
(Vict. *looks stately and offended.*—Basil *kneels.*)
O pardon me! I know not what I do.
Frown not, reduce me not to wretchedness;
But only grant—

Vict. What should I grant to him,
Who has so oft my earnest suit denied

Bas. By heaven I'll grant it! I'll do any thing
Say but thou art no more offended with me.

Vict. (*raising him.*) Well, Basil, this good promise is thy pardon.
I will not wait your noble friend's return
Since we shall meet again.—
You will perform your word?

Bas. I will perform it.
Vict. Farewell, my lord.
[Exit, *with her ladies.*
Bas. (*alone.*) "Farewell, my lord." O! what delightful sweetness!
The music of that voice dwells on the ear!
"Farewell, my lord!"—Ay, and then look'd she so—
The slightest glance of her bewitching eye,
Those dark blue eyes, commands the inmost soul.
Well, there is yet one day of life before me,
And, whatsoe'er betide, I will enjoy it.
Though but a partial sunshine in my lot,
I will converse with her, gaze on her still,
If all behind were pain and misery.
Pain! Were it not the easing of all pain,
E'en in the dismal gloom of after-years,
Such dear remembrance on the mind to wear
Like silvery moonbeams on the 'nighted deep,
When heaven's blest sun is gone?
Kind mercy! how my heart within me beat
When she so sweetly plead the cause of love!
Can she have loved? why shrink I at the thought?
Why should she not! no, no, it cannot be—
No man on earth is worthy of her love.
Ah! if she could, how blest a man were he!
Where rove my giddy thoughts? it must not be.
Yet might she well some gentle kindness bear;
Think of him oft, his absent fate inquire,
And, should he fall in battle, mourn his fall.
Yes, she would mourn—such love might she bestow;
And poor of soul the man who would exchange it
For warmest love of the most loving dame!
But here comes Rosinberg—have I done well?
He will not say I have.

Enter Rosinberg.

Ros. Where is the princess?
I'm sorry I return'd not ere she went.
Bas. You'll see her still.
Ros. What, comes she forth again?
Bas. She does to-morrow.
Ros. Thou hast yielded then.
Bas. Come, Rosinberg, I'll tell thee as we go;
It was impossible I should not yield.
Ros. O Basil! thou art weaker than a child.
Bas. Yes, yes, my friend, but 'tis a noble weakness;
A weakness which hath greater things achieved
Than all the firm determined strength of reason.
By heaven! I feel a new-born power within me,
Shall make me twenty-fold the man I've been
Before this fated day.
Ros. Fated, indeed! but an ill-fated day,
That makes thee other than thy former self.
Yet let it work its will; it cannot change thee
To aught I shall not love.
Bas. Thanks, Rosinberg! thou art a noble heart!
I would not be the man thou couldst not love
For an imperial crown. [Exeunt.

Scene III.—A small apartment in the palace.

Enter Duke and Gauriecio.

Duke. The point is gain'd; my daughter is successful;
And Basil is detain'd another day.
Gaur. But does the princess know your secret aim?
Duke. No, that had marr'd the whole; she is a woman;
Her mind, as suits the sex, too weak and narrow
To relish deep-laid schemes of policy.
Besides, so far unlike a child of mine,
She holds its subtle arts in high derision,
And will not serve us but with bandaged eyes.
Gauriecio, could I trusty servants find,
Experienced, crafty, close, and unrestrain'd
By silly, superstitious, child-learnt fears,
What might I not effect?
Gaur. O any thing!
The deep and piercing genius of your highness,
So ably served, might e'en achieve the empire.
Duke. No, no, my friend, thou dost o'erprize my parts;
Yet mighty things might be—deep subtle wits
In truth, are master spirits in the world.
The brave man's courage, and the student's lore,
Are but as tools his secret ends to work,
Who hath the skill to use them.
This brave Count Basil, dost thou know him well?
Much have we gain'd, but for a single day,
At such a time, to hold his troops detain'd;
When, by that secret message of our spy,
The rival powers are on the brink of action:
But might we more effect? Knowest thou this Basil?
Might he be tamper'd with?
Gaur. That were most dangerous.—
He is a man, whose sense of right and wrong
To such a high romantic pitch is wound,
And all so hot and fiery is his nature,
The slightest hint, as though you did suppose
Baseness and treachery in him, so he'll deem it,
Would be to rouse a flame that might destroy.
Duke. But interest, interest; man's all-ruling power,
Will tame the hottest spirit to your service,
And skilfully applied, mean service too;
E'en as there is an element in nature
Which, when subdued, will on your hearth fulfil
The lowest uses of domestic wants.
Gaur. Earth-kindled fire, which from a little spark,
On hidden fuel feeds his growing strength,
Till o'er the lofty fabric it inspires
And rages out its power, may be subdued,
And in your base domestic service bound;
But who would madly in its wild career
The fire of heaven arrest to boil his pot?
No, Basil will not serve your secret schemes,
Though you had all to give ambition strives for
We must beware of him.
Duke. His father was my friend,—I wish'd to gain him:
But since fantastic fancies bind him thus,
The sin be on his head; I stand acquitted,
And must receive him, even to his ruin.
Gaur. I have prepared Bernardo for your service;
To-night he will depart for th' Austrian camp,
And should he find them on the eve of battle,
I've bid him wait the issue of the field.
If that our secret friends victorious prove,

With th' arrow's speed he will return again;
But should fair fortune crown Piscaro's arms,
Then shall your soothing message greet his ears;
For till our friends some sound advantage gain,
Our actions still must wear an Austrian face.
Duke. Well hast thou school'd him. Didst thou add withal,
That 'tis my will he garnish well his speech,
With honey'd words of the most dear regard,
And friendly love I bear him? This is needful;
And lest my slowness in the promised aid
Awake suspicion, bid him e'en rehearse
The many favours on my house bestow'd
By his imperial master as a theme
On which my gratitude delights to dwell.
Gaur. I have, an' please your highness.
Duke. Then 'tis well.
Gaur. But for the yielding up that little fort
There could be no suspicion.
Duke. My governor I have severely punish'd,
As a most daring traitor to my orders.
He cannot from his dark some dungeon tell;
Why then should they suspect?
Gaur. He must not live should Charles prove victorious.
Duke. He's done me service: say not so, Gauriecio.
Gaur. A traitor's name he will not calmly bear;
He'll tell his tale aloud—he must not live.
Duke. Well, if it must—we'll talk of this again.
Gaur. But while with anxious care and crafty wiles,
You would enlarge the limits of your state,
Your highness must beware lest inward broils
Bring danger near at hand: your northern subjects
E'en now are discontented and unquiet.
Duke. What, dare the ungrateful miscreants thus return
The many favours of my princely grace?
'Tis ever thus indulgence spoils the base;
Raising up pride, and lawless turbulence,
Like noxious vapours from the fulsome marsh
When morning shines upon it.—
Did I not lately with parental care,
When dire invaders their destruction threaten'd,
Provide them all with means of their defence?
Did I not, as a mark of gracious trust,
A body of their vagrant youth select
To guard my sacred person? till that day
An honour never yet allowed their race.
Did I not suffer them, upon their suit,
T' establish manufactures in their towns?
And after all some chosen soldiers spare
To guard the blessings of interior peace?
Gaur. Nay, please your highness, they do well allow,
That when your enemies in fell revenge
Your former inroads threaten'd to repay,
Their ancient arms you did to them restore,
With kind permission to defend themselves:
That so far have they felt your princely grace,
In drafting from their fields their goodliest youth
To be your servants: That you did vouchsafe,
On paying of a large and heavy fine,
Leave to apply the labour of their hands
As best might profit to the country's weal:
And to encourage well their infant trade,
Quarter'd your troops upon them.—Please your grace,
All this they do most readily allow.
Duke. They do allow it then, ungrateful varlets.
What would they have? what would they have Gauriecio!
Gaur. Some mitigation of their grievous burdens
Which, like an iron weight around their necks,
Do bend their care-worn faces to the earth,
Like creatures form'd upon its soil to creep,
Not stand erect, and view the sun of heaven.
Duke. But they beyond their proper sphere would rise;
Let them their lot fulf as we do ours.
Society of various parts is form'd;
They are its grounds, its mud, its sediment,
And we the mantling top which crowns the whole.
Calm, steady labour is their greatest bliss;
To aim at higher things beseems them not.
To let them work in peace my care shall be;
To slacken labour is to nourish pride.
Methinks thou art a pleader for these fools:
What may this mean, Gauriecio?
Gaur. They were resolved to lay their cause before you,
And would have found some other advocate
Less pleasing to your grace had I refused.
Duke. Well, let them know, some more convenient season
I'll think of this, and do for them as much
As suits the honour of my princely state.
Their prince's honour should be ever dear
To worthy subjects as their precious lives.
Gaur. I fear, unless you give some special promise,
They will be violent still——
Duke. Then do it, if the wretches are so bold:
We can retract it when the times allow;
'Tis of small consequence. Go see Bernardo,
And come to me again. [Exit
Gaur. (*solus*) O happy people! whose indulgent lord
From every care, with which increasing wealth,
With all its hopes and fears, doth ever move
The human breast, most graciously would free
And kindly leave you naught to do but toil!
This creature now, with all his reptile cunning,
Writhing and turning through a maze of wiles,
Believes his genius form'd to rule mankind;
And calls his sordid wish for territory
That noblest passion of the soul, ambition.
Born had he been to follow some low trade,
A petty tradesman still he had remain'd,
And used the art with which he rules a state
To circumvent his brothers of the craft,
Or cheat the buyers of his paltry ware.
And yet he thinks,—ha, ha, ha, ha!—he thinks
I am the tool and servant of his will.
Well, let it be; through all the maze of trouble
His plots and base oppression must create,
I'll shape myself a way to higher things:
And who will say 'tis wrong?
A sordid being, who expects no faith
But as self-interest binds; who would not trust
The strongest ties of nature on the soul,

Deserves no faithful service. Perverse fate!
Were I like him, I would despise this dealing;
But being as I am, born low in fortune,
Yet with a mind aspiring to be great,
I must not scorn the steps which lead to it:
And if they are not right, no saint am I;
I follow nature's passion in my breast,
Which urges me to rise in spite of fortune.

[Exit.

Scene IV.—An apartment in the palace.

Victoria and Isabella are discovered playing at chess; the Countess Albini sitting by them reading to herself.

Vict. Away with it, I will not play again.
May men no more be foolish in my presence
If thou art not a cheat, an arrant cheat!

Isab. To swear that I am false by such an oath,
Should prove me honest, since its forfeiture
Would bring your highness gain.

Vict. Thou'rt wrong, my Isabella, simple maid;
For in the very forfeit of this oath,
There's death to all the dearest pride of women.
May man no more be foolish in my presence!

Isab. And does your grace, hail'd by applauding crowds,
In all the graceful eloquence address'd
Of most accomplish'd, noble, courtly youths,
Praised in the songs of heaven-inspired bards,
Those awkward proofs of admiration prize,
Which rustic swains their village fair ones pay!

Vict. O, love will master all the power of art!
Ay, all! and she who never has beheld
The polish'd courtier, or the tuneful sage,
Before the glances of her conquering eye
A very native simple swain become,
Has only vulgar charms.
To make the cunning artless, tame the rude,
Subdue the haughty, shake th' undaunted soul;
Yea, put a bridle in the lion's mouth,
And lead him forth as a domestic cur,
These are the triumphs of all-powerful beauty!
Did naught but flattering words and tuneful praise,
Sighs, tender glances, and obsequious service,
Attend her presence, it were nothing worth:
I'd put a white coif o'er my braided locks,
And be a plain, good, simple, fireside dame.

Alb. (*raising her head from her book.*) And is, indeed, a plain domestic dame,
Who fills the duties of a useful state,
A being of less dignity than she,
Who mainly on her transient beauty builds
A little poor ideal tyranny?

Isab. Ideal too!

Alb. Yes, most unreal power;
For she who only finds her self-esteem
In others' admiration, begs an alms;
Depends on others for her daily food,
And is the very servant of her slaves;
Though oftentimes, in a fantastic hour,
O'er men she may a childish power exert,
Which not ennobles, but degrades her state.

Vict. You are severe, Albini, most severe!
Were human passions placed within the breast
But to be curb'd, subdued, pluck'd by the roots!
All heaven's gifts to some good end were given.

Alb. Yes, for a noble, for a generous end.

Vict. Am I ungenerous then?

Alb. Yes, most ungenerous
Who, for the pleasure of a little power,
Would give most unavailing pain to those,
Whose love you ne'er can recompense again.
E'en now, to-day, O! was it not ungenerous
To fetter Basil with a foolish tie,
Against his will, perhaps against his duty?

Vict. What, dost thou think against his will, my friend?

Alb. Full sure I am against his reason's will.

Vict. Ah! but indeed thou must excuse me here;
For duller than a shelled crab was she,
Who could suspect her power in such a mind,
And calmly leave it doubtful and unproved.
But wherefore dost thou look so gravely on me?
Ah! well I read those looks! methinks they say,
"Your mother did not so."

Alb. Your highness reads them true, she did not so.
If foolish vanity e'er soil'd her thoughts,
She kept it low, withheld its aliment;
Not pamper'd it with every motley food,
From the fond tribute of a noble heart
To the lisp'd flattery of a cunning child.

Vict. Nay, speak not thus,—Albini, speak not thus
Of little blue-eyed, sweet, fair-hair'd Mirando.
He is the orphan of a hapless pair;
A loving, beautiful, but hapless pair,
Whose story is so pleasing, and so sad,
The swains have turn'd it to a plaintive lay,
And sing it as they tend their mountain sheep.
Besides, (*to* Isab.) I am the guardian of his choice.
When first I saw him—dost thou not remember?

Isab. 'Twas in the public garden.

Vict. Even so;
Perch'd in his nurse's arms, a roughsome quean,
Ill suited to the lovely charge she bore.
How steadfastly he fixed his looks upon me,
His dark eyes shining through forgotten tears,
Then stretch'd his little arms and call'd me mother!
What could I do? I took the bantling home—
I could not tell the imp he had no mother.

Alb. Ah! there, my child, thou hast indeed no blame.

Vict. Now this is kindly said: thanks, sweet Albini!
Still call me child, and chide me as thou wilt.
O! would that I were such as thou couldst love!
Couldst dearly love, as thou didst love my mother!

Alb. (*pressing her to her breast.*) And do I not? all perfect as she was,
I know not that she went so near my heart
As thou with all thy faults.

Vict. And say'st thou so? would I had sooner known!
I had done any thing to give thee pleasure.

Alb. Then do so now, and put thy faults away.

Vict. No, say not faults; the freaks of thoughtless youth.

Alb. Nay, very faults they must indeed be call'd.

Vict. O! say but foibles! youthful foibles only!

Alb. Faults, faults, real faults you must confess they are.

Vict. In truth I cannot do your sense the wrong
To think so poorly of the one you love.

Alb. I must be gone: thou hast o'ercome me now:
Another time I will not yield it so. [Exit.
Isab. The countess is severe; she's too severe:
She once was young, though now advanced in years.
Vict. No, I deserve it all; she is most worthy.
Unlike those faded beauties of the court,
But now the wither'd stems of former flowers,
With all their blossoms shed, her nobler mind
Procures to her the privilege of man,
Ne'er to be old till nature's strength decays.
Some few years hence, if I should live so long,
I'd be Albini rather than myself.
Isab. Here comes your little favourite.
Vict. I am not in the humour for him now.

Enter Mirando, running up to Victoria, and taking hold of her gown, while she takes no notice of him, as he holds up his mouth to be kissed.

Isab. (*to* Mir.) Thou seest the princess can't be troubled with thee.
Mir. O but she will! I'll scramble up her robe,
As naughty boys do when they climb for apples.
Isab. Come here, sweet child; I'll kiss thee in her stead.
Mir. Nay, but I will not have a kiss of thee.
Would I were tall! O were I but so tall!
Isab. And how tall wouldst thou be?
Mir. Thou dost not know?
Just tall enough to reach Victoria's lips.
Vict. (*embracing him.*) O! I must bend to this, thou little urchin.
Who taught thee all this wit, this childish wit?
Whom does Mirando love? (*embraces him again.*)
Mir. He loves Victoria.
Vict. And wherefore loves he her?
Mir. Because she's pretty.
Isab. Hast thou no little prate to-day, Mirando?
No tale to earn a sugar-plum withal?
Mir. Ay, that I have: I know who loves her grace.
Vict. Who is it, pray? thou shalt have comfits for it.
Mir. (*looking slyly at her.*) It is—it is—it is the Count of Maldo.
Vict. Away, thou little chit! that tale is old,
And was not worth a sugar-plum when new.
Mir. Well then, I know who loves her highness well.
Vict. Who is it, then?
Isab. Who is it, naughty boy?
Mir. It is the handsome Marquis of Carlatzi.
Vict. No, no, Mirando, thou art naughty still:
Twice have I paid thee for that tale already.
Mir. Well then, indeed—I know who loves Victoria.
Vict. And who is he?
Mir. It is Mirando's self.
Vict. Thou little imp! this story is not new,
But thou shalt have thy hire. Come, let us go.
Go, run before us, boy. [look'd,
Mir. Nay, but I'll show you how Count Wolvar
When he conducted Isabel from court.
Vict. How did he look?
Mir. Give me your hand: he held his body thus;
(*putting himself in a ridiculous bowing posture.*)
And then he whisper'd softly; then look'd so;
(*ogling with his eyes affectedly.*)
Then she look'd so, and smiled to him again.
(*Throwing down his eyes affectedly.*)
Isab. Thou art a little knave, and must be whipp'd
[Exeunt. Mirando *leading out* Victoria *affectedly.*

ACT III.

Scene I.—An open street, or square

Enter Rosinberg and Frederick, by opposite sides of the stage.

Fred. So Basil, from the pressing calls of war,
Another day to rest and pastime gives.
How is it now? methinks thou art not pleased.
Ros. It matters little if I am or not.
Fred. Now pray thee do confess thou art ashamed:
Thou, who art wisely wont to set at naught
The noble fire of individual courage,
And call calm prudence the superior virtue,
What say'st thou now, my candid Rosinberg,
When thy great captain, in a time like this,
Denies his weary troops one day of rest
Before th' exertions of approaching battle,
Yet grants it to a pretty lady's suit?
Ros. Who told thee this? it was no friendly tale;
And no one else, besides a trusty friend,
Could know his motives. Then thou wrong'st me too;
For I admire, as much as thou dost, Frederick,
The fire of valour, e'en rash, heedless valour;
But not like thee do I depreciate
That far superior, yea, that godlike talent,
Which doth direct that fire, because indeed
It is a talent nature has denied me.
Fred. Well, well, and greatly he may boast his virtue,
Who risks perhaps th' imperial army's fate,
To please a lady's freaks—
Ros. Go, go, thou'rt prejudiced:
A passion, which I do not choose to name,
Has warp'd thy judgment.
Fred. No, by heaven thou wrong'st me!
I do, with most enthusiastic warmth,
True valour love: wherever he is found,
I love the hero too; but hate to see
The praises due to him so cheaply earn'd.
Ros. Then mayst thou now these generous feelings prove.
Behold that man, whose short and grizzly hair
In clustering locks his dark brown face o'ershades
Where now the scars of former sabre wounds,
In honourable companionship are seen
With the deep lines of age; whose piercing eye
Beneath its shading eyebrow keenly darts
Its yet unquenched beams, as though in age
Its youthful fire had been again renew'd,
To be the guardian of its darken'd mate:
See with what vigorous steps his upright form
He onward bears; nay, e'en that vacant sleeve
Which droops so sadly by his better side,
Suits not ungracefully the veteran's mien.
This is the man, whose glorious acts in battle
We heard to-day related o'er our wine.
I go to tell the general he is come:
Enjoy the generous feelings of thy breast,
And make an old man happy. [Exit

Enter Geoffry.

Fred. Brave soldier, let me profit by the chance
That led me here; I've heard of thy exploits.
Geof. Ah! then you have but heard an ancient tale,
Which has been long forgotten.
Fred. But true it is, and should not be forgotten;
Though generals jealous of their soldiers' fame,
May dash it with neglect.
Geof. There are, perhaps, who may be so ungenerous.
Fred. Perhaps, say'st thou? in very truth there are.
How art thou else rewarded with neglect,
Whilst many a paltry fellow in thy corps
Has been promoted? it is ever thus.
Served not Mardini in your company?
He was, though honour'd with a valiant name,
To those who knew him well, a paltry soldier.
Geof. Your pardon, sir: we did esteem him much,
Although inferior to his gallant friend,
The brave Sebastian.
Fred. The brave Sebastian!
He was, as I am told, a learned coxcomb,
And loved a goose-quill better than a sword.
What, dost thou call him brave?
Thou, who dost bear about that war-worn trunk,
Like an old target, hack'd and rough with wounds,
Whilst, after all his mighty battles, he
Was with a smooth skin in his coffin laid,
Unblemish'd with a scar?
Geof. His duty call'd not to such desperate service;
For I have sought where few alive remain'd,
And none unscath'd; where but a few remain'd,
Thus marr'd and mangled; (*showing his wounds.*)
as belike you've seen,
O' summer nights, around the evening lamp,
Some wretched moths, wingless, and half consumed,
Just feebly crawling o'er their heaps of dead.—
In Savoy, on a small, though desperate post,
Of full three hundred goodly chosen men,
But twelve were left, and right dear friends were we
For ever after. They are all dead now:
I'm old and lonely.—We were valiant hearts—
Frederick Dewalter would have stopp'd a breach
Against the devil himself. I'm lonely now!
Fred. I'm sorry for thee. Hang ungrateful chiefs!
Why wert thou not promoted?
Geof. After that battle, where my happy fate
Had led me to fulfil a glorious part,
Chafed with the gibing insults of a slave,
The worthless favourite of a great man's favourite,
I rashly did affront; our cautious prince,
With narrow policy dependent made,
Dared not, as I am told, promote me then,
And now he is ashamed, or has forgot it.
Fred. Fy, fy upon it! let him be ashamed:
Here is a trifle for thee—(*offering him money.*)
Geof. No, good sir;
I have enough to live as poor men do.
When I'm in want I'll thankfully receive,
Because I'm poor, but not because I'm brave.
Fred. You're proud, old soldier.
Geof. No, I am not proud;
For if I were, methinks I'd be morose,
And willing to depreciate other men.

Enter Rosinberg.

Ros. (*clapping* Geof. *on the shoulder.*) How goes it with thee now, my good field-marshal?
Geof. The better that I see your honour well,
And in the humour to be merry with me.
Ros. 'Faith, by my sword, I've rightly named thee too;
What is a good field-marshal but a man,
Whose generous courage and undaunted mind
Doth marshal others on in glory's way?
Thou art not one by princely favour dubb'd,
But one of nature's making.
Geof. You show, my lord, such pleasant courtesy,
I know not how—
Ros. But see, the general comes.

Enter Basil.

Ros. (*pointing to* Geof.) Behold the worthy veteran.
Bas. (*taking him by the hand.*) Brave, honourable man, your worth I know,
And greet it with a brother soldier's love.
Geof. (*taking away his hand in confusion.*) My general, this is too much, too much honour.
Bas. (*taking his hand again.*) No, valiant soldier, I must have it so.
Geof. My humble state agrees not with such honour.
Bas. Think not of it, thy state is not thyself.
Let mean souls, highly rank'd, look down on thee,
As the poor dwarf, perch'd on a pedestal,
O'erlooks the giant: 'tis not worth a thought.
Art thou not Geoffry of the tenth brigade,
Whose warlike feats, child, maid, and matron know?
And oft, cross-elbow'd, o'er his nightly bowl,
The jolly toper to his comrade tells
Whose glorious feats of war, by cottage door,
The ancient soldier, tracing in the sand
The many movements of the varied field,
In warlike terms to listening swains relates;
Whose bosoms glowing at the wondrous tale
First learn to scorn the hind's inglorious life;
Shame seize me, if I would not rather be
The man thou art, than court-created chief,
Known only by the dates of his promotion!
Geof. Ah! would I were, would I were young again,
To fight beneath your standard, noble general;
Methinks what I have done were but a jest,
Ay, but a jest to what I now should do,
Were I again the man that I have been.
O! I could fight!
Bas. And would'st thou fight for me?
Geof. Ay, to the death!
Bas. Then come, brave man, and be my champion still:
The sight of thee will fire my soldiers' breasts;
Come, noble veteran, thou shalt fight for me.
[Exit *with* Geoffry.
Fred. What does he mean to do?
Ros. We'll know ere long.
Fred. Our general bears it with a careless face,
For one so wise.
Ros. A careless face? on what?
Fred. Now feign not ignorance, we know it all.

News which have spread in whispers from the court,
Since last night's messenger arrived from Milan.
Ros. As I'm an honest man, I know it not!
Fred. 'Tis said the rival armies are so near
A battle must immediately ensue.
Ros. It cannot be. Our general knows it not.
The Duke is of our side a sworn ally,
And had such messenger to Mantua come,
He would have been apprized upon the instant.
It cannot be, it is some idle tale.
Fred. So may it prove till we have join'd them too—
Then Heaven grant they may be nearer still!
For O! my soul for war and danger pants,
As doth the noble lion for his prey.
My soul delights in battle.
Ros. Upon my simple word, I'd rather see
A score of friendly fellows shaking hands,
Than all the world in arms. Hast thou no fear?
Fred. What dost thou mean?
Ros. Hast thou no fear of death?
Fred. Fear is a name for something in the mind,
But what, from inward sense, I cannot tell.
I could as little anxious march to battle,
As when a boy to childish games I ran.
Ros. Then as much virtue hast thou in thy valour,
As when a child thou hadst in childish play.
The brave man is not he who feels no fear,
For that were stupid and irrational;
But he, whose noble soul its fear subdues,
And bravely dares the danger nature shrinks from.
As for your youth, whom blood and blows delight,
Away with them! there is not in the crew
One valiant spirit.—Ha! what sound is this?
(*Shouting is heard without.*)
Fred. The soldiers shout; I'll run and learn the cause.
Ros. But tell me first, how didst thou like the veteran?
Fred. He is too proud; he was displeased with me,
Because I offer'd him a little sum.
Ros. What, money! O, most generous, noble spirit!
Noble rewarder of superior worth!
A halfpenny for Belisarius!
But hark! they shout again—here comes Valtomer.
(*Shouting heard without.*)

Enter VALTOMER.

What does this shouting mean?
Valt. O! I have seen a sight, a glorious sight!
Thou wouldst have smiled to see it.
Ros. How smile? methinks thine eyes are wet with tears.
Valt. (*passing the back of his hands across his eyes.*)
'Faith, so they are; well, well, but I smiled too.
You heard the shouting.
Ros. and Fred. Yes.
Valt. O had you seen it!
Drawn out in goodly ranks, there stood our troops;
Here, in the graceful state of manly youth,
His dark face brighten'd with a generous smile,
Which to his eyes such flashing lustre gave,
As though his soul, like an unsheathed sword,
Had through them gleam'd, our noble general stood,
And to his soldiers, with heart-moving words
The veteran showing, his brave deeds rehearsed,
Who by his side stood like a storm-scath'd oak,
Beneath the shelter of some noble tree,
In the green honours of its youthful prime.
Ros. How look'd the veteran?
Valt. I cannot tell thee!
At first he bore it up with cheerful looks,
As one who fain would wear his honours bravely
And greet the soldiers with a comrade's face:
But when Count Basil, in such moving speech,
Told o'er his actions past, and bade his troops
Great deeds to emulate, his countenance changed;
High heaved his manly breast, as it had been
By inward strong emotion half convulsed;
Trembled his nether lip; he shed some tears:
The general paused, the soldiers shouted loud;
Then hastily he brush'd the drops away,
And waved his hand, and clear'd his tear choked voice,
As though he would some grateful answer make;
When back with double force the whelming tide
Of passion came; high o'er his hoary head
His arm he toss'd, and heedless of respect,
In Basil's bosom hid his aged face,
Sobbing aloud. From the admiring ranks
A cry arose; still louder shouts resound.
I felt a sudden tightness grasp my throat
As it would strangle me; such as I felt,
I knew it well, some twenty years ago,
When my good father shed his blessing on me:
I hate to weep, and so I came away.
Ros. (*giving* Valt. *his hand.*) And there, take thou my blessing for the tale.
Hark, I ow they shout again! 'tis nearer now.
This way they march.

Martial music heard. Enter Soldiers marching in order, bearing GEOFFRY in triumph on their shoulders After them enter BASIL; the whole preceded by a band of music. They cross over the stage, are joined by Ros. &c. and EXEUNT.

SCENE II.

Enter GAURIECIO and a GENTLEMAN, talking as they enter.

Gaur. So slight a tie as this we cannot trust:
One day her influence may detain him here,
But love a feeble agent may be found
With the ambitious.
Gent. And so you think this boyish odd conceit
Of bearing home in triumph with his troops
That aged soldier, will your purpose serve?
Gaur. Yes, I will make it serve; for though my prince
Is little scrupulous of right and wrong,
I have possess'd his mind, as though it were
A flagrant insult on his princely state,
To honour thus the man he has neglected,
Which makes him relish, with a keener taste,
My purposed scheme. Come, let us fall to work.
With all their warm heroic feelings roused,
We'll spirit up his troops to mutiny,

Which must retard, perhaps undo him quite.
Thanks to his childish love, which has so well
Procured us time to tamper with the fools.
Gent. Ah! but those feelings he has waked within them,
Are generous feelings, and endear himself.
Gaur. It matters not; though generous in their nature,
They yet may serve a most ungenerous end;
And he who teaches men to think, though nobly,
Doth raise within their minds a busy judge
To scan his actions. Send thine agents forth,
And sound it in their ears how much Count Basil
Affects all difficult and desperate service,
To raise his fortunes by some daring stroke;
Having unto the emperor pledged his word,
To make his troops all dreadful hazards brave:
For which intent he fills their simple minds
With idle tales of glory and renown;
Using their warm attachment to himself
For most unworthy ends.
This is the busy time: go forth, my friend;
Mix with the soldiers, now in jolly groups
Around their evening cups. There, spare no cost, (*gives him a purse.*)
Observe their words, see how the poison takes
And then return again.
Gent. I will, my lord.
[EXEUNT *severally.*

SCENE III.—A SUITE OF GRAND APARTMENTS, WITH THEIR WIDE DOORS THROWN OPEN, LIGHTED UP WITH LAMPS, AND FILLED WITH COMPANY IN MASKS.

Enter several Masks, and pass through the first apartment to the other rooms. Then enter BASIL in the disguise of a wounded soldier.

Bas. (*alone.*) Now am I in the region of delight!
Within the blessed compass of these walls
She is; the gay light of those blazing lamps
Doth shine upon her, and this painted floor
Is with her footsteps press'd. E'en now, perhaps,
Amidst that motley rout she plays her part:
There will I go; she cannot be conceal'd;
For but the flowing of her graceful robe
Will soon betray the lovely form that wears it,
Though in a thousand masks. Ye homely weeds,— (*looking at his habit.*)
Which half conceal, and half declare my state,
Beneath your kind disguise, O! let me prosper,
And boldly take the privilege ye give:
Follow her mazy steps, crowd by her side;
Thus near her face my listening ear incline,
And feel her soft breath fan my glowing cheek,
Her fair hand seize, yea, press it closely too!
May it not be e'en so? by heaven it shall!
This once, O! serve me well, and ever after,
Ye shall be treasured like a monarch's robes;
Lodged in my chamber, near my pillow kept;
And oft with midnight lamp I'll visit ye,
And, gazing wistfully, this night recall,
With all its past delights.—But yonder moves
A slender form, dress'd in an azure robe;
't moves not like the rest—it must be she!
(*Goes hastily into another apartment, and mixes with the Masks.*)

Enter ROSINBERG, fantastically dressed, with a willow upon his head, and scraps of sonnets, and torn letters fluttering round his neck; pursued by a group of Masks from one of the inner apartments, who hoot at him, and push him about as he enters.

1*st Mask.* Away, thou art a saucy, jeering knave
And fain wouldst make a jest of all true love.
Ros. Nay, gentle ladies, do not buffet me:
I am a right true servant of the fair;
And as this woful chaplet on my brow,
And these tear-blotted sonnets would denote,
A poor abandon'd lover, out of place;
With any lover ready to engage,
Who will enlist me in her loving service.
Of a convenient kind my talents are,
And to all various humours may be shaped.
2*d Mask.* What canst thou do?
3*d Mask.* Ay, what besides offending?
Ros. O! I can sigh so deeply, look so sad,
Pule out a piteous tale on bended knee;
Groan like a ghost; so very wretched be,
As would delight a tender lady's heart
But to behold.
1*st Mask.* Poo, poo, insipid fool!
Ros. But should my lady brisker mettle own,
And tire of all those gentle, dear delights,
Such pretty little quarrels I'd invent
As whether such a fair one (some dear friend)
Whose squirrel's tail was pinch'd, or the soft maid,
With favourite lap-dog of a surfeit sick,
Have greatest cause of delicate distress
Or whether—
1*st Mask.* Go, too bad thou art indeed!
(*aside.*) How could he know I quarrell'd with the count?
2*d Mask.* Wilt thou do nothing for thy lady's fame?
Ros. Yes, lovely shepherdess, on every tree
I'll carve her name, with true-love garlands bound:
Write madrigals upon her roseate cheeks;
Odes to her eye; 'faith, every wart and mole
That spots her snowy skin shall have its sonnet!
I'll make love posies for her thimble's edge,
Rather than please her not.
3*d Mask.* But for her sake what dangers wilt thou brave?
Ros. In truth, fair nun, I stomach dangers less
Than other service, and were something loath
To storm a convent's walls for one dear glance;
But if she'll wisely manage this alone,
As maids have done, come o'er the wall herself,
And meet me fairly on the open plain,
I will engage her tender steps to aid
In all annoyance of rude brier or stone,
Or crossing rill, some half foot wide or so,
Which that fair lady should unaided pass,
Ye gracious powers forbid! I will defend
Against each hideous fly, whose dreadful buzz—
4*th Mask.* Such paltry service suits thee best, indeed.
What maid of spirit would not spurn thee from her?
Ros. Yes, to recall me soon, sublime sultana!
For I can stand the burst of female passion,
Each change of humour and affected storm;
Be scolded, frown'd upon, to exile sent,
Recall'd, caress'd, chid, and disgraced again;
And say what maid of spirit would forego

The bliss of one to exercise it thus?
O! I can bear ill treatment like a lamb!

4th Mask. (*beating him.*) Well, bear it then, thou hast deserved it well.

Ros. 'Zounds, lady! do not give such heavy blows;
I'm not your husband, as belike you guess.

5th Mask. Come, lover, I enlist thee for my swain;
Therefore, good lady, do forbear your blows,
Nor thus assume my rights.

Ros. Agreed. Wilt thou a gracious mistress prove?

5th Mask. Such as thou wouldst, such as thy genius suits;
For since of universal scope it is,
All women's humour shalt thou find in me.
I'll gently soothe thee with such winning smiles—
To nothing sink thee with a scornful frown:
Tease thee with peevish and affected freaks;
Caress thee, love thee, hate thee, break thy pate;
But still between the whiles I'll careful be,
In feigned admiration of thy parts,
Thy shape, thy manners, or thy graceful mien,
To bind thy giddy soul with flattery's charm;
For well thou know'st that flattery ever is
The tickling spice, the pungent seasoning
Which makes this motley dish of monstrous scraps
So pleasing to the dainty lover's taste.
Thou canst not leave, though violent in extreme,
And most vexatious in her teasing moods;
Thou canst not leave the fond admiring soul,
Who did declare, when calmer reason ruled,
Thou hadst a pretty leg.

Ros. Marry, thou hast the better of me there.

5th Mask. And more; I'll pledge to thee my honest word,
That when your noble swainship shall bestow
More faithful homage on the simple maid,
Who loves you with sincerity and truth,
Than on the changeful and capricious tyrant,
Who mocking leads you like a trammel'd ass,
My studied woman's wiles I'll lay aside,
And such a one become.

Ros. Well spoke, brave lady, I will follow thee.
(*Follows her to the corner of the stage.*)
Now on my life, these ears of mine I'd give,
To have but one look of that little face,
Where such a biting tongue doth hold its court
To keep the fools in awe. Nay, nay, unmask:
I'm sure thou hast a pair of wicked eyes,
A short and saucy nose: now prithee do.
(*Unmasking.*)

Alb. (*unmasking.*) Well, hast thou guess'd me right?

Ros. (*bowing low.*) Wild freedom, changed to most profound respect,
Doth make an awkward booby of me now.

Alb. I've joined your frolic with a good intent,
For much I wish'd to gain your private ear.
The time is precious, and I must be short.

Ros. On me your slightest word more power will have,
Most honour'd lady, than a conn'd oration.
Thou art the only one of all thy sex,
Who wear'st thy years with such a winning grace;
Thou art the more admired the more thou fadest.

Alb. I thank your lordship for these courteous words;
But to my purpose—You are Basil's friend:
Be friendly to him then, and warn him well
This court to leave, nor be allured to stay;
For if he does, there's mischief waits him here
May prove the bane of all his future days.
Remember this, I must no longer stay.
God bless your friend and you; I love you both.
[Exit.

Ros. (*alone.*) What may this warning mean? I had my fears.
There's something hatching which I know not of.
I've lost all spirit for this masking now.
(*Throwing away his papers and his willows.*)
Away, ye scraps! I have no need of you.
I would I knew what garment Basil wears:
I watch'd him, yet he did escape my sight;
But I must search again and find him out. [Exit.

Enter Basil much agitated, with his mask in his hand.

Bas. In vain I've sought her, follow'd every form
Where aught appear'd of dignity or grace:
I've listen'd to the tone of every voice;
I've watch'd the entrance of each female mask;
My fluttering heart roused like a startled hare,
With the imagined rustling of her robes,
At every dame's approach. Deceitful night,
How art thou spent! where are thy promised joys?
How much of thee is gone! O spiteful fate!
Yet within the compass of these walls
Somewhere she is, although to me she is not.
Some other eye doth gaze upon her form,
Some other ear doth listen to her voice;
Some happy favourite doth enjoy the bliss
My spiteful stars deny.
Disturber of my soul! what veil conceals thee?
What devilish spell is o'er this cursed hour?
O heavens and earth! where art thou?

Enter a Mask in the dress of a female conjurer.

Mask. Methinks thou art impatient, valiant soldier:
Thy wound doth gall thee sorely; is it so?

Bas. Away, away, I cannot fool with thee.

Mask. I have some potent drugs may ease thy smart.
Where is thy wound? is't here?
(*Pointing to the bandage on his arm.*)

Bas. Poo, poo, begone!
Thou canst do naught—'tis in my head, my heart—
'Tis everywhere, where medicine cannot cure.

Mask. If wounded in the heart, it is a wound
Which some ungrateful fair one hath inflicted,
And I may conjure something for thy good.

Bas. Ah! if thou couldst! what, must I fool with thee?

Mask. Thou must a while, and be examined too.
What kind of woman did the wicked deed?

Bas. I cannot tell thee. In her presence still
My mind in such a wild delight hath been,
I could not pause to picture out her beauty,
Yet naught of woman e'er was form'd so fair.

Mask. Art thou a soldier, and no weapon bear'st
To send her wound for wound?

Bas. Alas! she shoots from such a hopeless height,

No dart of mine hath plume to mount so far.
None but a prince may dare.
Mask. But, if thou hast no hope, thou hast no love.
Bas. I love, and yet in truth I had no hope,
But that she might at least with some good will,
Some gentle, pure regard, some secret kindness,
Within her dear remembrance give me place.
This was my all of hope, but it is flown:
For she regards me not; despises, scorns me:
Scorns, I must say it too, a noble heart,
That would have bled for her.
Mask. (*discovering herself to be* Victoria, *by speaking in her true voice.*) O! no, she does not.
[Exit *hastily in confusion.*
Bas. (*stands for a moment riveted to the spot, then holds up both his hands in an ecstacy.*)
It is herself! it is her blessed self!
O! what a fool am I, that had no power
To follow her, and urge th' advantage on.
Begone, unmanly fears! I must be bold.
[Exit *after her.*

A Dance of Masks.

Enter Duke and Gauriecio, unmasked.

Duke. This revelry, methinks, goes gayly on.
The hour is late, and yet your friend returns not.
Gaur. He will return ere long—nay, there he comes.

Enter Gentleman.

Duke. Does all go well? (*going close up to him.*)
Gent. All as your grace could wish.
For now the poison works, and the stung soldiers
Rage o'er their cups, and, with fire-kindled eyes,
Swear vengeance on the chief who would betray them.
That Frederick, too, the discontented man
Of whom your highness was so lately told,
Swallows the bait, and does his part most bravely.
Gauriecio counsell'd well to keep him blind,
Nor with a bribe attempt him. On my soul:
He is so fiery he had spurn'd us else,
And ruin'd all the plot.
Duke. Speak softly, friend—I'll hear it all in private.
A gay and careless face we now assume.

Duke, Gaur. and Gent. retire into the inner apartment, appearing to laugh and talk gayly to the different Masks as they pass them.

Re-enter Victoria, followed by Basil.

Vict. Forbear, my lord; these words offend mine ear.
Bas. Yet let me but this once, this once offend,
Nor thus with thy displeasure punish me;
And if my words against all prudence sin,
O! hear them, as the good of heart do list
To the wild ravings of a soul distraught.
Vict. If I indeed should listen to thy words,
They must not talk of love.
Bas. To be with thee, to speak, to hear thee speak,
To claim the soft attention of thine eye,
I'd be content to talk of any thing,
If it were possible to be with thee,
And think of aught but love.
Vict. I fear, my lord, you have too much presumed
On those unguarded words, which were in truth
Utter'd at unawares, with little heed,
And urge their meaning far beyond the right.
Bas. I thought, indeed, that they were kindly meant,
As though thy gentle breast did kindly feel
Some secret pity for my hopeless pain,
And would not pierce with scorn, ungenerous scorn
A heart so deeply stricken.
Vict. So far thou'st read it well.
Bas. Ha! have I well?
Thou dost not hate me, then?
Vict. My father comes
He were displeased if he should see thee thus.
Bas. Thou dost not hate me, then?
Vict. Away! he'll be displeased—I cannot say—
Bas. Well, let him come: it is thyself I fear;
For did destruction thunder o'er my head,
By the dread Power of heaven, I would not stir,
Till thou hadst answer'd my impatient soul!
Thou dost not hate me?
Vict. Nay, nay, let go thy hold—I cannot hate thee. (*Breaks from him and exit.*)
Bas. (*alone.*) Thou canst not hate me! no, thou canst not hate me!
For I love thee so well, so passing well,
With such o'erflowing heart, so very dearly,
That it were sinful not to pay me back
Some small, some kind return.

Enter Mirando, dressed like Cupid.

Mir. Bless thee, brave soldier.
Bas. What say'st thou, pretty child? what playful fair
Has deck'd thee out in this fantastic guise?
Mir. It was Victoria's self; it was the princess.
Bas. Thou art her favourite, then?
Mir. They say I am:
And now, between ourselves, I'll tell thee, soldier,
I think in very truth she loves me well.
Such merry little songs she teaches me—
Sly riddles too, and when I'm laid to rest,
Ofttimes on tip-toe near my couch she steals,
And lifts the covering so, to look upon me.
And oftentimes I feign as though I slept;
For then her warm lips to my cheek she lays,
And pats me softly with her fair white hands;
And then I laugh, and through mine eyelids peep,
And then she tickles me, and calls me cheat;
And then we so do laugh, ha, ha, ha, ha!
Bas. What! does she even so, thou happiest child?
And have those rosy cheeks been press'd so dearly?
Delicious urchin! I will kiss thee too.
(*Takes him eagerly up in his arms, and kisses him.*)
Mir. No, let me down, thy kisses are so rough,
So furious rough—she doth not kiss me so.
Bas. Sweet boy, where is thy chamber? by Victoria's?
Mir. Hard by her own.
Bas. Then will I come beneath thy window soon:
And, if I could, some pretty song I'd sing,
To lull thee to thy rest.
Mir. O no, thou must not! 'tis a frightful place
It is the churchyard of the neighbouring dome.
The princess loves it for the lofty trees,
Whose spreading branches shade her chamber walls:
So do not I; for when 'tis dark o' nights,

Goblins howl there, and ghosts rise through the ground.
I hear them many a time when I'm a bed,
And hide beneath the clothes my cowering head.
O! is it not a frightful thing, my lord,
To sleep alone i' the dark?

Bas. Poor harmless child! thy prate is wondrous sweet.

Enter a group of Masks.

1*st Mask.* What dost thou here, thou little truant boy?
Come, play thy part with us.

Masks place MIRANDO in the middle, and range themselves round him.

SONG.—A GLEE.

Child, with many a childish wile,
Timid look, and blushing smile,
Downy wings to steal thy way,
Gilded bow, and quiver gay,
Who in thy simple mien would trace
The tyrant of the human race?

Who is he whose flinty heart
Hath not felt the flying dart?
Who is he that from the wound
Hath not pain and pleasure found?
Who is he that hath not shed
Curse and blessings on thy head?
Ah love! our weal, our wo, our bliss, our bane,
A restless life have they who wear thy chain!
Ah love! our weal, our wo, our bliss, our bane,
More hapless still are they who never felt thy pain!

(*All the Masks dance round Cupid. Then enter a band of Satyrs, who frighten away Love and his votaries; and conclude the scene, dancing in a grotesque manner.*)

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—THE STREET BEFORE BASIL'S LODGINGS.

Enter ROSINBERG and two Officers

Ros. (*speaking as he enters.*) Unless we find him quickly, all is lost.

1*st Off.* His very guards, methinks, have left their post
To join the mutiny.

Ros. (*knocking very loud.*) Holla! who's there within? confound this door!
It will not yield. O for a giant's strength!
Holla, holla, within! will no one hear?

Enter a Porter from the house.

Ros. (*eagerly to the porter.*) Is he return'd? is he return'd not yet?
Thy face doth tell me so.

Port. Not yet, my lord.

Ros. Then let him ne'er return!——
Tumult, disgrace, and ruin have their way!
'll search for him no more.

Port. He hath been absent all the night, my lord.

Ros. I know he hath.

2*d Off.* And yet 'tis possible
e may have entered by the secret door;
And now perhaps, in deepest sleep entranced,
Is dead to every sound.

(Ros. *without speaking, rushes into the house, and the rest follow him.*)

Enter BASIL.

Bas. The blue air of the morning pinches keenly.
Beneath her window all the chilly night,
I felt it not. Ah! night has been my day;
And the pale lamp which from her chamber gleam'd
Has to the breeze a warmer temper lent
Than the red burning east.

Re-enter ROSINBERG, &c. from the house.

Ros. Himself! himself! He's here! he's here. O Basil!
What friend at such a time could lead thee forth?

Bas. What is the matter which disturbs you thus?

Ros. Matter that would a wiser man disturb.
Treason's abroad: thy men have mutinied.

Bas. It is not so; thy wits have mutinied,
And left their sober station in thy brain.

1*st Off.* Indeed, my lord, he speaks in sober earnest.
Some secret enemies have been employed
To fill your troops with strange imaginations.
As though their general would, for selfish gain,
Their generous valour urge to desperate deeds.
All to a man assembled on the ramparts,
Now threaten vengeance, and refuse to march.

Bas. What! think they vilely of me? threaten too!
O! most ungenerous, most unmanly thought!
Didst thou attempt (*to* Ros.) to reason with their folly?
Folly it is; baseness it cannot be.

Ros. Yes, truly, I did reason with a storm,
And bid it cease to rage.——
Their eyes look fire on him who questions them
The hollow murmurs of their mutter'd wrath
Sound dreadful through the dark extended ranks,
Like subterraneous grumblings of an earthquake.
——————The vengeful hurricane
Does not with such fantastic writhings toss
The wood's green boughs, as does convulsive rage
Their forms with frantic gestures agitate.
Around the chief of hell such legions throng'd
To bring back curse and discord on creation.

Bas. Nay, they are men, although impassion'd ones.
I'll go to them—

Ros. And we will stand by thee.
My sword is thine against ten thousand strong,
If it should come to this.

Bas. No, never, never!
There is no mean: I with my soldiers must
Or their commander or their victim prove.
But are my officers all stanch and faithful?

Ros. All but that devil, Frederick——
He, disappointed, left his former corps,
Where he, in truth, had been too long neglected,
Thinking he should all on the sudden rise,
From Basil's well-known love of valiant men;
And now, because it still must be deferr'd,
He thinks you seek from envy to depress him,
And burns to be revenged.

Bas. Well, well——This grieves me too—
But let us go.

SCENE II.—THE RAMPARTS OF THE TOWN.

The Soldiers are discovered, drawn up in a disorderly manner, hollaing and speaking big, and clashing their arms tumultuously.

1st Sol. No, comrade, no; hell gape and swallow me,
If I do budge for such most devilish orders!

2d Sol. Huzza! brave comrades! Who says otherwise?

3d Sol. No one, huzza! confound all treacherous leaders!

(*The Soldiers huzza and clash their arms.*)

5th Sol. Heaven dart its fiery lightning on his head!
We're men, we are not cattle to be slaughter'd!

2d Sol. They who do long to caper high in air,
Into a thousand bloody fragments blown,
May follow our brave general.

1st Sol. Curse his name!
I've fought for him till my strain'd nerves have crack'd!

2d Sol. We will command ourselves: for Milan, comrades.

5th Sol. Ay, ay, for Milan, valiant hearts, huzza.

(*All the Soldiers cast up their caps in the air and huzza.*)

2d Sol. Yes, comrades, tempting booty waits us here,
And easy service: keep good hearts, my soldiers!
The general comes, good hearts! no flinching, boys!
Look bold and fiercely: we're the masters now.

(*They all clash their arms and put on a fierce threatening aspect to receive their general, who now enters, followed by* Rosinberg *and Officers.* Basil *walks close along the front ranks of the Soldiers, looking at them very steadfastly; then retires a few paces back, and raising his arm, speaks with a very full loud voice.*)

Bas. How is it, soldiers, that I see you thus,
Assembled here unsummon'd by command?

(*A confused murmur is heard amongst the Soldiers; some of them call out*)

But we ourselves command: we wait no orders.

(*A confused noise of voices is heard, and one louder than the rest calls out*)

Must we be butcher'd for that we are brave?

(*A loud clamour and clashing of arms, then several voices call out*)

Damn hidden treachery! we defy thy orders.
Frederick shall lead us now——

(*Others call out*)

We'll march where'er we list; for Milan march.

Bas. (*waving his hand, and beckoning them to be silent, speaks with a very loud voice.*)

Yes, march where'er ye list: for Milan march.

Sol. Hear him, hear him!

(*The murmur ceases—a short pause.*)

Bas. Yes, march where'er ye list; for Milan march:
But as banditti, not as soldiers go;
For on this spot of earth I will disband,
And take from you the rank and name of soldiers.

(*A great clamour amongst the ranks—some call out*)

What wear we arms for? (*Others call out*)
No, he dares not do it.
(*One voice very loud*)
Disband us at thy peril, treacherous Basil!

(*Several of the Soldiers brandish their arms, and threaten to attack him; the Officers gather round* Basil, *and draw their swords to defend him.*)

Bas. Put up your swords, my friends, it must not be.
I thank your zeal, I'll deal with them alone.

Ros. What, shall we calmly stand and see thee butcher'd?

Bas. (*very earnestly.*) Put up, my friends.

(*Officers still persist.*) What! are you rebels too?
Will no one here his general's voice obey?
I do command you to put up your swords.
Retire, and at a distance wait th' event.
Obey, or henceforth be no friends of mine.

Officers retire very unwillingly. Basil *waves them off with his hand till they are all gone, then walks up to the front of his Soldiers, who still hold themselves in a threatening posture.*)

Soldiers! we've fought together in the field,
And bravely fought: i' the face of horrid death,
At honour's call, I've led you dauntless on;
Nor do I know the man of all your bands,
That ever poorly from the trial shrunk,
Or yielded to the foe contended space.
Am I the meanest then of all my troops,
That thus ye think, with base unmanly threats,
To move me now? Put up those paltry weapons;
They edgeless are to him who fears them not;
Rocks have been shaken from the solid base;
But what shall move a firm and dauntless mind?
Put up your swords, or dare the threaten'd deed—
Obey, or murder me.——

(*A confused murmur—some of the Soldiers call out*)

March us to Milan, and we will obey thee.

(*Others call out*)

Ay, march us there, and be our leader still.

Bas. Nay, if I am your leader, I'll command ye;
And where I do command, there shall you go,
But not to Milan. No, nor shall you deviate
E'en half a furlong from your destined way,
To seize the golden booty of the east.
Think not to gain, or temporize with me;
For should I this day's mutiny survive,
Much as I've loved you, soldiers, ye shall find me
Still more relentless in pursuit of vengeance;
Tremendous, cruel, military vengeance.
There is no mean—a desperate game ye play;
Therefore, I say, obey, or murder me.
Do as ye will, but do it manfully.
He is a coward who doth threaten me:
The man who slays me, but an angry soldier;
Acting in passion, like the frantic son,
Who struck his sire and wept.

(*Soldiers call out*) It was thyself who sought to murder us.

1st Sol. You have unto the emperor pledged your faith,
To lead us foremost in all desperate service:

You have agreed to sell your soldiers' blood,
And we have shed our dearest blood for you.
Bas. Hear me, my soldiers——
2d Sol. No, hear him not, he means to cozen you.
Frederick will do you right——
(*Endeavouring to stir up a noise and confusion amongst them.*)
Bas. What cursed fiend art thou, cast out from hell
To spirit up rebellion? damned villain
(*Seizes upon 2d Soldier, drags him out from the ranks, and wrests his arms from him; then takes a pistol from his side, and holds it to his head.*)
Stand there, damn'd meddling villain, and be silent;
For if thou utterest but a single word,
A cough or hem, to cross me in my speech,
I'll send thy cursed spirit from the earth,
To bellow with the damn'd!
(*The Soldiers keep a dead silence—after a pause,* Basil *resumes his speech.*)
Listen to me, my soldiers.——
You say that I am to the emperor pledged
To lead you foremost in all desperate service,
For now you call it not the path of glory;
And if in this I have offended you,
I do indeed repent me of the crime.
But new from battles, where my native troops
So bravely fought, I felt me proud at heart,
And boasted of you, boasted foolishly.
I said, fair glory's palm ye would not yield
To e'er the bravest legion train'd to arms.
I swore the meanest man of all my troops
Would never shrink before an armed host,
If honour bade him stand. My royal master
Smiled at the ardour of my heedless words,
And promised, when occasion claim'd our arms,
To put them to the proof.
But ye do peace, and ease, and booty crave,
Safe and ignoble service—be it so—
Forgive me that I did mistake you thus;
But do not earn with savage mutiny,
Your own destruction. We'll for Pavia march,
To join the royal army near its walls;
And there with blushing forehead will I plead,
That ye are men with warlike service worn,
Requiring ease and rest. Some other chief,
Whose cold blood boils not at the trumpet's sound,
Will in your rearward station head you then,
And so, my friends, we'll part. As for myself,
A volunteer, unheeded in the ranks,
I'll rather fight, with brave men for my fellows,
Than be the leader of a sordid band.
(*A great murmur rises amongst the ranks, Soldiers call out*)
We will not part! no, no, we will not part!
(*All call out together*)
We will not part! be thou our general still.
Bas How can I be your general? ye obey
As caprice moves you; I must be obey'd
As honest men against themselves perform
A sacred oath.—
Some other chief will more indulgent prove—
You're weary grown—I've been too hard a master—
Soldiers. Thyself, and only thee, will we obey.
Bas. But if you follow me, yourselves ye pledge
Unto no easy service:—hardships, toils,
The hottest dangers of most dreadful fight
Will be your portion; and when all is o'er,
Each, like his general, must contented be
Home to return again, a poor brave soldier.
How say ye now? I spread no tempting lure—
A better fate than this, I promise none.
Soldiers. We'll follow Basil.
Bas. What token of obedience will ye give?
(*A deep pause.*)
Soldiers, lay down your arms!
(*They all lay down their arms.*)
If any here are weary of the service,
Now let them quit the ranks, and they shall have
A free discharge, and passport to their homes;
And from my scanty fortune I'll make good
The well-earn'd pay their royal master owes them.
Let those who follow me their arms resume.
(*They all resume their arms.*)
Bas. (*holding up his hands.*) High heaven be praised!
I had been grieved to part with you, my soldiers.
Here is a letter from my gracious master,
With offers of preferment in the north,
Most high preferment, which I did refuse,
For that I would not leave my gallant troops.
(*Takes out a letter, and throws it amongst them.*)
(*A great commotion amongst the Soldiers; many of them quit their ranks, and crowd about him, calling out*)
Our gallant general! (*Others call out*)
We'll spend our hearts' blood for thee, noble Basil!
Bas. And so you thought me false? this bites to the quick!
My soldiers thought me false!
(*They all quit their ranks, and crowd eagerly around him.* Basil, *waving them off with his hands.*)
Away, away, you have disgusted me!
(*Soldiers retire to their ranks.*)
'Tis well—retire, and hold yourselves prepared
To march upon command, nor meet again
Till you are summon'd by the beat of drum.
Some secret enemy has tamper'd with you,
For yet I will not think that in these ranks
There moves a man who wears a traitor's heart.
(*The Soldiers begin to march off, and music strikes up.*)
Bas. (*holding up his hand.*) Cease, cease, triumphant sounds,
Which our brave fathers, men without reproach,
Raised in the hour of triumph! but this hour
To us no glory brings—
Then silent be your march—ere that again
Our steps to glorious strains like these shall move,
A day of battle o'er our heads must pass,
And blood be shed to wash out this day's stain.
[Exeunt *Soldiers, silent and dejected.*

Enter Frederick, who starts back on seeing Basil alone.
Bas. Advance, lieutenant; wherefore shrink ye back?
I've even seen you bear your head erect,
And front your man though arm'd with frowning death.

Have you done aught the valiant should not do?
I fear you have. (Fred. *looks confused.*)
With secret art, and false insinuation,
The simple untaught soldiers to seduce
From their sworn duty, might become the base,
Become the coward well; but O! what villain
Had the dark power to engage thy valiant worth
In such a work as this!

Fred. Is Basil, then, so lavish of his praise
On a neglected pitiful subaltern?
It were a libel on his royal master;
A foul reproach upon fair fortune cast,
To call me valiant:
And surely he has been too much their debtor
To mean them this rebuke.

Bas. Is nature then so sparing of her gifts,
That it is wonderful when they are found
Where fortune smiles not?
Thou art by nature brave and so am I;
But in those distant ranks moves there not one
(*pointing off the stage.*)
Of high ennobled soul, by nature form'd
A hero and commander, who will yet
In his untrophied grave forgotten lie
With meaner men? I dare be sworn there does.

Fred. What need of words? I crave of thee no favour,
I have offended 'gainst arm'd law, offended,
And shrink not from my doom.

Bas. I know thee well, I know thou fear'st not death;
On scaffold or in field with dauntless breast
Thou wilt engage him: and if thy proud soul,
In sullen obstinacy, scorns all grace,
E'en be it so. But if with manly gratitude
Thou truly canst receive a brave man's pardon,
Thou hast it freely.

Fred. It must not be. I've been thine enemy—
I've been unjust to thee—

Bas. I know thou hast;
But thou art brave, and I forgive thee all.

Fred. My lord! my general! O I cannot speak!
I cannot live and be the wretch I am.

Bas. But thou canst live and be an honest man
From error turn'd,—canst live and be my friend.
(*Raising* Fred. *from the ground.*)
Forbear, forbear! see where our friends advance:
They must not think thee suing for a pardon;
That would disgrace us both. Yet, ere they come,
Tell me, if that thou mayst with honour tell,
What did seduce thee from thy loyal faith?

Fred. No cunning traitor did my faith attempt,
For then I had withstood him: but of late
I know not how—a bad and restless spirit
Has work'd within my breast, and made me wretched.
I've lent mine ear to foolish idle tales,
Of very zealous, though but recent friends.

Bas. Softly, our friends approach—of this again.
[Exeunt.

SCENE III.—AN APARTMENT IN BASIL'S LODGINGS.

Enter BASIL and ROSINBERG.

Ros. Thank heaven I am now alone with thee.
night I sought thee with an anxious mind,
And cursed thine ill-timed absence.—
There's treason in this most deceitful court,
Against thee plotting, and this morning's tumult,
Hath been its damn'd effect.

Bas. Nay, nay, my friend!
The nature of man's mind too well thou knowest,
To judge as vulgar hoodwink'd statesmen do;
Who, ever with their own poor wiles misled,
Believe each popular tumult or commotion
Must be the work of deep-laid policy.
Poor, mean, mechanic souls, who little know
A few short words of energetic force,
Some powerful passion on the sudden roused,
The animating sight of something noble,
Some fond trait of the memory finely waked,
A sound, a simple song without design,
In revolutions, tumults, wars, rebellions,
All grand events, have oft effected more
Than deepest cunning of their paltry art.
Some drunken soldier, eloquent with wine,
Who loves not fighting, hath harangued his mates,
For they in truth some hardships have endured:
Wherefore in this should we suspect the court?

Ros. Ah! there is something, friend, in Mantua's court,
Will make the blackest trait of barefaced treason,
Seem fair and guiltless to thy partial eye.

Bas. Nay, 'tis a weakness in thee, Rosinberg,
Which makes thy mind so jealous and distrustful.
Why should the Duke be false?

Ros. Because he is a double, crafty prince—
Because I've heard it rumour'd secretly,
That he in some dark treaty is engaged,
E'en with our master's enemy, the Frank.

Bas. And so thou thinkest—

Ros. Nay, hear me to the end.
Last night that good and honourable dame,
Noble Albini, with most friendly art,
From the gay clamorous throng my steps beguiled,
Unmask'd before me, and with earnest grace
Entreated me, if I were Basil's friend,
To tell him hidden danger waits him here,
And warn him earnestly this court to leave.
She said she loved thee much; and hadst thou seen
How anxiously she urged—

Bas. (*interrupting him.*) By heaven and earth
There is a ray of light breaks through thy tale,
And I could leap like madmen in their freaks,
So blessed is the gleam! Ah! no, no, no!
It cannot be! alas, it cannot be!
Yet didst thou say, she urged it earnestly?
She is a woman, who avoids all share
In secret politics; one only charge
Her interest claims, Victoria's guardian friend—
And she would have me hence—it must be so.
O! would it were! how saidst thou, gentle Rosinberg?
She urged it earnestly—how did she urge it?
Nay, prithee do not stare upon me thus,
But tell me all her words! What said she?

Ros. O Basil! I could laugh to see thy folly,
But that thy weakness doth provoke me so.
Most admirable, brave, determined man!
So well, so lately tried, what art thou now?
A vain deceitful thought transports thee thus.
Thinkst thou—

Bas. I will not tell thee what I think.
Ros But I can guess it well, and it deceives thee.
Leave this detested place, this fatal court,
Where dark deceitful cunning plots thy ruin.
A soldier's duty calls thee loudly hence.
The time is critical. How wilt thou feel
When they shall tell these tidings in thine ear,
That brave Pizaro, and his royal troops,
Our valiant fellows, have the enemy fought,
Whilst we, so near at hand, lay loitering here?
Bas. Thou dost disturb thy brain with fancied fears.
Our fortunes rest not on a point so nice,
That one short day should be of all this moment;
And yet this one short day will be to me
Worth years of other time.
Ros. Nay, rather say,
A day to darken all thy days beside.
Confound the fatal beauty of that woman,
Which hath bewitch'd thee so!
Bas. 'Tis most ungenerous
To push me thus with rough unsparing hand,
Where but the slightest touch is felt so dearly.
It is unfriendly.
Ros. God knows my heart! I would not give thee pain;
But it disturbs me, Basil, vexes me
To see thee so inthralled by a woman.
If she is fair, others are fair as she.
Some other face will like emotions raise,
When thou canst better play a lover's part:
But for the present,—fy upon it, Basil!
Bas. What, is it possible thou hast beheld,
Hast tarried by her too, her converse shared,
Yet talk'st as though she were a common fair one,
Such as a man may fancy and forget?
Thou art not, sure, so dull and brutish grown:
It is not so; thou dost belie thy thoughts,
And vainly try'st to gain me with the cheat.
Ros. So thinks each lover of the maid he loves,
Yet, in their lives, some many maidens love.
Fy on it! leave this town, and be a soldier!
Bas. Have done, have done! why dost thou bate me thus?
Thy words become disgusting to me, Rosinberg.
What claim hast thou my actions to control?
I'll Mantua leave when it is fit I should.
Ros. Then, 'faith! 'tis fitting thou shouldst leave it now;
Ay, on the instant. Is't not desperation
To stay, and hazard ruin on thy fame,
Though yet uncheer'd e'en by that tempting lure,
No lover breathes without? thou hast no hope.
Bas. What, dost thou mean—curse on the paltry thought!
That I should count and bargain with my heart,
Upon the chances of unstinted favour,
As little souls their base-bred fancies feed?
O! were I conscious that within her breast
I held some portion of her dear regard,
Though pent for life within a prison's walls,
Where through my grate I yet might sometimes see
E'en but her shadow sporting in the sun;
Though placed by fate where some obstructing bound,
Some deep impassable between us roll'd,
And I might yet from some high towering cliff
Perceive her distant mansion from afar,
Or mark its blue smoke rising eve and morn;
Nay, though within the circle of the moon
Some spell did fix her, never to return,
And I might wander in the hours of night,
And upward turn my ever-gazing eye,
Fondly to mark upon its varied disk
Some little spot that might her dwelling be;
My fond, my fixed heart would still adore,
And own no other love. Away, away!
How canst thou say to one who loves like me,
Thou hast no hope?
Ros. But with such hope, my friend, how stand thy fears?
Are they so well refined? how wilt thou bear
Ere long to hear, that some high-favour'd prince
Has won her heart, her hand, has married her?
Though now unshackled, will it always be?
Bas. By heaven thou dost contrive but to torment,
And hast a pleasure in the pain thou givest!
There is malignity in what thou sayest.
Ros. No, not malignity, but kindness, Basil,
That fain would save thee from the yawning gulf,
To which blind passion guides thy heedless steps.
Bas. Go, rather save thyself
From the weak passion which has seized thy breast.
T' assume authority with sage-like brow,
And shape my actions by thine own caprice.
I can direct myself.
Ros. Yes, do thyself,
And let no artful woman do it for thee.
Bas. I scorn thy thought: it is beneath my scorn:
It is of meanness sprung—an artful woman!
O! she has all the loveliness of heaven
And all its goodness too!
Ros. I mean not to impute dishonest arts,
I mean not to impute—
Bas. No, 'faith thou canst not.
Ros. What, can I not? their arts all women have.
But now of this no more; it moves thee greatly.
Yet once again, as a most loving friend,
Let me conjure thee, if thou prizest honour,
A soldier's fair repute, a hero's fame,
What noble spirits love, and well I know
Full dearly dost thou prize them, leave this place,
And give thy soldiers orders for the march.
Bas. Nay, since thou must assume it o'er me thus,
Be general, and command my soldiers too.
Ros. What, hath this passion in so short a space,
O! curses on it! so far changed thee, Basil,
That thou dost take with such ungentle warmth,
The kindly freedom of thine ancient friend?
Methinks the beauty of a thousand maids
Would not have moved me thus to treat my friend,
My best, mine earliest friend!
Bas. Say kinsman rather; chance has link'd us so:
Our blood is near, our hearts are sever'd far;
No act of choice did e'er unite our souls.
Men most unlike we are; our thoughts unlike;
My breast disowns thee—thou'rt no friend of mine.

Ros. Ah! have I then so long, so dearly loved thee;
So often, with an elder brother's care,
Thy childish rambles tended, shared thy sports;
Fill'd up by stealth thy weary school-boy's task;
Taught thy young arms thine earliest feats of strength;
With boastful pride thine early rise beheld
In glory's paths, contented then to fill
A second place, so I might serve with thee;
And say'st thou now, I am no friend of thine?
Well, be it so; I am thy kinsman then,
And by that title will I save thy name,
From danger of disgrace. Indulge thy will.
I'll lay me down and feign that I am sick:
And yet I shall not feign—I shall not feign;
For thy unkindness makes me so indeed.
It will be said that Basil tarried here
To save his friend, for so they'll call me still;
Nor will dishonour fall upon thy name
For such a kindly deed.—

(Basil *walks up and down in great agitation, then stops, covers his face with his hands, and seems to be overcome.* Rosinberg *looks at him earnestly.*)

O blessed heaven, he weeps!

(*Runs up to him, and catches him in his arms.*)

O Basil! I have been too hard upon thee.
And is it possible I've moved thee thus?

Bas. (*in a convulsed, broken voice.*) I will renounce—I'll leave—

Ros. What says my Basil?

Bas. I'll Mantua leave—I'll leave this seat of bliss—
This lovely woman—tear my heart in twain—
Cast off at once my little span of joy—
Be wretched—miserable—whate'er thou wilt—
Dost thou forgive me?

Ros. O my friend! my friend!
I love thee now more than I ever loved thee.
must be cruel to thee to be kind:
Each pang I see thee feel strikes through my heart;
Then spare us both, call up thy noble spirit,
And meet the blow at once. Thy troops are ready—
Let us depart, nor lose another hour.

(Basil *shrinks from his arms, and looks at him with somewhat of an upbraiding, at the same time a sorrowful look.*)

Bas. Nay, put me not to death upon the instant;
I'll see her once again, and then depart.

Ros. See her but once again, and thou art ruin'd!
It must not be—if thou regardest me—

Bas. Well then, it shall not be. Thou hast no mercy!

Ros. Ah! thou wilt bless me all thine after-life
For what now seems to thee so merciless.

Bas. (*sitting down very dejectedly.*) Mine after-life! what is mine after-life?
My day is closed! the gloom of night is come!
A hopeless darkness settles o'er my fate.
I've seen the last look of her heavenly eyes;
I've heard the last sounds of her blessed voice;
I've seen her fair form from my sight depart
My doom is closed!

Ros. (*hanging over him with pity and affection.*) Alas! my friend!

Bas. In all her lovely grace she disappear'd,
Ah! little thought I never to return!

Ros. Why so desponding? think of warlike glory.
The fields of fair renown are still before thee;
Who would not burn such noble fame to earn?

Bas. What now are arms, or fair renown to me?
Strive for it those who will—and yet, a while,
Welcome rough war; with all thy scenes of blood;
(*starting from his seat.*)
Thy roaring thunders, and thy clashing steel!
Welcome once more! what have I now to do
But play the brave man o'er again, and die?

Enter Isabella.

Isab. (*to* Bas.) My princess bids me greet you noble count:—

Bas. (*starting.*) What dost thou say?

Ros. Damn this untimely message!

Isab. The princess bids me greet you, noble count:
In the cool grove, hard by the southern gate
She with her train—

Bas. What, she indeed, herself?

Isab. Herself, my lord, and she requests to see you.

Bas. Thank heaven for this! I will be there anon.

Ros. (*taking hold of him.*) Stay, stay, and do not be a madman still.

Bas. Let go thy hold: what, must I be a brute,
A very brute to please thee? no, by heaven!
(*Breaks from him, and* Exit.)

Ros. (*striking his forehead.*) All lost again! ill fortune light upon her!
(*Turning eagerly to* Isab.)
And so thy virtuous mistress sends thee here
To make appointments, honourable dame?

Isab. Not so, my lord, you must not call it so:
The court will hunt to-morrow, and Victoria
Would have your noble general of her train.

Ros. Confound these women, and their artful snares,
Since men will be such fools!

Isab. Yes, grumble at our empire as you will—

Ros. What, boast ye of it? empire do ye call it?
It is your shame! a short-lived tyranny,
That ends at last in hatred and contempt.

Isab. Nay, but some women do so wisely rule,
Their subjects never from the yoke escape.

Ros. Some women do, but they are rarely found.
There is not one in all your paltry court
Hath wit enough for the ungenerous task.
'Faith! of you all, not one, but brave Albini,
And she disdains it—Good be with you, lady!
(*Going.*)

Isab. O would I could but touch that stubborn heart!
How dearly should he pay for this hour's scorn!

[Exeunt *severally.*

Scene IV.—A summer apartment in the country, the windows of which look to a forest.

Enter Victoria in a hunting dress, followed by Albini and Isabella, speaking as they enter.

Vict. (*to* Alb.) And so you will not share our sport to-day?

Alb. My days of frolic should ere this be o'er,
But thou, my charge, hast kept me youthful still.
I should most gladly go; but since the dawn,
A heavy sickness hangs upon my heart;
I cannot hunt to-day.
Vict. I'll stay at home and nurse thee, dear Albini.
Alb. No, no, thou shalt not stay.
Vict. Nay, but I will.
I cannot follow to the cheerful horn
Whilst thou art sick at home.
Alb. Not very sick.
Rather than thou shouldst stay, my gentle child,
I'll 'mount my horse, and go e'en as I am.
Vict. Nay, then I'll go, and soon return again.
Meanwhile, do thou be careful of thyself.
Isab. Hark, hark! the shrill horns call us to the field:
Your highness hears it? (*Music without.*)
Vict. Yes, my Isabella;
I hear it, and methinks e'en at the sound
I vault already on my leathern seat,
And feel the fiery steed beneath me shake
His mantled sides, and paw the fretted earth
Whilst I aloft, with gay equestrian grace,
The low salute of gallant lords return,
Who waiting round with eager watchful eye,
And reined steeds, the happy moments seize.
O! didst thou never hear, my Isabel,
How nobly Basil in the field becomes
His fiery courser's back?
Isab. They say most gracefully.
Alb. What, is the valiant count not yet departed?
Vict. You would not have our gallant Basil go
When I have bid him stay? not so, Albini.
Alb. Fy! reigns that spirit still so strongly in thee,
Which vainly covets all men's admiration,
And is to others cause of cruel pain?
O! would thou couldst subdue it!
Vict. My gentle friend, thou shouldst not be severe:
For now in truth I love not admiration
As I was wont to do; in truth I do not.
But yet, this once my woman's heart excuse,
For there is something strange in this man's love,
I never met before, and I must prove it.
Alb. Well, prove it then, be stricken too thyself,
And bid sweet peace of mind a sad farewell.
Vict. O no! that will not be! 'twill peace restore:
For after this, all folly of the kind
Will quite insipid and disgusting seem;
And so I shall become a prudent maid,
And passing wise at last. (*Music heard without.*)
Hark, hark! again!
All good be with you! I'll return ere long.
[Exeunt Victoria *and* Isabella.
Alb. (*sola.*) Ay, go, and every blessing with thee go,
My most tormenting, and most pleasing charge!
Like vapour, from the mountain stream art thou,
Which lightly rises on the morning air,
And shifts its fleeting form with every breeze,
For ever varying, and for ever graceful.
Endearing, generous, bountiful and kind;
Vain, fanciful, and fond of worthless praise;
Courteous and gentle, proud and magnificent:
And yet these adverse qualities in thee,
No dissonance, nor striking contrast make;
For still thy good and amiable gifts
The sober dignity of virtue wear not,
And such a 'witching mien thy follies show,
They make a very idiot of reproof,
And smile it to disgrace.—
What shall I do with thee?—It grieves me much,
To hear Count Basil is not yet departed.
When from the chase he comes, I'll watch his steps
And speak to him myself.—
O! I could hate her for that poor ambition
Which silly adoration only claims,
But that I well remember, in my youth
I felt the like—I did not feel it long:
I tore it soon, indignant from my breast,
As that which did degrade a noble mind. [Exit

Scene V.—A very beautiful grove in the forest.

Music and horns heard afar off, whilst huntsmen and dogs appear passing over the stage, at a great distance. Enter Victoria and Basil, as if just alighted from their horses.

Vict. (*speaking to attendants without.*) Lead on our horses to the further grove,
And wait us there.—
(*To* Bas.) This spot so pleasing, and so fragrant is,
'Twere sacrilege with horses' hoofs to wear
Its velvet turf, where little elfins dance,
And fairies sport beneath the summer's moon;
I love to tread upon it.
Bas. O! I would quit the chariot of a god
For such delightful footing!
Vict. I love this spot.
Bas. It is a spot where one would live and die
Vict. See, through the twisted boughs of those high elms,
The sunbeams on the bright'ning foliage play,
And tinge the scaled bark with ruddy brown.
Is it not beautiful?
Bas. As though an angel, in his upward flight,
Had left his mantle floating in mid air.
Vict. Still most unlike a garment; small and sever'd:
(*Turning round, and perceiving that he is gazing at her.*)
But thou regard'st them not.
Bas. Ah! what should I regard, where should I gaze?
For in that far shot glance, so keenly waked,
That sweetly rising smile of admiration,
Far better do I learn how fair heaven is,
Than if I gazed upon the blue serene.
Vict. Remember you have promised, gentle count,
No more to vex me with such foolish words.
Bas. Ah! wherefore should my tongue alone be mute?
When every look and every motion tell,
So plainly tell, and will not be forbid,
That I adore thee, love thee, worship thee!
(Victoria *looks haughty and displeased.*)
Ah! pardon me, I know not what I say.

Ah! frown not thus! I cannot see thee frown.
I'll do whate'er thou wilt, I will be silent:
But O! a reined tongue, and bursting heart,
Are hard at once to bear.—Wilt thou forgive me?
Vict. We'll think no more of it; we'll quit this spot;
I do repent me that I led thee here.
But 'twas the favourite path of a dear friend:
Here many a time we wander'd, arm in arm:
We loved this grove, and now that he is absent,
I love to haunt it still. (Basil *starts.*)
Bas. His favourite path—a friend—here arm in arm—
(*Clasping his hands, and raising them to his head.*)
Then there is such a one!
(*Drooping his head, and looking distractedly upon the ground.*)
I dream'd not of it.
Vict. (*pretending not to see him.*) That little lane, with woodbine all o'ergrown,
He loved so well! it is a fragrant path,
Is it not, count?
Bas. It is a gloomy one!
Vict. I have, my lord, been wont to think it cheerful.
Bas. I thought your highness meant to leave this spot?
Vict. I do, and by this lane we'll take our way;
For here he often walk'd with sauntering pace,
And listen'd to the woodlark's evening song.
Bas. What, must I on his very footsteps go:
Accursed be the ground on which he trod!
Vict. And is Count Basil so uncourtly grown,
That he would curse my brother to my face?
Bas. Your brother! gracious God, is it your brother?
That dear, that loving friend of whom you spoke,
Is he indeed your brother?
Vict. He is indeed, my lord.
Bas. Then heaven bless him! all good angels bless him!
I could weep o'er him now, shed blood for him!
I could—O what a foolish heart have I!
(*Walks up and down with a hurried step, tossing about his arms in transport; then stops short and runs up to* Victoria.)
Is it indeed your brother?
Vict. It is indeed: what thoughts disturb'd thee so?
Bas. I will not tell thee; foolish thoughts they were.
Heaven bless your brother!
Vict. Ay, heaven bless him too!
I have but him; would I had two brave brothers,
And thou wert one of them!
Bas. I would fly from thee to earth's utmost bounds,
Were I thy brother—
And yet methinks, I would I had a sister.
Vict. And wherefore would ye so?
Bas. To place her near thee,
The soft companion of thy hours to prove,
And, when far distant, sometimes talk of me.
Thou couldst not chide a gentle sister's cares.
Perhaps, when rumour from the distant war,
Uncertain tales of dreadful slaughter bore,
Thou'dst see the tear hang on her pale wan cheek,
And kindly say, How does it fare with Basil?
Vict. No more of this—indeed there must no more.
A friend's remembrance I will ever bear thee.
But see where Isabella this way comes:
I had a wish to speak with her alone;
Attend us here, for soon will we return,
And then take horse again. [Exit
Bas. (*looking after her for some time.*) See with what graceful steps she moves along,
Her lovely form, in every action lovely!
If but the wind her ruffled garment raise,
It twists it into some light pretty fold,
Which adds new grace. Or should some small mishap,
Some tangled branch, her fair attire derange,
What would in others strange, or awkward seem,
But lends to her some wild bewitching charm.
See, yonder does she raise her lovely arm
To pluck the dangling hedge-flower as she goes;
And now she turns her head as though she view'd
The distant landscape; now methinks she walks
With doubtful lingering steps—will she look back?
Ah no! yon thicket hides her from my sight.
Bless'd are the eyes that may behold her still,
Nor dread that every look shall be the last!
And yet she said she would remember me.
I will believe it: Ah! I must believe it,
Or be the saddest soul that sees the light!
But lo, a messenger, and from the army!
He brings me tidings; grant they may be good!
Till now I never fear'd what man might utter;
I dread his tale, God grant it may be good!

Enter Messenger.

From the army?
Mess. Yes, my lord.
Bas. What tidings bring'st thou?
Mess. Th' imperial army, under brave Piscaro,
Have beat the enemy near Pavia's walls.
Bas. Ha! have they fought? and is the battle o'er?
Mess. Yes, conquer'd; taken the French king prisoner,
Who, like a noble, gallant gentleman,
Fought to the last, nor yielded up his sword
Till, being one amidst surrounding foes,
His arm could do no more.
Bas. What dost thou say? who is made prisoner?
What king did fight so well?
Mess. The King of France.
Bas. Thou saidst—thy words do ring so in mine ears,
I cannot catch their sense—the battle's o'er?
Mess. It is, my lord. Piscaro stayed your coming,
But could no longer stay. His troops were bold,
Occasion press'd him, and they bravely fought—
They bravely fought, my lord!
Bas. I hear, I hear thee.
Accursed am I, that it should wring my heart
To hear they bravely fought!—

They bravely fought, whilst we lay lingering here.
O! what a fated blow to strike me thus!
Perdition! shame! disgrace! a damned blow!
Mess. Ten thousand of the enemy are slain;
We too have lost full many a gallant soul.
I view'd the closing armies from afar;
Their close-piked ranks in goodly order spread,
Which seem'd, alas! when that the fight was o'er,
Like the wild marshes' crop of stately reeds,
Laid with the passing storm. But wo is me!
When to the field I came, what dismal sights!
What waste of life! What heaps of bleeding slain!
Bas. Would I were laid a red, disfigured corse,
Amid those heaps! they fought, and we were absent!
(*Walks about distractedly, then stops short.*)
Who sent thee here?
Mess. Piscaro sent me to inform Count Basil,
He needs not now his aid, and gives him leave
To march his tardy troops to distant quarters.
Bas. He says so, does he? well, it shall be so.
(*Tossing his arms distractedly.*)
I will to quarters, narrow quarters go,
Where voice of war shall rouse me forth no more.
[Exit.
Mess. I'll follow after him; he is distracted:
And yet he looks so wild I dare not do it.

Enter Victoria as if frightened, followed by Isabella.

Vict. (*to* Isab.) Didst thou not mark him as he pass'd thee too?
Isab. I saw him pass, but with such hasty steps I had no time.
Vict. I met him with a wild disorder'd air,
In furious haste; he stopp'd distractedly,
And gazed upon me with a mournful look,
But pass'd away, and spoke not. Who art thou?
(*To the Messenger.*)
I fear thou art a bearer of bad tidings.
Mess. No, rather good as I should deem it, madam,
Although unwelcome tidings to Count Basil.
Our army hath a glorious battle won;
Ten thousand French are slain, their monarch captive.
Vict. (*to* Mess.) Ah, there it is! he was not in the fight.
Run after him I pray—nay, do not so—
Run to his kinsman, good Count Rosinberg,
And bid him follow him—I pray thee run!
Mess. Nay, lady, by your leave, you seem not well:
I will conduct you hence, and then I'll go.
Vict. No, no, I'm well enough; I'm very well;
Go, hie thee hence, and do thine errand swiftly.
[Exit *Messenger*.
O what a wretch am I? I am to blame!
I only am to blame!
Isab. Nay, wherefore say so?
What have you done that others would not do?
Vict. What have I done? I've fool'd a noble heart—
I've wreck'd a brave man's honour!
Exit, *leaning upon* Isabella.

ACT V.

Scene I.—A dark night; no moon, but a few stars glimmering; the stage represents (as much as can be discovered for the darkness) a churchyard with part of a chapel, and a wing of the ducal palace adjoining to it.

Enter Basil with his hat off, his hair and his dress in disorder, stepping slowly, and stopping several times to listen, as if he was afraid of meeting any one.

Bas. No sound is here: man is at rest, and I
May near his habitations venture forth,
Like some unblessed creature of the night,
Who dares not meet his face.—Her window's dark;
No streaming light doth from her chamber beam,
That I once more may on her dwelling gaze,
And bless her still. All now is dark for me!
(*Pauses for some time and looks upon the graves.*)
How happy are the dead, who quietly rest
Beneath these stones! each by his kindred laid,
Still in a hallow'd neighbourship with those,
Who when alive his social converse shared:
And now perhaps some dear surviving friend
Doth here at times the grateful visit pay,
Read with sad eyes his short memorial o'er,
And bless his memory still!—
But I, like a vile outcast of my kind,
In some lone spot must lay my unburied corse
To rot above the earth; where, if perchance
The steps of human wanderer e'er approach,
He'll stand aghast, and flee the horrid place,
With dark imaginations frightful made
The haunt of damned sprites. O cursed wretch!
In the fair and honour'd field shouldst thou ha died,
Where brave friends, proudly smiling through their tears,
Had pointed out the spot where Basil lay!
(*A light seen in* Victoria's *window.*)
But ha! the wonted, welcome light appears.
How bright within I see her chamber wall!
Athwart it too, a darkening shadow moves,
A slender woman's form: it is herself!
What means that motion of its clasped hands?
That drooping head? alas! is she in sorrow?
Alas! thou sweet enchantress of the mind,
Whose voice was gladness, and whose presence bliss,
Art thou unhappy too? I've brought thee wo;
It is for me thou weepest. Ah! were it so,
Fall'n as I am, I yet could life endure,
In some dark den from human sight conceal'd,
So, that I sometimes from my haunt might steal,
To see and love thee still. No, no, poor wretch!
She weeps thy shame, she weeps, and scorns thee too.
She moves again; e'en darkly imaged thus,
How lovely is that form!
(*Pauses, still looking at the window.*)
To be so near thee, and for ever parted!
For ever lost! what art thou now to me?
Shall the departed gaze on thee again?
Shall I glide past thee in the midnight hour,
Whilst thou perceivest it not, and think'st perhaps

'Tis but the mournful breeze that passes by?
(*Pauses again, and gazes at the window, till the light disappears.*)
'Tis gone, 'tis gone! these eyes have seen their last!
The last impression of her heavenly form:
The last sight of those walls wherein she lives:
The last blest ray of light from human dwelling.
I am no more a being of this world.
Farewell! farewell! all now is dark for me!
Come fated deed! come horror and despair!
Here lies my dreadful way.

Enter GEOFFRY from behind a tomb.

Geof. O! stay, my general!
Bas. Art thou from the grave?
Geof. O my brave general! do you know me not?
I am old Geoffry, the old maim'd soldier,
You did so nobly honour.
Bas. Then go thy way, for thou art honourable:
Thou hast no shame, thou need'st not seek the dark
Like fall'n, fameless men. I pray thee go!
Geof. Nay, speak not thus, my noble general!
Ah! speak not thus! thou'rt brave, thou'rt honour'd still.
Thy soldier's fame is far too surely raised
To be o'erthrown with one unhappy chance.
I've heard of thy brave deeds with swelling heart,
And yet shall live to cast my cap in air
At glorious tales of thee.—
Bas. Forbear, forbear! thy words but wring my soul.
Geof. O! pardon me! I am old maim'd Geoffry.
O! do not go! I've but one hand to hold thee.
(*Laying hold of* Basil *as he attempts to go away.* Basil *stops, and looks around upon him with softness.*)
Bas. Two would not hold so well, old honour'd veteran!
What wouldst thou have me do?
Geof. Return, my lord; for love of blessed heaven,
Seek not such desperate ways! where would you go?
Bas. Does Geoffry ask where should a soldier go
To hide disgrace? there is no place but one.
(*Struggling to get free.*)
Let go thy foolish hold, and force me not
To do some violence to thy hoary head—
What, wilt thou not? nay, then it must be so.
(*Breaks violently from him, and* EXIT.)
Geof. Cursed feeble hand! he's gone to seek perdition!
I cannot run. Where is that stupid hind?
He should have met me here. Holla, Fernando!

Enter FERNANDO.

We've lost him, he is gone, he's broke from me!
Did I not bid thee meet me early here,
For that he has been known to haunt this place?
Fer. Which way has he gone?
Geof. Towards the forest, if I guess aright.
But do thou run with speed to Rosinberg,
And he will follow him; run swiftly, man!
[EXEUNT.

SCENE II.—A WOOD, WILD AND SAVAGE; AN ENTRY TO A CAVE, VERY MUCH TANGLED WITH BRUSH WOOD, IS SEEN IN THE BACKGROUND. THE TIME REPRESENTS THE DAWN OF MORNING. BASIL IS DISCOVERED STANDING NEAR THE FRONT OF THE STAGE, IN A THOUGHTFUL POSTURE, WITH A COUPLE OF PISTOLS LAID BY HIM ON A PIECE OF PROJECTING ROCK; HE PAUSES FOR SOME TIME.

Bas. (*alone.*) What shall I be some few short moments hence?
Why ask I now? who from the dead will rise
To tell me of that awful state unknown?
But be it what it may, or bliss, or torment,
Annihilation, dark and endless rest,
Or some dread thing, man's wildest range of thought
Hath never yet conceived, that change I'll dare
Which makes me any thing but what I am.
I can bear scorpions' stings, tread fields of fire,
In frozen gulfs of cold eternal lie,
Be toss'd aloft through tracks of endless void,
But cannot live in shame—(*Pauses.*) O impious thought!
Will the great God of mercy, mercy have
On all but those who are most miserable?
Will he not punish with a pitying hand
The poor, fall'n, froward child? (*Pauses.*)
And shall I then against his will offend,
Because he is most good and merciful?
O! horrid baseness! what, what shall I do?
I'll think no more—it turns my dizzy brain—
It is too late to think—what must be, must be—
I cannot live, therefore I needs must die.
(*Takes up the pistols, and walks up and down, looking wildly around him, then discovering the cave's mouth,*)
Here is an entry to some darksome cave,
Where an uncoffin'd corse may rest in peace,
And hide its foul corruption from the earth.
The threshold is unmark'd by mortal foot.
I'll do it here.
(*Enters the cave and* EXIT; *a deep silence; then the report of a pistol is heard from the cave, and soon after, Enter* Rosinberg, Valtomer, *two* Officers *and* Soldiers, *almost at the same moment by different sides of the stage.*)
Ros. This way the sound did come.
Valt. How came ye, soldiers? heard ye that report?
1*st Sol.* We heard it, and it seem'd to come from hence,
Which made us this way hie.
Ros. A horrid fancy darts across my mind.
(*A groan heard from the cave.*)
(*To* Valt.) Ha! heard'st thou that?
Valt. Methinks it is the groan of one in pain.
(*A second groan.*)
Ros. Ha! there again!
Valt. From this cave's mouth, so dark and choaked with weeds,
It seems to come.
Ros. I'll enter first. [briers:
1*st Off.* My lord, the way is tangled o'er with
Hard by, a few short paces to the left,
There is another mouth of easier access;
I pass'd it even now.
Ros. Then shew the way. [EXEUNT

SCENE III.—THE INSIDE OF THE CAVE.

BASIL discovered lying on the ground, with his head raised a little upon a few stones and earth, the pistols lying beside him, and blood upon his breast. Enter ROSINBERG, VALTOMER, and OFFICERS. Rosinberg, upon seeing Basil, stops short with horror, and remains motionless for some time.

Valt. Great God of heaven! what a sight is this!
(Rosinberg *runs to* Basil, *and stoops down by his side.*)
Ros. O Basil! O my friend! what hast thou done?
Bas. (*covering his face with his hand.*) Why art thou come? I thought to die in peace.
Ros. Thou know'st me not—I am thy Rosinberg,
Thy dearest, truest friend, thy loving kinsman!
Thou dost not say to me, Why art thou come?
Bas. Shame knows no kindred: I am fall'n, disgraced;
My fame is gone, I cannot look upon thee.
Ros. My Basil, noble spirit! talk not thus!
The greatest mind untoward fate may prove:
Thou art our generous, valiant leader still,
Fall'n as thou art—and yet thou art not fall'n;
Who says thou art, must put his harness on,
And prove his words in blood.
Bas. Ah Rosinberg! this is no time to boast!
I once had hopes a glorious name to gain;
Too proud of heart, I did too much aspire:
The hour of trial came, and found me wanting.
Talk not of me, but let me be forgotten.—
And O! my friend! something upbraids me here,
(*laying his hand on his breast.*)
For that I now remember how oft-times
I have ursurp'd it o'er thy better worth,
Most vainly teaching where I should have learnt;
But thou wilt pardon me.—
Ros. (*taking* Basil's *hand, and pressing it to his breast.*) Rend not my heart in twain: O talk not thus!
I knew thou wert superior to myself,
And to all men beside: thou wert my pride;
I paid thee deference with a willing heart.
Bas. It was delusion, all delusion, Rosinberg!
I feel my weakness now, I own my pride.
Give me thy hand, my time is near the close:
Do this for me: thou know'st my love, Victoria—
Ros. O curse that woman! she it is alone—
She has undone us all!
Bas. It doubles unto me the stroke of death
To hear thee name her thus. O curse her not!
The fault is mine; she's gentle, good and blameless.—
Thou wilt not then my dying wish fulfil?
Ros. I will! I will! what wouldst thou have me do?
Bas. See her when I am gone; be gentle with her;
And tell her that I bless'd her in my death;
E'en in my agonies I loved and bless'd her.
Wilt thou do this?
Ros. I'll do what thou desirest.
Bas. I thank thee, Rosinberg; my time draws near.
(*Raising his head a little, and perceiving* Officers.)
Is there not some one here? are we alone?
Ros. (*making a sign for the* Officers *to retire.*)
'Tis but a sentry, to prevent intrusion.
Bas. Thou know'st this desperate deed from sacred rites
Hath shut me out: I am unbless'd of men,
And what I am in sight of th' awful God,
I dare not think; when I am gone, my friend,
O! let a good man's prayers to heaven ascend
For an offending spirit!—Pray for me.
What thinkest thou? although an outcast here,
May not some heavenly mercy still be found?
Ros. Thou wilt find mercy—my beloved Basil—
It cannot be that thou shouldst be rejected.
I will with bended knee—I will implore—
It choaks mine utterance—I will pray for thee—
Bas. This comforts me—thou art a loving friend.
(*A noise without.*)
Ros. (*to* Off. *without.*) What noise is that?

Enter VALTOMER.

Valt. (*to* Ros.) My lord, the soldiers all insist to enter.
What shall I do? they will not be denied:
They say that they will see their noble general.
Bas. Ah, my brave fellows! do they call me so?
Ros. Then let them come!

Enter SOLDIERS, who gather round BASIL, and look mournfully upon him; he holds out his hand to them with a faint smile.

Bas. My generous soldiers, this is kindly meant.
I'm low in the dust; God bless you all, brave hearts!
1*st Sol.* And God bless you, my noble, noble general!
We'll never follow such a leader more.
2*d Sol.* Ah! had you stayed with us, my noble general,
We would have died for you.
(3*d Soldier endeavours next to speak, but cannot; and kneeling down by* Basil, *covers his face with his cloak.* Rosinberg *turns his face to the wall and weeps.*)
Bas. (*in a very faint broken voice.*) Where art thou? do not leave me, Rosinberg—
Come near to me—these fellows make me weep:
I have no power to weep—give me thy hand—
I love to feel thy grasp—my heart beats strangely—
It beats as though its breathings would be few—
Remember—
Ros. Is there aught thou wouldst desire?
Bas. Naught but a little earth to cover me,
And lay the smooth sod even with the ground—
Let no stone mark the spot—give no offence.
I fain would say—what can I say to thee?
(*A deep pause; after a feeble struggle,* Basil *expires.*)
1*st Sol.* That motion was his last.
2*d Sol.* His spirit's fled.
1*st Sol.* God grant it peace! it was a noble spirit.
4*th Sol.* The trumpet's sound did never rouse a braver.
1*st Sol.* Alas! no trumpet e'er shall rouse him more,
Until the dreadful blast that wakes the dead.
2*d Sol.* And when that sounds it will not wake a braver.

3d Sol. How pleasantly he shared our hardest toil!
Our coarsest food the daintiest fare he made.
4th Sol. Ay, many a time, i' the cold damp plain has he
With cheerful countenance cried, "Good rest, my hearts!"
Then wrapp'd him in his cloak, and laid him down
E'en like the meanest soldier in the field.
(Rosinberg *all this time continues hanging over the body, and gazing upon it.* Valtomer *now endeavours to draw him away.*)
Valt. This is too sad, my lord.
Ros. There, seest thou how he lies? so fix'd, so pale?
Ah! what an end is this! thus lost! thus fall'n!
To be thus taken in his middle course,
Where he so nobly strove; till cursed passion
Came like a sun-stroke on his midday toil,
And cut the strong man down. O Basil! Basil!
Valt. Forbear, my friend, we must not sorrow here.
Ros. He was the younger brother of my soul.
Valt. Indeed, my lord, it is too sad a sight
Time calls us, let the body be removed.
Ros. He was—O! he was like no other man!
Valt. (*still endeavouring to draw him away.*)
Nay now forbear.
Ros. I loved him from his birth!
Valt. Time presses, let the body be removed.
Ros. What say'st thou?
Valt. Shall we not remove him hence?
Ros. He has forbid it, and has charged me well
To leave his grave unknown; for that the church
All sacred rites to the self-slain denies.
He would not give offence.
1st Sol. What shall our general, like a very wretch,
Be laid unhonour'd in the common ground?
No last salute to bid his soul farewell?
No warlike honours paid? it shall not be.
2d Sol. Laid thus? no, by the blessed light of heaven!
In the most holy spot in Mantua's walls
He shall be laid: in face of day be laid;
And though black priests should curse us in the teeth,
We will fire o'er him whilst our hands have power
To grasp a musket.
Several Soldiers. Let those who dare forbid it!
Ros. My brave companions, be it as you will.
(*spreading out his arms as if he would embrace the Soldiers.—They prepare to remove the body.*)
Valt. Nay, stop a while, we will not move it now,
For see a mournful visiter appears,
And must not be denied.

Enter Victoria and Isabella.

Vict. I thought to find him here, where has he fled?
(Rosinberg *points to the body without speaking.* Victoria *shrieks out and falls into the arms of* Isabella.)
Isab. Alas! my gentle mistress, this will kill thee.
Vict. (*recovering.*) Unloose thy hold, and let me look upon him.
O! horrid, horrid sight! my ruin'd Basil!
Is this the sad reward of all thy love!
O! I have murder'd thee!
(*Kneels down by the body and bends over it.*)
These wasted streams of life! this bloody wound!
(*Laying her hand upon his heart.*)
Is there no breathing here? all still! all cold.
Open thine eyes, speak, be thyself again,
And I will love thee, serve thee, follow thee,
In spite of all reproach. Alas! alas!
A lifeless corse art thou for ever laid,
And dost not hear my call.—
Ros. No, madam; now your pity comes too late.
Vict. Dost thou upbraid me? O! I have deserved it!
Ros. No, madam, no, I will not now upbraid:
But woman's grief is like a summer storm,
Short as it violent is; in gayer scenes,
Where soon thou shalt in giddy circles blaze,
And play the airy goddess of the day,
Thine eye, perchance, amidst th' observing crowd,
Shall mark the indignant face of Basil's friend,
And then it will upbraid.
Vict. No, never, never! thus it shall not be.
To the dark, shaded cloister will thou go,
Where sad and lonely, through the dismal grate
Thou'lt spy my wasted form, and then upbraid me.
Ros. Forgive me, heed me not; I'm grieved at heart;
I'm fretted, gall'd, all things are hateful to me.
If thou didst love my friend, I will forgive thee;
I must forgive thee: with his dying breath
He bade me tell thee, that his latest thoughts
Were love to thee; in death he loved and bless'd thee.
(Victoria *goes to throw herself upon the body but is prevented by* Valtomer *and* Isabella, *who support her in their arms and endeavour to draw her away from it.*)
Vict. O! force me not away! by his cold corse,
Let me lie down and weep. O! Basil, Basil!
The gallant and the brave! how hast thou loved me!
If there is any holy kindness in you,
(*to* Isab. *and* Valt.)
Tear me not hence.
For he loved me in thoughtless folly lost,
With all my faults, most worthless of his love·
And him I'll love in the low bed of death,
In horror and decay.—
Near his lone tomb I'll spend my wretched days
In humble prayer for his departed spirit:
Cold as his grave shall be my earthy bed,
As dark my cheerless cell. Force me not hence.
I will not go, for grief hath made me strong.
(*Struggling to get loose.*)
Ros. Do not withhold her, leave her sorrow free.
(*They let her go, and she throws herself upon the body in an agony of grief.*)
It doth subdue the sternness of my grief
To see her mourn him thus.—Yet I must curse.—
Heaven's curses light upon her damned father,
Whose crooked policy has wrought this wreck!
Isab. If he has done it, you are well revenged,

For all his hidden plots detected are.
Gauriceio, for some interest of his own,
His master's secret dealings with the foe
Has to Lanoy betray'd; who straight hath sent
On the behalf of his imperial lord,
A message full of dreadful threats to Mantua.
His discontented subjects aid him not:
He must submit to the degrading terms
A haughty conquering power will now impose.
Ros. Art thou sure of this?
Isab. I am, my lord.
Ros. Give me thy hand, I'm glad on't, O! I'm glad on't!
.t should be so! How like a hateful ape
Detected grinning, 'midst his pilfer'd hoard,
A cunning man appears, whose secret frauds
Are open'd to the day! scorn'd, hooted, mock'd!
Scorn'd by the very fools who most admired
His worthless art. But when a great mind falls,
The noble nature of man's generous heart
Doth bear him up against the shame of ruin;
With gentle censure using but its faults
As modest means to introduce his praise;
For pity like a dewy twilight comes
To close the oppressive splendour of his day,
And they who but admired him in his height,
His alter'd state lament, and love him fall'n.

[Exeunt.

DE MONFORT.

PERSONS OF THE DRAMA.

MEN.

De Monfort.
Rezenvelt.
Count Freberg, *Friend to* De Monfort *and* Rezenvelt.
Manuel, *Servant to* De Monfort.
Jerome, De Monfort's *old Landlord.*
Conrad, *an artful Knave.*
Bernard, *a Monk.*

Monks, Gentlemen, Officers, Page, *&c. &c.*

WOMEN.

Jane De Monfort, *Sister to* De Monfort.
Countess Freberg, *Wife to* Freberg.
Theresa, *Servant to the* Countess.

Abbess, Nuns, *and a* Lay Sister, Ladies, *&c.*

*** *Scene, a Town in* Germany.

ACT I.

Scene I.—Jerome's house. A large old-fashioned chamber.

Jer. (*speaking without.*) This way, good masters.

Enter Jerome, bearing a light, and followed by Manuel, and Servants carrying luggage.

Rest your burdens here.
This spacious room will please the marquis best.
He takes me unawares; but ill prepared:
If he had sent, e'en though a hasty notice,
I had been glad.
Man. Be not disturb'd, good Jerome;
Thy house is in most admirable order;
And they who travel o' cold winter nights
Think homeliest quarters good.
Jer. He is not far behind?
Man. A little way.
(*To the Servants.*) Go you and wait below till he arrives.
Jer (*shaking* Manuel *by the hand.*) Indeed, my friend, I'm glad to see you here,
Yet marvel wherefore.
Man. I marvel wherefore too, my honest Jerome:
But here we are; prithee be kind to us.
Jer. Most heartily I will. I love your master:
He is a quiet and a liberal man:
A better inmate never cross'd my door.
Man. Ah! but he is not now the man he was.
Liberal he'll be. God grant he may be quiet.
Jer. What has befall'n him?
Man. I cannot tell thee;
But faith, there is no living with him now.
Jer. And yet methinks, if I remember well,
You were about to quit his service, Manuel,
When last he left this house. You grumbled then.
Man. I've been upon the eve of leaving him
These ten long years; for many times is he
So difficult, capricious, and distrustful,
He galls my nature—yet, I know not how,
A secret kindness binds me to him still.
Jer. Some, who offend from a suspicious nature,
Will afterward such fair confession make
As turns e'en th' offence into a favour.
Man. Yes, some indeed do so: so will not he:
He'd rather die than such confession make.
Jer. Ay, thou art right; for now I call to mind
That once he wrong'd me with unjust suspicion,
When first he came to lodge beneath my roof
And when it so fell out that I was proved
Most guiltless of the fault, I truly thought
He would have made profession of regret.
But silent, haughty, and ungraciously
He bore himself as one offended still.
Yet shortly after, when unwittingly
I did him some slight service, o' the sudden
He overpower'd me with his grateful thanks,
And would not be restrain'd from pressing on me
A noble recompense. I understood
His o'erstrain'd gratitude and bounty well,
And took it as he meant.
Man. 'Tis often thus.
I would have left him many years ago,
But that with all his faults there sometimes come
Such bursts of natural goodness from his heart,
As might engage a harder churl than me
To serve him still.—And then his sister too;
A noble dame, who should have been a queen:
The meanest of her hinds, at her command,
Had fought like lions for her, and the poor,
E'en o'er their bread of poverty, had bless'd her—
She would have grieved if I had left my lord.
Jer. Comes she along with him?
Man. No, he departed all unknown to her,
Meaning to keep conceal'd his secret route;
But well I knew it would afflict her much,
And therefore left a little nameless billet,
Which after our departure, as I guess,
Would fall into her hands, and tell her all.
What could I do? O 'tis a noble lady!

Jer. All this is strange—something disturbs his mind—
Belike he is in love.
Man. No, Jerome, no.
Once on a time I served a noble master,
Whose youth was blasted with untoward love,
And he with hope, and fear, and jealousy
For ever toss'd, led an unquiet life;
Yet, when unruffled by the passing fit,
His pale wan face such gentle sadness wore
As moved a kindly heart to pity him.
But Monfort, even in his calmest hour,
Still bears that gloomy sternness in his eye
Which powerfully repels all sympathy.
O no! good Jerome, no; it is not love.
Jer. Hear I not horses trampling at the gate? (*Listening.*)
He is arrived—stay thou—I had forgot—
A plague upon't! my head is so confused—
I will return i' th' instant to receive him.
[Exit *hastily.*
(*A great bustle without.* Exit Manuel *with lights, and returns again, lighting in* De Monfort, *as if just alighted from his journey.*)
Man. Your ancient host, my lord, receives you gladly,
And your apartment will be soon prepared.
De Mon. 'Tis well.
Man. Where shall I place the chest you gave in charge?
So please you, say my lord.
De Mon. (*throwing himself into a chair.*) Where'er thou wilt.
Man. I would not move that luggage till you came. (*Pointing to certain things.*)
De Mon. Move what thou wilt, and trouble me no more.
(Manuel, *with the assistance of other Servants, sets about putting the things in order, and* De Monfort *remains sitting in a thoughtful posture.*)

Enter Jerome, bearing wine, &c. on a salver. As he approaches De Monfort, Manuel pulls him by the sleeve.

Man. (*aside to* Jerome.) No, do not now; he will not be disturb'd.
Jer. What, not to bid him welcome to my house,
And offer some refreshment?
Man. No, good Jerome.
Softly a little while: I prithee do.
(Jerome *walks softly on tiptoes, till he gets behind* De Monfort, *then peeping on one side to see his face,*)
Jer. (*aside to* Manuel.) Ah, Manuel, what an alter'd man is here!
His eyes are hollow, and his cheeks are pale—
He left this house a comely gentleman.
De Mon. Who whispers there?
Man. 'Tis your old landlord, sir.
Jer. I joy to see you here—I crave your pardon—
I fear I do intrude.—
De Mon. No, my kind host, I am obliged to thee.
Jer. How fares it with your honour?
De Mon. Well enough.
Jer. Here is a little of the favourite wine
That you were wont to praise. Pray honour me. (*Fills a glass.*)
De Mon. (*after drinking.*) I thank you, Jerome, 'tis delicious.
Jer. Ay, my dear wife did ever make it so.
De Mon. And how does she?
Jer. Alas, my lord! she's dead.
De Mon. Well, then she is at rest.
Jer. How well, my lord?
De Mon. Is she not with the dead, the quiet dead,
Where all is peace? Not e'en the impious wretch,
Who tears the coffin from its earthly vault,
And strews the mouldering ashes to the wind,
Can break their rest.
Jer. Wo's me! I thought you would have grieved for her.
She was a kindly soul! Before she died,
When pining sickness bent her cheerless head.
She set my house in order—
And but the morning ere she breathed her last,
Bade me preserve some flaskets of this wine,
That should the Lord De Monfort come again
His cup might sparkle still. (De Monfort *walks across the stage, and wipes his eyes.*)
Indeed I fear I have distress'd you, sir;
I surely thought you would be grieved for her.
De Mon. (*taking* Jerome's *hand.*) I am, my friend. How long has she been dead?
Jer. Two sad long years.
De Mon. Would she were living still:
I was too troublesome, too heedless of her.
Jer. O no! she loved to serve you. (*Loud knocking without.*)
De Mon. What fool comes here, at such untimely hours,
To make this cursed noise? (*To* Manuel.) Go to the gate. [Exit Manuel.
All sober citizens are gone to bed;
It is some drunkards on their nightly rounds,
Who mean it but in sport.
Jer. I hear unusual voices—here they come.

Re-enter Manuel, showing in Count Freberg and his Lady, with a mask in her hand.

Freb. (*running to embrace* De Mon.) My dearest Monfort! most unlook'd for pleasure!
Do I indeed embrace thee here again?
I saw thy servant standing by the gate,
His face recall'd, and learnt the joyful tidings.
Welcome, thrice welcome here!
De Mon. I thank thee, Freberg, for this friendly visit,
And this fair lady too. (*Bowing to the lady.*)
Lady. I fear, my lord,
We do intrude at an untimely hour:
But now, returning from a midnight mask,
My husband did insist that we should enter.
Freb. No, say not so; no hour untimely call,
Which doth together bring long absent friends.
Dear Monfort, why hast thou so slyly play'd,
To come upon us thus so suddenly?
De Mon. O! many varied thoughts do cross our brain,
Which touch the will, but leave the memory trackless;

And yet a strange compounded motive make,
Wherefore a man should bend his evening walk
To th' east or west, the forest or the field.
Is it not often so?

Freb. I ask no more, happy to see you here
From any motive. There is one behind,
Whose presence would have been a double bliss:
Ah! how is she? The noble Jane De Monfort.

De Mon. (*confused.*) She is—I have—I left my sister well.

Lady. (*to* Freberg.) My Freberg, you are heedless of respect:
You surely mean to say the Lady Jane.

Freb. Respect! no, madam; princess, empress, queen,
Could not denote a creature so exalted
As this plain appellation doth
The noble Jane De Monfort.

Lady. (*turning from him displeased to* Mon.) You are fatigued, my lord; you want repose;
Say, should we not retire?

Freb. Ha! is it so?
My friend, your face is pale, have you been ill?

De Mon. No, Freberg, no; I think I have been well.

Freb. (*shaking his head.*) I fear thou hast not, Monfort—Let it pass.
We'll re-establish thee: we'll banish pain.
I will collect some rare, some cheerful friends,
And we shall spend together glorious hours,
That gods might envy. Little time so spent
Doth far outvalue all our life beside.
This is indeed our life, our waking life,
The rest dull breathing sleep.

De Mon. Thus, it is true, from the sad years of life
We sometimes do short hours, yea, minutes strike,
Keen, blissful, bright, never to be forgotten;
Which, through the dreary gloom of time o'erpast,
Shine like fair sunny spots on a wild waste.
But few they are, as few the heaven-fired souls
Whose magic power creates them. Bless'd art thou,
If, in the ample circle of thy friends,
Thou canst but boast a few.

Freb. Judge for thyself: in truth I do not boast.
There is amongst my friends, my later friends,
A most accomplish'd stranger: new to Amberg;
But just arrived, and will ere long depart.
I met him in Franconia two years since.
He is so full of pleasant anecdote,
So rich, so gay, so poignant is his wit,
Time vanishes before him as he speaks,
And ruddy morning through the lattice peeps
Ere night seems well begun.

De Mon. How is he call'd?

Freb. I will surprise thee with a welcome face:
I will not tell the now.

Lady. (*to* Mon.) I have, my lord, a small request to make,
And must not be denied. I too may boast
Of some good friends, and beauteous countrywomen:
To-morrow night I open wide my doors
To all the fair and gay: beneath my roof
Music, and dance, and revelry shall reign;
I pray you come and grace it with your presence.

De Mon. You honour me too much to be denied

Lady. I thank you, sir; and in return for this,
We shall withdraw, and leave you to repose.

Freb. Must it be so? Good night—sweet sleep to thee! (*To* De Monfort.)

De Mon. (*To* Freb.) Good night. (*To Lady.*) Good night, fair lady.

Lady. Farewell!

[EXEUNT Freberg *and* Lady.

De Mon. (*to* Jer.) I thought Count Freberg had been now in France.

Jer. He meant to go, as I have been inform'd.

De Mon. Well, well, prepare my bed; I will to rest. [EXIT Jerome.

De Mon. (*aside.*) I know not how it is, my heart stands back,
And meets not this man's love.—Friends! rarest friends!
Rather than share his undiscerning praise
With every table wit, and bookform'd sage,
And paltry poet puling to the moon,
I'd court from him proscription, yea, abuse,
And think it proud distinction. [EXIT.

SCENE II.—A SMALL APARTMENT IN JEROME'S HOUSE; A TABLE AND BREAKFAST SET OUT.

Enter De MONFORT, followed by MANUEL, and sets himself down by the table with a cheerful face.

De Mon. Manuel, this morning's sun shines pleasantly:
These old apartments too are light and cheerful.
Our landlord's kindness has revived me much;
He serves as though he loved me. This pure air
Braces the listless nerves, and warms the blood;
I feel in freedom here.

(*Filling a cup of coffee, and drinking.*)

Man. Ah! sure, my lord,
No air is purer than the air at home.

De Mon. Here can I wander with assured steps,
Nor dread, at every winding of the path,
Lest an abhorred serpent cross my way,
To move— (*Stopping short.*)

Man. What says your honour?
There are no serpents in our pleasant fields.

De Mon. Think'st thou there are no serpents in the world
But those who slide along the grassy sod,
And sting the luckless foot that presses them?
There are who in the path of social life
Do bask their spotted skins in fortune's sun,
And sting the soul—Ay, till its healthful frame
Is changed to secret, festering, sore disease,
So deadly is the wound.

Man. Heaven guard your honour from such horrid scath!
They are but rare, I hope?

De Mon. (*shaking his head.*) We mark the hollow eye, the wasted frame,
The gait disturb'd of wealthy honour'd men,
But do not know the cause.

Man. 'Tis very true. God keep you well, my lord!

De Mon. I thank thee, Manuel, I am very well.
I shall be gay too, by the setting sun.

I go to revel it with sprightly dames,
And drive the night away.
(*Filling another cup, and drinking.*)
Man. I should be glad to see your honour gay.
De Mon. And thou too shalt be gay. There, honest Manuel,
Put these broad pieces in thy leathern purse
And take at night a cheerful jovial glass.
Here is one too, for Bremer: he loves wine;
And one for Jaques: be joyful all together.

Enter SERVANT.

Ser. My lord, I met e'en now, a short way off,
Your countryman, the Marquis Rezenvelt.
De Mon. (*starting from his seat, and letting the cup fall from his hand.*) Who, say'st thou?
Ser. Marquis Rezenvelt, an' please you.
De Mon. Thou liest—it is not so—it is impossible!
Ser. I saw him with these eyes, plain as yourself.
De Mon. Fool! 'tis some passing stranger thou hast seen,
And with a hideous likeness been deceived.
Ser. No other stranger could deceive my sight.
De Mon. (*dashing his clenched hand violently upon the table, and overturning every thing.*) Heaven blast thy sight! it lights on nothing good.
Ser. I surely thought no harm to look upon him.
De Mon. What, dost thou still insist? Him must it be?
Does it so please thee well? (Servant *endeavours to speak.*) Hold thy damn'd tongue!
By heaven I'll kill thee! (*Going furiously up to him.*)
Man. (*in a soothing voice.*) Nay, harm him not, my lord; he speaks the truth;
I've met his groom, who told me certainly
His lord is here. I should have told you so,
But thought, perhaps, it might displease your honour.
De Mon. (*becoming all at once calm, and turning sternly to* Manuel.) And how darest thou think it would displease me?
What is't to me who leaves or enters Amberg?
But it displeases me, yea, even to frenzy,
That every idle fool must hither come,
To break my leisure with the paltry tidings
Of all the cursed things he stares upon.
(Servant *attempts to speak*—De Monfort *stamps with his foot.*)
Take thine ill-favour'd visage from my sight,
And speak of it no more. [EXIT Servant.
And go thou too; I choose to be alone.
[EXIT Manuel.
(De Monfort *goes to the door by which they went out; opens it and looks.*)
But is he gone indeed? yes, he is gone.
(*Goes to the opposite door, opens it, and looks: then gives loose to all the fury of gesture and walks up and down in great agitation.*)
It is too much: by heaven it is too much!
He haunts me—stings me—like a devil haunts—
He'll make a raving maniac of me—Villain!
The air wherein thou draw'st thy fulsome breath
Is poison to me—Oceans shall divide us! (*Pauses.*)
But no; thou think'st I fear thee, cursed reptile;
And hast a pleasure in the damned thought.
Though my heart's blood should curdle at thy sight,
I'll stay and face thee still.
(*Knocking at the chamber door.*)
Ha! who knocks there?
Freb. (*without.*) It is thy friend, De Monfort.
De Mon. (*opening the door.*) Enter, then.

Enter FREBERG.

Freb. (*taking his hand kindly.*) How art thou now? How hast thou past the night?
Has kindly sleep refresh'd thee?
De Mon. Yes, I have lost an hour or two in sleep,
And so should be refresh'd.
Freb. And art thou not?
Thy looks speak not of rest. Thou art disturb'd.
De Mon. No, somewhat ruffled from a foolish cause,
Which soon will pass away.
Freb. (*shaking his head.*) Ah no, De Monfort! something in thy face
Tells me another tale. Then wrong me not
If any secret grief distract thy soul,
Here am I all devoted to thy love:
Open thy heart to me. What troubles thee?
De Mon. I have no grief: distress me not, my friend.
Freb. Nay, do not call me so. Wert thou my friend,
Wouldst thou not open all thine inmost soul,
And bid me share its every consciousness?
De Mon. Freberg, thou know'st not man; not nature's man
But only him who, in smooth studied works
Of polish'd sages, shines deceitfully
In all the splendid foppery of virtue.
That man was never born whose secret soul,
With all its motley treasure of dark thoughts,
Foul fantasies, vain musings, and wild dreams,
Was ever open'd to another scan.
Away, away! it is delusion all.
Freb. Well, be reserved then; perhaps I'm wrong.
De Mon. How goes the hour?
Freb. 'Tis early still; a long day lies before us;
Let us enjoy it. Come along with me;
I'll introduce you to my pleasant friend.
De Mon. Your pleasant friend?
Freb. Yes, him of whom I spake.
(*Taking his hand.*)
There is no good I would not share with thee;
And this man's company, to minds like thine,
Is the best banquet feast I could bestow.
But I will speak in mystery no more;
It is thy townsman, noble Rezenvelt.
(De Mon. *pulls his hand hastily from* Freberg, *and shrinks back.*)
Ha! what is this? Art thou pain-stricken, Monfort?
Nay, on my life, thou rather seem'st offended.
Does it displease thee that I call him friend?
De Mon. No, all men are thy friends.

Freb. No, say not all men. But thou art offended.
I see it well. I thought to do thee pleasure.
But if his presence is not welcome here,
He shall not join our company to-day.
De Mon. What dost thou mean to say? What is't to me
Whether I meet with such a thing as Rezenvelt
To-day, to-morrow, every day, or never?
Freb. In truth, I thought you had been well with him.
He praised you much.
De Mon. I thank him for his praise—Come, let us move:
This chamber is confined and airless grown.
(*Starting.*)
I hear a stranger's voice!
Freb. 'Tis Rezenvelt,
Let him be told that we are gone abroad.
De Mon. (*proudly.*) No! let him enter. Who waits there? Ho! Manuel!

Enter MANUEL.

What stranger speaks below?
Man. The Marquis Rezenvelt.
I have not told him that you are within.
De Mon. (*angrily.*) And wherefore didst thou not? Let him ascend.
(*A long pause.* De Monfort *walking up and down with a quick pace.*)

Enter REZENVELT, and runs freely up to De Monfort.

Rez. (*to* De Mon.) My noble marquis, welcome!
De Mon. Sir, I thank you.
Rez. (*to* Freb.) My gentle friend, well met. Abroad so early?
Freb. It is indeed an early hour for me.
How suits thy last night's revel on thy spirits?
Rez. O, light as ever. On my way to you,
E'en now, I learnt De Monfort was arrived,
And turn'd my steps aside; so here I am.
(*Bowing gayly to* De Monfort.)
De Mon. I thank you, sir; you do me too much honour. (*Proudly.*)
Rez. Nay, say not so; not too much honour, surely,
Unless, indeed, 'tis more than pleases you.
De Mon. (*confused.*) Having no previous notice of your coming,
I look'd not for it.
Rez. Ay, true indeed; when I approach you next,
I'll send a herald to proclaim my coming,
And bow to you by sound of trumpet, marquis.
De Mon. (*to* Freb. *turning haughtily from* Rezenvelt *with affected indifference.*) How does your cheerful friend, that good old man?
Freb. My cheerful friend? I know not whom you mean.
De Mon. Count Waterlan.
Freb. I know not one so named.
De Mon. (*very confused.*) O pardon me—it was at Bâle I knew him.
Freb. You have not yet inquired for honest Reisdale.
I met him as I came, and mention'd you.
He seem'd amazed; and fain he would have learn'
What cause procured us so much happiness.
He question'd hard, and hardly would believe,
I could not satisfy his strong desire.
Rez. And know you not what brings De Monfort here?
Freb. Truly, I do not.
Rez. O! 'tis love of me.
I have but two short days in Amberg been,
And here with postman's speed he follows me,
Finding his home so dull and tiresome grown.
Freb. (*to* De Mon.) Is Rezenvelt so sadly miss'd with you?
Your town so changed?
De Mon. Not altogether so;
Some witlings and jest-mongers still remain
For fools to laugh at.
Rez. But he laughs not, and therefore he is wise.
For ever frowns on them with sullen brow
Contemptuous; therefore he is very wise.
Nay, daily frets his most refined soul
With their poor folly, to its inmost core;
Therefore he is most eminently wise.
Freb. Fy, Rezenvelt! you are too early gay.
Such spirits rise but with the evening glass:
They suit not placid morn.
(*To* De Monfort, *who, after walking impatiently up and down, comes close to his ear, and lays hold of his arm.*)
What would you, Monfort?
De Mon. Nothing—what is't o'clock?
No, no—I had forgot—'tis early still.
(*Turns away again.*)
Freb. (*to* Rez.) Waltser informs me that you have agreed
To read his verses o'er, and tell the truth.
It is a dangerous task.
Rez. Yet I'll be honest:
I can but lose his favour and a feast.
(*Whilst they speak,* De Monfort *walks up and down impatiently and irresolute; at last pulls the bell violently.*)

Enter SERVANT.

De Mon. (*to* Ser.) What dost thou want?
Ser. I thought your honour rung.
De Mon. I have forgot—stay; are my horses saddled?
Ser. I thought, my lord, you would not ride to-day,
After so long a journey.
De Mon. (*impatiently.*) Well—'tis good.
Begone! I want thee not. [EXIT Servant.
Rez. (*smiling significantly.*) I humbly crave your pardon, gentle marquis.
It grieves me that I cannot stay with you,
And make my visit of a friendly length.
I trust your goodness will excuse me now;
Another time I shall be less unkind.
(*To* Freberg.) Will you not go with me?
Freb. Excuse me, Monfort, I'll return again.
[EXEUNT Rezenvelt *and* Freberg.
De Mon. (*alone, tossing his arms distractedly.*)
Hell hath no greater torment for th' accursed
Than this man's presence gives—
Abhorred fiend! he hath a pleasure too,

A damned pleasure in the pain he gives!
O! the side glance of that detested eye!
That conscious smile! that full insulting lip!
It touches every nerve; it makes me mad.
What, does it please thee? Dost thou woo my hate?
Hate shalt thou have! determined, deadly hate,
Which shall awake no smile. Malignant villain!
The venom of thy mind is rank and devilish,
And thin the film that hides it.
Thy hateful visage ever spoke thy worth:
I loathed thee when a boy.
That men should be besotted with him thus!
And Freberg likewise so bewitched is,
That, like a hireling flatterer, at his heels
He meanly paces, offering brutish praise.
O! I could curse him too! [Exit.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—A VERY SPLENDID APARTMENT IN COUNT FREBERG'S HOUSE, FANCIFULLY DECORATED. A WIDE FOLDING DOOR OPENED, SHOWS ANOTHER MAGNIFICENT ROOM LIGHTED UP TO RECEIVE COMPANY.

Enter through the folding doors the COUNT and COUNTESS, richly dressed.

Freb. (*looking round.*) In truth, I like those decorations well:
They suit those lofty walls. And here, my love,
The gay profusion of a woman's fancy
Is well display'd. Noble simplicity
Becomes us less, on such a night as this,
Than gaudy show.
Lady. Is it not noble then? (*He shakes his head.*) I thought it so;
And as I know you love simplicity,
I did intend it should be simple too.
Freb. Be satisfied, I pray; we want to-night
A cheerful banquet-house, and not a temple.
How runs the hour?
Lady. It is not late, but soon we shall be roused
With the loud entry of our frolick guests.

Enter a PAGE, richly dressed.

Page. Madam, there is a lady in your ha.
Who begs to be admitted to your presence.
Lady. Is it not one of our invited friends?
Page. No, far unlike to them; it is a stranger.
Lady. How looks her countenance?
Page. So queenly, so commanding, and so noble,
I shrunk at first in awe; but when she smiled,
For so she did to see me thus abash'd,
Methought I could have compass'd sea and land
To do her bidding.
Lady. Is she young or old?
Page. Neither, if right I guess; but she is fair:
For time hath laid his hand so gently on her,
As he too had been awed.
Lady. The foolish stripling!
She has bewitch'd thee. Is she large in stature?
Page. So stately and so graceful in her form,
I thought at first her stature was gigantic;
But on a near approach I found in truth,
She scarcely does surpass the middle size.
Lady. What is her garb?
Page. I cannot well describe the fashion of it.
She is not deck'd in any gallant trim,
But seems to me clad in the usual weeds
Of high habitual state; for as she moves,
Wide flows her robe in many a waving fold,
As I have seen unfurled banners play
With the soft breeze.
Lady. Thine eyes deceive thee, boy;
It is an apparition thou hast seen.
Freb. (*starting from his seat, where he has been sitting during the conversation between the* Lady *and the* Page.) It is an apparition he has seen.
Or it is Jane De Monfort. [Exit, *hastily.*
Lady. (*displeased.*) No; such description surely suits not her.
Did she inquire for me?
Page. She ask'd to see the lady of Count Freberg.
Lady. Perhaps it is not she—I fear it is—
Ha! here they come. He has but guess'd too well.

Enter FREBERG, leading in JANE DE MONFORT.

Freb. (*presenting her to* Lady.) Here, madam, welcome a most worthy guest.
Lady. Madam, a thousand welcomes! Pardon me;
I could not guess who honour'd me so far;
I should not else have waited coldly here.
Jane. I thank you for this welcome, gentle countess;
But take those kind excuses back again;
I am a bold intruder on this hour,
And am entitled to no ceremony.
I came in quest of a dear truant friend,
But Freberg has inform'd me—
(*To* Freberg.) And he is well, you say?
Freb. Yes, well, but joyless.
Jane. It is the usual temper of his mind;
It opens not, but with the thrilling touch
Of some strong heart-string o' the sudden press'd.
Freb. It may be so, I've known him otherwise:
He is suspicious grown.
Jane. Not so, Count Freberg, Monfort is too noble.
Say rather, that he is a man in grief,
Wearing at times a strange and scowling eye;
And thou, less generous than beseems a friend,
Hast thought too hardly of him.
Freb. (*bowing with great respect.*) So will I say;
I'll own nor word nor will, that can offend you.
Lady. De Monfort is engaged to grace our feast;
Ere long you'll see him here.
Jane. I thank you truly, but this homely dress
Suits not the splendour of such scenes as these.
Freb. (*pointing to her dress.*) Such artless and majestic elegance,
So exquisitely just, so nobly simple,
Will make the gorgeous blush.
Jane. (*smiling.*) Nay, nay, be more consistent, courteous knight,
And do not praise a plain and simple guise
With such profusion of unsimple words.
I cannot join your company to night.
Lady. Not stay to see your brother?
Jane. Therefore it is I would not, gentle hostess
Here will he find all that can woo the heart

To joy and sweet forgetfulness of pain;
The sight of me would wake his feeling mind
To other thoughts. I am no doting mistress;
No fond, distracted wife, who must forthwith
Rush to his arms and weep. I am his sister:
The eldest daughter of his father's house:
Calm and unwearied is my love for him;
And having found him, patiently I'll wait,
Nor greet him in the hour of social joy,
To dash his mirth with tears.—
The night wears on; permit me to withdraw.

Freb. Nay, do not, do not injure us so far!
Disguise thyself, and join our friendly train.

Jane. You wear not masks to night.

Lady. We wear not masks, but you may be conceal'd
Behind the double foldings of a veil.

Jane. (*after pausing to consider.*) In truth, I feel a little so inclined.
Methinks unknown, I e'en might speak to him,
And gently prove the temper of his mind;
But for the means I must become your debtor.
(*To* Lady.)

Lady. Who waits? (*Enter her* Woman.) Attend this lady to my wardrobe,
And do what she commands you.
[Exeunt Jane *and* Waiting-woman.

Freb. (*looking after* Jane, *as she goes out, with admiration.*) O! what a soul she bears! see how she steps!
Naught but the native dignity of worth
E'er taught the moving form such noble grace.

Lady. Such lofty mien, and high assumed gait
I've seen ere now, and then have call'd it pride.

Freb. No, 'faith! thou never didst, but oft indeed
The paltry imitation thou hast seen.
(*Looking at her.*) How hang those trappings on thy motley gown?
They seem like garlands on a May-day queen,
Which hinds have dress'd in sport.
(Lady *turns away displeased.*)

Freb. Nay, do not frown; I spoke it but in haste:
For thou art lovely still in every garb.
But see, the guests assemble.

Enter groups of well-dressed people, who pay their compliments to Freberg and his Lady; and followed by her, pass into the inner apartment, where more company appear assembling, as if by another entry.

Freb. (*who remains on the front of the stage with a friend or two.*) How loud the hum of this gay-meeting crowd!
'Tis like a bee-swarm in the noonday sun.
Music will quell the sound. Who waits without?
Music strike up.

(*Music, and when it ceases, enter from the inner apartment* Rezenvelt, *with several gentlemen, all richly dressed.*)

Freb. (*to those just entered.*) What, lively gallants, quit the field so soon?
Are there no beauties in that moving crowd
To fix your fancy?

Rez. Ay, marry, are there! men of every fancy
May in that moving crowd some fair one find,
To suit their taste, though whimsical and strange,
As ever fancy own'd.
Beauty of every cast and shade is there,
From the perfection of a faultless form,
Down to the common, brown, unnoted maid,
Who looks but pretty in her Sunday gown.

1*st Gent.* There is, indeed, a gay variety.

Rez. And if the liberality of nature
Suffices not, there's store of grafted charms,
Blending in one the sweets of many plants,
So obstinately, strangely opposite,
As would have well defied all other art
But female cultivation. Aged youth,
With borrow'd locks in rosy chaplets bound,
Clothes her dim eye, parch'd lips, and skinny cheek
In most unlovely softness:
And youthful age, with fat, round, trackless face,
The downcast look of contemplation deep
Most pensively assumes.
Is it not even so? The native prude,
With forced laugh, and merriment uncouth,
Plays off the wild coquet's successful charms
With most unskilful pains; and the coquet,
In temporary crust of cold reserve,
Fixes her studied looks upon the ground
Forbiddingly demure.

Freb. Fy! thou art too severe.

Rez. Say, rather, gentle
I' faith! the very dwarfs attempt to charm
With lofty airs of puny majesty;
Whilst potent damsels of a portly make,
Totter like nurselings, and demand the aid
Of gentle sympathy.
From all those divers modes of dire assault,
He owns a heart of hardest adamant,
Who shall escape to night.

Freb. (*to* De Mon. *who has entered during* Rezenvelt's *speech, and heard the greatest part of it.*) Ha, ha, ha, ha!
How pleasantly he gives his wit the rein,
Yet guides its wild career!
(De Mon. *is silent.*)

Rez. (*smiling archly.*) What, think you, Freberg, the same powerful spell
Of transformation reigns o'er all to night?
Or that De Monfort is a woman turn'd,
So widely from his native self to swerve,
As grace my folly with a smile of his?

De Mon. Nay, think not, Rezenvelt, there is no smile
I can bestow on thee. There is a smile,
A smile of nature too, which I can spare,
And yet, perhaps, thou wilt not thank me for it
(*Smiles contemptuously.*)

Rez. Not thank thee! It were surely most ungrateful
No thanks to pay for nobly giving me
What, well we see, has cost thee so much pain.
For nature hath her smiles of birth more painful
Than bitterest execrations.

Freb. These idle words will lead us to disquiet:
Forbear, forbear, my friends! Go, Rezenvelt,
Accept the challenge of those lovely dames,
Who through the portal come with bolder step
To claim your notice.

Enter a group of Ladies from the other apartment, who walk slowly across the bottom of the stage, and return to it again. Rez. shrugs up his shoulders, as if unwilling to go.

1st Gent. (*to* Rez.) Behold in sable veil a lady comes,
Whose noble air doth challenge fancy's skill
To suit it with a countenance as goodly.
(*Pointing to* Jane De Mon. *who now enters in a thick black veil.*)
Rez. Yes, this way lies attraction. (*To* Freb.) With permission, (*going up to* Jane.)
Fair lady, though within that envious shroud
Your beauty deigns not to enlighten us,
We bid you welcome, and our beauties here
Will welcome you the more for such concealment.
With the permission of our noble host—
(*Taking her hand, and leading her to the front of the stage.*)
Jane. (*to* Freb.) Pardon me this presumption, courteous sir:
I thus appear, (*pointing to her veil,*) not careless of respect
Unto the generous lady of the feast.
Beneath this veil no beauty shrouded is,
That, now, or pain or pleasure can bestow.
Within the friendly cover of its shade
I only wish, unknown, again to see
One who, alas! is heedless of my pain.
De Mon. Yes, it is ever thus. Undo that veil,
And give thy countenance to the cheerful light.
Men now all soft, and female beauty scorn,
And mock the gentle cares which aim to please.
It is most damnable! undo thy veil,
And think of him no more.
Jane. I know it well, even to a proverb grown,
Is lovers' faith, and I had borne such slight:
But he, who has, alas! forsaken me,
Was the companion of my early days,
My cradle's mate, mine infant play fellow.
Within our opening minds, with riper years,
The love of praise and generous virtue sprung:
Through varied life our pride, our joys were one;
At the same tale we wept: he is my brother.
De Mon. And he forsook thee?—No, I dare not curse him:
My heart upbraids me with a crime like his.
Jane. Ah! do not thus distress a feeling heart.
All sisters are not to the soul entwined
With equal bans; thine has not watch'd for thee,
Wept for thee, cheer'd thee, shared thy weal and woe,
As I have done for him.
De Mon. (*eagerly.*) Ah! has she not?
By heaven! the sum of all thy kindly deeds
Were but as chaff poised against massy gold,
Compared to that which I do owe her love.
O pardon me! I mean not to offend—
I am too warm—but she of whom I speak
Is the dear sister of my earliest love;
In noble, virtuous worth to none a second:
And though behind those sable folds were hid
As fair a face as ever woman own'd,
Still would I say she is as fair as thou.
How oft amidst the beauty-blazing throng,
I've proudly to th' inquiring stranger told
Her name and lineage! yet within her house
The virgin mother of an orphan race
Her dying parents left, this noble woman
Did, like a Roman matron, proudly sit,
Despising all the blandishments of love;
Whilst many a youth his hopeless love conceal'd,
O, humbly distant, woo'd her like a queen.
Forgive, I pray you! O forgive this boasting!
In faith! I mean you no discourtesy.
Jane. (*Off her guard, in a soft natural tone of voice.*) O no! nor do me any.
De Mon. What voice speaks now? Withdraw withdraw this shade!
For if thy face bear semblance to thy voice,
I'll fall and worship thee. Pray! pray undo!
(*Puts forth his hand eagerly to snatch away the veil, whilst she shrinks back, and* Rezenvelt *steps between to prevent him.*)
Rez. Stand off: no hand shall lift this sacred veil.
De Mon. What, dost thou think De Monfort fall'n so low,
That there may live a man beneath heaven's roof,
Who dares to say, he shall not?
Rez. He lives who dares to say—
Jane. (*throwing back her veil, much alarmed, and rushes between them.*) Forbear, forbear!
(Rezenvelt, *very much struck, steps back respectfully, and makes her a low bow.* De Monfort *stands for a while motionless, gazing upon her, till she, looking expressively to him, extends her arms, and he, rushing into them, bursts into tears.* Freberg *seems very much pleased. The company then advancing from the inner apartment, gather about them, and the Scene closes.*)

Scene II.—De Monfort's Apartments

Enter De Monfort, with a disordered air, and his hand pressed upon his forehead, followed by Jane.

De Mon. No more, my sister, urge me not again:
My secret troubles cannot be reveal'd.
From all participation of its thoughts
My heart recoils: I pray thee be contented.
Jane. What, must I, like a distant humble friend,
Observe thy restless eye, and gait disturb'd,
In timid silence whilst with yearning heart
I turn aside to weep? O no! De Monfort!
A nobler task thy nobler mind will give;
Thy true intrusted friend I still shall be.
De Mon. Ah, Jane, forbear! I cannot e'en to thee.
Jane. Then, fy upon it! fy upon it, Monfort!
There was a time when e'en with murder stain'd,
Had it been possible that such dire deed
Could e'er have been the crime of one so piteous,
Thou wouldst have told it me.
De Mon. So would I now—but ask of this no more.
All other trouble but the one I feel
I had disclosed to thee. I pray thee spare me;
It is the secret weakness of my nature.
Jane. Then secret let it be; I urge no farther.
The eldest of our valiant father's hopes,
So sadly orphan'd, side by side we stood,

Like two young trees, whose boughs in early strength
Screen the weak saplings of the rising grove,
And brave the storm together—
I have so long, as if by nature's right,
Thy bosom's inmate and adviser been,
I thought through life I should have so remain'd,
Nor ever known a change. Forgive me, Monfort,
A humbler station will I take by thee:
The close attendant of thy wandering steps;
The cheerer of this home, with strangers sought
The soother of those griefs I must not know:
This is mine office now: I ask no more.

De Mon. O Jane! thou dost constrain me with thy love!
Would I could tell it thee.

Jane. Thou shalt not tell me. Nay, I'll stop mine ears,
Nor from the yearnings of affection wring
What shrinks from utterance. Let it pass, my brother.
I'll stay by thee; I'll cheer thee, comfort thee:
Pursue with thee the study of some art,
Or nobler science, that compels the mind
To steady thought progressive, driving forth
All floating, wild, unhappy fantasies;
Till thou, with brow unclouded, smilest again;
Like one who, from dark visions of the night,
When th' active soul within its lifeless cell
Hold its own world, with dreadful fancy press'd
Of some dire, terrible, or murderous deed,
Wakes to the dawning morn, and blesses heaven.

De Mon. It will not pass away: 'twill haunt me still.

Jane. Ah! say not so, for I will haunt thee too;
And be to it so close an adversary,
That, though I wrestle darkling with the fiend,
I shall o'ercome it.

De Mon. Thou most generous woman!
Why do I treat thee thus? It should not be—
And yet I cannot—O that cursed villain!
He will not let me be the man I would.

Jane. What say'st thou, Monfort? O! what words are these?
They have awaked my soul to dreadful thoughts.
I do beseech thee speak!

(*He shakes his head, and turns from her; she following him.*)

By the affection thou didst ever bear me;
By the dear memory of our infant days;
By kindred living ties, ay, and by those
Who sleep i' the tomb, and cannot call to thee,
I do conjure thee speak!

(*He waves her off with his hand, and covers his face with the other, still turning from her.*)

Ha! wilt thou not?
(*Assuming dignity.*) Then, if affection, most unwearied love,
Tried early, long, and never wanting found,
O'er generous man hath more authority,
More rightful power than crown or sceptre give,
I do command thee.

(*He throws himself into a chair, greatly agitated.*)

De Monfort, do not thus resist my love.
Here I entreat thee on my bended knees.
(*Kneeling.*)
Alas! my brother!

(De Monfort *starts up, and catching her in his arms, raises her up, then placing her in the chair kneels at her feet.*)

De Mon. Thus let him kneel who should th' abased be,
And at thine honour'd feet confession make.
I'll tell thee all—but, O! thou wilt despise me.
For in my breast a raging passion burns,
To which thy soul no sympathy will own—
A passion which hath made my nightly couch
A place of torment; and the light of day,
With the gay intercourse of social man,
Feel like the oppressive airless pestilence.
O Jane! thou wilt despise me.

Jane. Say not so:
I never can despise thee, gentle brother.
A lover's jealousy and hopeless pangs
No kindly heart contemns.

De Mon. A lover, say'st thou?
No, it is hate! black, lasting, deadly hate!
Which thus hath driven me forth from kindred peace,
From social pleasure, from my native home,
To be a sullen wanderer on the earth,
Avoiding all men, cursing and accursed.

Jane. De Monfort, this is fiend-like, frightful, terrible!
What being, by th' Almighty Father form'd,
Of flesh and blood, created even as thou,
Could in thy breast such horrid tempest wake,
Who art thyself his fellow?
Unknit thy brows, and spread those wrath clench'd hands.
Some sprite accursed within thy bosom mates
To work thy ruin. Strive with it, my brother!
Strive bravely with it; drive it from thy breast:
'Tis the degrader of a noble heart:
Curse it, and bid it part.

De Mon. It will not part. (*His hand on his breast.*)
I've lodged it here too long:
With my first cares I felt its rankling touch;
I loathed him when a boy.

Jane. Who didst thou say?

De Mon. O! that detested Rezenvelt;
E'en in our early sports, like two young whelps
Of hostile breed, instinctively reverse,
Each 'gainst the other pitch'd his ready pledge,
And frown'd defiance. As we onward pass'd
From youth to man's estate, his narrow art
And envious gibing malice, poorly veil'd
In the affected carelessness of mirth,
Still more detestable and odious grew.
There is no living being on this earth
Who can conceive the malice of his soul,
With all his gay and damned merriment,
To those, by fortune or by merit placed
Above his paltry self. When, low in fortune,
He look'd upon the state of prosperous men,
As nightly birds, roused from their murky holes,
Do scowl and chatter at the light of day,
I could endure it; even as we bear
Th' impotent bite of some half-trodden worm,

could endure it. But when honours came,
And wealth and new-got titles fed his pride;
Whilst flattering knaves did trumpet forth his praise,
And grovelling idiots grinn'd applauses on him;
O! then I could no longer suffer it!
It drove me frantic.—What! what would I give!
What would I give to crush the bloated toad,
So rankly do I loathe him!

Jane. And would thy hatred crush the very man
Who gave to thee that life he might have ta'en?
That life which thou so rashly didst expose
To aim at his? O! this is horrible!

De Mon. Ha! thou hast heard it, then? From all the world,
But most of all from thee, I thought it hid.

Jane. I heard a secret whisper, and resolved
Upon the instant to return to thee.
Didst thou receive my letter?

De Mon. I did! I did! 'twas that which drove me hither.
I could not bear to meet thine eye again.

Jane. Alas! that, tempted by a sister's tears,
I ever left thy house! These few past months,
These absent months, have brought us all this wo.
Had I remain'd with thee it had not been.
And yet, methinks, it should not move you thus.
You dared him to the field; both bravely fought;
He, more adroit, disarm'd you; courteously
Return'd the forfeit sword, which, so return'd,
You did refuse to use against him more;
And then, as says report, you parted friends.

De Mon. When he disarm'd this cursed, this worthless hand
Of its most worthless weapon, he but spared
From devilish pride, which now derives a bliss
In seeing me thus fetter'd, shamed, subjected
With the vile favour of his poor forbearance;
Whilst he securely sits with gibing brow,
And basely bates me like a muzzled cur
Who cannot turn again.—
Until that day, till that accursed day,
I knew not half the torment of this hell,
Which burns within my breast. Heaven's lightnings blast him!

Jane. O this is horrible! Forbear, forbear!
Lest Heaven's vengeance light upon thy head,
For this most impious wish.

De Mon. Then let it light.
Torments more fell than I have felt already
It cannot send. To be annihilated,
What all men shrink from; to be dust, be nothing,
Were bliss to me, compared to what I am!

Jane. O! wouldst thou kill me with these dreadful words?

De Mon. (*raising his hands to heaven.*) Let me but once upon his ruin look,
Then close mine eyes for ever!

Jane in great distress, staggers back, and supports herself upon the side scene. De Mon. *alarmed, runs up to her with a softened voice.*)

Ha! how is this? thou'rt ill; thou'rt very pale.
What have I done to thee? Alas, alas!
I meant not to distress thee.—O my sister!

Jane. (*shaking her head.*) I cannot speak to thee.

De Mon. I have kill'd thee
Turn, turn thee not away! look on me still
O! droop not thus, my life, my pride, my sister;
Look on me yet again.

Jane. Thou too, De Monfort,
In better days, wert wont to be my pride.

De Mon. I am a wretch, most wretched in myself,
And still more wretched in the pain I give.
O curse that villain! that detested villain!
He has spread misery o'er my fated life:
He will undo us all.

Jane. I've held my warfare through a troubled world,
And borne with steady mind my share of ill;
And then the helpmate of my toil wert thou.
But now the wane of life comes darkly on,
And hideous passion tears me from my heart,
Blasting thy worth.—I cannot strive with this.

De Mon. (*affectionately.*) What shall I do?

Jane. Call up thy noble spirit;
Rouse all the generous energy of virtue;
And with the strength of heaven-endued man,
Repel the hideous foe. Be great; be valiant.
O, if thou couldst! e'en shrouded as thou art
In all the sad infirmities of nature,
What a most noble creature wouldst thou be!

De Mon. Ay, if I could: alas! alas! I cannot.

Jane. Thou canst, thou mayst, thou wilt.
We shall not part till I have turn'd thy soul.

Enter MANUEL.

De Mon. Ha! some one enters. Wherefore comest thou here?

Man. Count Freberg waits your leisure.

De Mon. (*angrily.*) Be gone, be gone! I cannot see him now. [EXIT MANUEL.

Jane. Come to my closet; free from all intrusion,
I'll school thee there; and thou again shalt be
My willing pupil, and my generous friend,
The noble Monfort I have loved so long,
And must not, will not lose.

De Mon. Do as thou wilt; I will not grieve thee more. [EXEUNT.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—COUNTESS FREBERG'S DRESSING-ROOM.

Enter the COUNTESS dispirited and out of humour, and throws herself into a chair: enter, by the opposite side, THERESA.

Ther. Madam, I am afraid you are unwell:
What is the matter? does your head ache?

Lady. (*peevishly.*) No,
'Tis not my head: concern thyself no more
With what concerns not thee.

Ther. Go you abroad to-night?

Lady. Yes, thinkest thou I'll stay and fret at home?

Ther. Then please to say what you would choose to wear:—
One of your newest robes?

Lady. I hate them all.

Ther. Surely that purple scarf became you well,
With all those wreaths of richly hanging flowers.

Did I not overhear them say, last night,
As from the crowded ball-room ladies past,
How gay and handsome, in her costly dress,
The Countess Freberg look'd?

Lady. Didst thou overhear it?

Ther. I did, and more than this.

Lady. Well, all are not so greatly prejudiced;
All do not think me like a May-day queen,
Which peasants deck in sport.

Ther. And who said this?

Lady. (*putting her handkerchief to her eyes.*)
E'en my good lord, Theresa.

Ther. He said it but in jest. He loves you well.

Lady. I know as well as thou he loves me well.
But what of that! he takes in me no pride:
Elsewhere his praise and admiration go,
And Jane De Monfort is not mortal woman.

Ther. The wondrous character this lady bears
For worth and excellence: from early youth
The friend and mother of her younger sisters,
Now greatly married, as I have been told,
From her most prudent care, may well excuse
The admiration of so good a man
As my good master is. And then, dear madam,
I must confess, when I myself did hear
How she was come through the rough winter's storm,
To seek and comfort an unhappy brother,
My heart beat kindly to her.

Lady. Ay, ay, there is a charm in this I find:
But wherefore may she not have come as well
Through wintry storms to seek a lover, too?

Ther. No, madam, no, I could not think of this.

Lady. That would reduce her in your eyes, may hap,
To woman's level.—Now I see my vengeance!
I'll tell it round that she is hither come,
Under pretence of finding out De Monfort,
To meet with Rezenvelt. When Freberg hears it,
Twill help, I ween, to break his magic charm.

Ther. And say what is not, madam?

Lady. How canst thou know that I shall say what is not?
Tis like enough I shall but speak the truth.

Ther. Ah no! there is—

Lady. Well, hold thy foolish tongue.
(Freberg's *voice is heard without. After hesitating.*)
t will not see him now. [Exit.

Enter Freberg by the opposite side, passing on hastily.

Ther. Pardon, my lord; I fear you are in haste.
Yet must I crave that you will give to me
The books my lady mentioned to you: she
Has charged me to remind you.

Freb. I'm in haste. (*Passing on.*)

Ther. Pray you, my lord: your countess wants them much;
The Lady Jane De Monfort ask'd them of her.

Freb. (*returning instantly.*) Are they for her? I knew not this before.
' will, then, search them out immediately.
There is naught good or precious in my keeping,
That is not dearly honour'd by her use.

Ther. My lord, what would your gentle countess say
If she o'erheard her own request neglected,
Until supported by a name more potent?

Freb. Think'st thou she is a fool, my good Theresa,
Vainly to please herself with childish thoughts
Of matching what is matchless—Jane De Monfort!
Think'st thou she is a fool, and cannot see,
That love and admiration often thrive
Though far apart?

Re-enter Lady, with great violence.

Lady. I am a fool, not to have seen full well,
That thy best pleasure in o'errating so
This lofty stranger is to humble me,
And cast a darkening shadow o'er my head.
Ay, wherefore dost thou stare upon me thus
Art thou ashamed that I have thus surprised thee?
Well mayst thou be so!

Freb. True; thou rightly say'st.
Well may I be ashamed: not for the praise
Which I have ever openly bestowed
On Monfort's noble sister; but that thus,
Like a poor, mean, and jealous listener,
She should be found, who is Count Freberg's wife.

Lady. O, I am lost and ruin'd! hated, scorn'd!
(*Pretending to faint.*)

Freb. Alas, I've been too rough!
(*Taking her hand and kissing it tenderly.*)
My gentle love! my own, my only love!
See, she revives again. How art thou, love?
Support her to her chamber, good Theresa,
I'll sit and watch by her. I've been too rough.
[Exeunt Lady, *supported by* Freb. *and* Ther.

Scene II.—De Monfort discovered sitting by a table reading. After a little time, he lays down his book, and continues in a thoughtful posture.

Enter to him Jane De Monfort.

Jane. Thanks, gentle brother—
(*Pointing to the book.*)
Thy willing mind has rightly been employ'd:
Did not thy heart warm at the fair display
Of peace and concord, and forgiving love?

De Mon. I know resentment may to love be turn'd;
Though keen and lasting into love as strong:
And fiercest rivals in th ensanguin'd field
Have cast their brandish'd weapons to the ground;
Joining their mailed breasts in close embrace,
With generous impulse fired. I know right well
The darkest, fellest wrongs have been forgiven
Seventy times o'er from blessed heavenly love:
I've heard of things like these; I've heard and wept.
But what is this to me?

Jane. All, all, my brother!
It bids thee too that noble precept learn,
To love thine enemy.

De Mon. Th' uplifted stroke that would a wretch destroy,
Gorged with my richest spoil, stain'd with my blood,
I would arrest, and cry, "Hold! hold! have mercy."
But when the man most adverse to my nature

Who e'en from childhood hath, with rude malevolence,
Withheld the fair respect all paid beside,
Turning my very praise into derision;
Who galls and presses me where'er I go,
Would claim the generous feelings of my heart,
Nature herself doth lift her voice aloud,
And cries, "It is impossible!"

Jane. (*shaking her head.*)—Ah, Monfort, Monfort!

De Mon. I can forgive th' envenomed reptile's sting,
But hate his loathsome self.

Jane. And canst thou do no more for love of heaven?

De Mon. Alas! I cannot now so school my mind
As holy men have taught, nor search it truly:
But this, my Jane, I'll do for love of thee:
And more it is than crowns could win me to,
Or any power but thine. I'll see the man.
Th' indignant risings of abhorrent nature;
The stern contraction of my scowling brows,
That, like the plant whose closing leaves do shrink
At hostile touch, still knit at his approach;
The crooked curving lip, by instinct taught,
In imitation of disgustful things,
To pout and swell, I strictly will repress;
And meet him with a tamed countenance,
E'en as a townsman, who would live at peace,
And pay him the respect his station claims.
I'll crave his pardon too for all offence
My dark and wayward temper may have done.
Nay more, I will confess myself his debtor
For the forbearance I have cursed so oft:
Life spared by him, more horrid than the grave
With all its dark corruption! This I'll do.
Will it suffice thee? More than this I cannot.

Jane. No more than this do I require of thee
In outward act, though in thy heart, my friend,
I hoped a better change, and still will hope.
I told thee Freberg had proposed a meeting.

De Mon. I know it well.

Jane. And Rezenvelt consents.
He meets you here; so far he shows respect.

De Mon. Well, let it be; the sooner past the better.

Jane. I'm glad to hear you say so, for, in truth,
He has proposed for it an early hour.
'Tis almost near his time; I came to tell you.

De Mon. What, comes he here so soon? shame on his speed!
It is not decent thus to rush upon me.
He loves the secret pleasure he will feel
To see me thus subdued.

Jane. O say not so! he comes with heart sincere.

De Mon. Could we not meet elsewhere? from home—i' the fields,
Where other men—must I alone receive him?
Where is your agent, Freberg, and his friends,
That I must meet him here?
(*Walks up and down very much disturbed.*)
Now didst thou say?—how goes the hour?—e'en now!
I would some other friend were first arrived.

Jane. See, to thy wish come Freberg and his dame.

De Mon. His lady too! why comes he not alone?
Must all the world stare upon our meeting?

Enter Count Freberg and his Countess.

Freb. A happy morrow to my noble marquis
And his most noble sister!

Jane. Generous Freberg,
Your face, methinks, forbodes a happy morn,
Open and cheerful. What of Rezenvelt?

Freb. I left him at his home, prepared to follow:
He'll soon appear. (*To* De Monfort.) And now my worthy friend,
Give me your hand; this happy change delights me.
(De Monfort *gives him his hand coldly, and they walk to the bottom of the stage together, in earnest discourse, whilst* Jane *and the* Countess *remain in the front.*)

Lady. My dearest madam, will you pardon me?
I know Count Freberg's business with De Monfort,
And had a strong desire to visit you,
So much I wish the honour of your friendship;
For he retains no secret from mine ear.

Jane. (*archly.*) Knowing your prudence—You are welcome, madam;
So shall Count Freberg's lady ever be.
(De Monfort *and* Freberg, *returning toward the front of the stage, still engaged in discourse.*)

Freb. He is indeed a man, within whose breast
Firm rectitude and honour hold their seat,
Though unadorned with that dignity
Which were their fittest garb: Now, on my life!
I know no truer heart than Rezenvelt.

De Mon. Well, Freberg, well, there needs not all this pains
To garnish out his worth: let it suffice;
I am resolved I will respect the man,
As his fair station and repute demand.
Methinks I see not at your jolly feasts
The youthful knight, who sung so pleasantly.

Freb. A pleasant circumstance detains him hence;
Pleasant to those who love high generous deeds
Above the middle pitch of common minds;
And, though I have been sworn to secrecy,
Yet must I tell it thee.
This knight is near akin to Rezenvelt,
To whom an old relation, short while dead,
A good estate bequeathed, some leagues distant
But Rezenvelt, now rich in fortune's store,
Disdain'd the sordid love of further gain,
And generously the rich bequest resign
To this young man, blood of the same degree
To the deceased, and low in fortune's gifts,
Who is from hence to take possession of it:
Was it not nobly done?

De Mon. 'Twas right and honourable.
This morning is oppressive, warm, and heavy:
There hangs a foggy closeness in the air:
Dost thou not feel it?

Freb. O no! to think upon a generous deed
Expands my soul, and makes me lightly breathe.

De Mon. Who gives the feast to-night? His name escapes me.
You say I am invited.

Freb. Old Count Waterlan.

In honour of your townsman's generous gift
He spreads the board.
De Mon. He is too old to revel with the gay.
Freb. But not too old is he to honour virtue.
I shall partake of it with open soul;
For, on my honest faith, of living men
I know not one, for talents, honour, worth,
That I should rank superior to Rezenvelt.
De Mon. How virtuous he hath been in three short days!
Freb. Nay, longer, marquis; but my friendship rests
Upon the good report of other men,
And that has told me much.
(De Monfort *aside, going some steps hastily from* Freberg, *and rending his cloak with agitation as he goes.*)
Would he were come! by heaven I would he were!
This fool besets me so.
(*Suddenly correcting himself, and joining the* Ladies, *who have retired to the bottom of the stage, he speaks to* Countess Freberg *with affected cheerfulness.*)
The sprightly dames of Amberg rise by times,
Untarnish'd with the vigils of the night.
Lady. Praise us not rashly, 'tis not always so.
De Mon. He does not rashly praise who praises you;
For he were dull indeed—
Stopping short, as if he heard something.)
Lady. How dull indeed?
De Mon. I should have said—It has escaped me now—
Listening again, as if he heard something.)
Jane. (*to* De Mon.) What, hear you aught?
De Mon. (*hastily.*) 'Tis nothing.
Lady. (*to* De Mon.) Nay, do not let me lose it so, my lord.
Some fair one has bewitch'd your memory,
And robs me of the half-form'd compliment.
Jane. Half-utter'd praise is to the curious mind
As to the eye half-veiled beauty is,
More precious than the whole. Pray pardon him.
Some one approaches. (*Listening.*)
Freb. No, no, it is a servant who ascends;
He will not come so soon.
De Mon. (*off his guard.*) 'Tis Rezenvelt: I heard his well-known foot,
From the first staircase, mounting step by step.
Freb. How quick an ear thou hast for distant sound!
I heard him not.
(De Monfort *looks embarrassed, and is silent.*)

Enter Rezenvelt

(De Monfort, *recovering himself, goes up to receive* Rezenvelt, *who meets him with a cheerful countenance.*)
De Mon. (*to* Rez.) I am, my lord, beholden to you greatly.
This ready visit makes me much your debtor.
Rez. Then may such debts between us, noble marquis,
Be oft incurred, and often paid again!
(*To* Jane.) Madam, I am devoted to your service,
And every wish of yours commands my will.
(*To* Countess.) Lady, good morning. (*To* Freb. Well, my gentle friend,
You see I have not linger'd long behind.
Freb. No, thou art sooner than I look'd for thee.
Rez. A willing heart adds feather to the heel,
And makes the clown a winged Mercury.
De Mon. Then let me say, that with a grateful mind,
I do receive these tokens of good will;
And must regret, that, in my wayward moods,
I have too oft forgot the due regard
Your rank and talents claim.
Rez. No, no, De Monfort,
You have but rightly curb'd a wanton spirit,
Which makes me too neglectful of respect.
Let us be friends, and think of this no more.
Freb. Ay, let it rest with the departed shades
Of things which are no more; whilst lovely concord,
Follow'd by friendship sweet, and firm esteem,
Your future days enrich. O heavenly friendship!
Thou dost exalt the sluggish souls of men,
By thee conjoin'd, to great and glorious deeds;
As two dark clouds, when mix'd in middle air,
The vivid lightning's flash, and roar sublime.
Talk not of what is past, but future love.
De Mon. (*with dignity.*) No, Freberg, no, it must not. (*To* Rezenvelt.) No, my lord,
I will not offer you a hand of concord,
And poorly hide the motives which constrain me.
I would that, not alone, these present friends,
But every soul in Amberg were assembled,
That I, before them all, might here declare
I owe my spared life to your forbearance.
(*Holding out his hand.*) Take this from one who boasts no feeling warmth,
But never will deceive.
(Jane *smiles upon* De Monfort *with great approbation, and* Rezenvelt *runs up to him with open arms.*)
Rez. Away with hands! I'll have thee to my breast.
Thou art, upon my faith, a noble spirit!
De Mon. (*shrinking back from him.*) Nay, if you please, I am not so prepared—
My nature is of temperature too cold—
I pray you pardon me. (Jane's *countenance changes.*)
But take this hand, the token of respect;
The token of a will inclined to concord;
The token of a mind, that bears within
A sense impressive of the debt it owes you:
And cursed be its power, unnerved its strength,
If e'er again it shall be lifted up
To do you any harm.
Rez. Well, be it so, De Monfort, I'm contented;
I'll take thy hand, since I can have no more.
(*Carelessly.*) I take of worthy men whate'er they give.
Their heart I gladly take, if not, their hand!
If that too is withheld, a courteous word,
Or the civility of placid looks:
And, if e'en these are too great favours deem'd,
'Faith, I can set me down contentedly

With plain and homely greeting, or "God save ye!"

De Mon. (*aside, starting away from him. some paces.*)

By the good light, he makes a jest of it!

(Jane *seems greatly distressed, and* Freberg *endeavours to cheer her.*)

Freb. (*to* Jane.) Cheer up, my noble friend; all will go well;

For friendship is no plant of hasty growth.
Though rooted in esteem's deep soil, the slow
And gradual culture of kind intercourse
Must bring it to perfection.
(*To the* Countess.) My love, the morning, now, is far advanced;
Our friends elsewhere expect us; take your leave.

Lady. (*to* Jane.) Farewell, dear madam, till the evening hour.

Freb. (*to* De Mon.) Good day, De Monfort. (*To* Jane.) Most devoutly yours.

Rez. (*to* Freb.) Go not too fast, for I will follow you. [Exeunt Freberg *and his* Lady.

(*To* Jane.) The Lady Jane is yet a stranger here:
She might, perhaps, in this your ancient city
Find somewhat worth her notice.

Jane. I thank you, marquis, I am much engaged; I go not out to-day.

Rez. Then fare ye well! I see I cannot now
Be the proud man who shall escort you forth,
And show to all the world my proudest boast,
The notice and respect of Jane De Monfort.

De Mon. (*aside impatiently.*) He says farewell, and goes not!

Jane. (*to* Rez.) You do me honour.

Rez. Madam, adieu! (*To* Jane.) Good morning, noble marquis. [Exit.

(Jane *and* De Monfort *look expressively to one another without speaking, and then* Exeunt *severally.*)

ACT IV.

Scene I.—A hall or ante-chamber, with the folding doors of an inner apartment open, which discovers the guests rising from a banquet.

They enter and pass over the stage and Exeunt; and after them enter Rezenvelt and Freberg.

Freb. Alas, my Rezenvelt!
I vainly hoped the hand of gentle peace,
From this day's reconciliation sprung,
These rude unseemly jarrings had subdued;
But I have mark'd, e'en at the social board,
Such looks, such words, such tones, such untold things,
Too plainly told, 'twixt you and Monfort pass,
That I must now despair.
Yet who could think, two minds so much refined,
So near in excellence, should be removed,
So far removed, in generous sympathy?

Rez. Ay, far removed indeed!

Freb. And yet, methought, he made a noble effort,
And with a manly plainness bravely told
The galling debt he owes to your forbearance.

Rez. 'Faith! so he did, and so did I receive it;
When, with spread arms, and heart e'en moved to tears,
I frankly proffer'd him a friend's embrace:
And, I declare, had he as such received it,
I from that very moment had forborne
All opposition, pride-provoking jest,
Contemning carelessness, and all offence;
And had caress'd him as a worthy heart,
From native weakness such indulgence claiming.
But since he proudly thinks that cold respect,
The formal tokens of his lordly favour,
So precious are, that I would sue for them
As fair distinction in the public eye,
Forgetting former wrongs, I spurn it all.
And but that I do bear that noble woman,
His worthy, his incomparable sister,
Such fix'd profound regard, I would expose him;
And as a mighty bull, in senseless rage,
Roused at the baiter's will, with wretched rags
Of ire-provoking scarlet, chafes and bellows,
I'd make him at small cost of paltry wit,
With all his deep and manly faculties,
The scorn and laugh of fools.

Freb. For heaven's sake, my friend, restrain your wrath!
For what has Monfort done of wrong to you,
Or you to him, bating one foolish quarrel,
Which you confess from slight occasion rose,
That in your breasts such dark resentment dwells
So fix'd, so hopeless?

Rez. O! from our youth he has distinguished me
With every mark of hatred and disgust.
For e'en in boyish sports I still opposed
His proud pretensions to pre-eminence;
Nor would I to his ripen'd greatness give
That fulsome adulation of applause
A senseless crowd bestow'd. Though poor in fortune,
I still would smile at vain assuming wealth:
But when unlook'd-for fate on me bestow'd
Riches and splendour equal to his own,
Though I, in truth, despise such poor distinction,
Feeling inclined to be at peace with him,
And with all men besides, I curb'd my spirit,
And sought to soothe him. Then, with spiteful rage,
From small offence he rear'd a quarrel with me,
And dared me to the field. The rest you know
In short, I still have been th' opposing rock,
O'er which the stream of his o'erflowing pride
Hath foam'd and fretted. See'st thou how it is?

Freb. Too well I see, and warn thee to beware
Such streams have oft, by swelling floods sun charged,
Borne down, with sudden and impetuous force,
The yet unshaken stone of opposition,
Which had for ages stopp'd their flowing course.
I pray thee, friend, beware.

Rez. Thou canst not mean—he will not murder me?

Freb. What a proud heart, with such dark passion toss'd,
May, in the anguish of its thoughts, conceive,
I will not dare to say.

Rez. Ha, ha! thou know'st him not.

Full often have I mark'd it in his youth,
And could have almost loved him for the weakness:
He's form'd with such antipathy, by nature,
To all infliction of corporeal pain,
To wounding life, e'en to the sight of blood,
He cannot if he would.
Freb. Then fy upon thee!
It is not generous to provoke him thus.
But let us part: we'll talk of this again.
Something approaches.—We are here too long.
Rez. Well, then, to-morrow I'll attend your call.
Here lies my way. Good night. [Exit.

Enter Conrad.

Con. Forgive, I pray, my lord, a stranger's boldness.
I have presumed to wait your leisure here,
Though at so late an hour.
Freb. But who art thou?
Con. My name is Conrad, sir,
A humble suitor to your honour's goodness,
Who is the more imbolden'd to presume,
In that De Monfort's brave and noble marquis
Is so much famed for good and generous deeds.
Freb. You are mistaken, I am not the man.
Con. Then, pardon me: I thought I could not err;
That mien so dignified, that piercing eye
Assured me it was he.
Freb. My name is not De Monfort, courteous stranger;
But if you have a favour to request,
I may, with him, perhaps, befriend your suit.
Con. I thank your honour, but I have a friend
Who will commend me to De Monfort's favour;
The Marquis Rezenvelt has known me long,
Who, says report, will soon become his brother.
Freb. If thou wouldst seek thy ruin from De Monfort,
The name of Rezenvelt employ, and prosper;
But, if aught good, use any name but his.
Con. How may this be?
Freb. I cannot now explain.
Early to-morrow call upon Count Freberg;
So am I call'd, each burgher knows my house,
And there instruct me how to do you service.
Good-night. [Exit.
Con. (*alone.*) Well, this mistake may be of service to me:
And yet my business I will not unfold
To this mild, ready, promise-making courtier;
I've been by such too oft deceived already.
But if such violent enmity exists
Between De Monfort and this Rezenvelt,
He'll prove my advocate by opposition.
For if De Monfort would reject my suit,
Being the man whom Rezenvelt esteems,
Being the man he hates, a cord as strong,
Will he not favour me? I'll think of this. [Exit.

Scene II.—A lower apartment in Jerome's house, with a wide, folding glass door, looking into a garden, where the trees and shrubs are brown and leafless.

Enter De Monfort with a thoughtful, frowning aspect, and paces slowly across the stage, Jerome following behind him, with a timid step. De Monfort, hearing him, turns suddenly about.

De Mon. (*angrily.*) Who follows me to this sequester'd room?
Jer. I have presumed, my lord. 'Tis somewhat late:
I am inform'd you eat at home to-night;
Here is a list of all the dainty fare
My busy search has found; please to peruse it.
De Mon. Leave me: begone! Put hemlock in thy soup,
Or deadly night-shade, or rank hellebore,
And I will mess upon it.
Jer. Heaven forbid!
Your honour's life is all too precious, sure—
De Mon. (*sternly.*) Did I not say begone?
Jer. Pardon, my lord, I'm old, and oft forget.
[Exit.
De Mon. (*looking after him, as if his heart smote him.*) Why will they thus mistime their foolish zeal,
That I must be so stern?
O, that I were upon some desert coast!
Where howling tempests and the lashing tide
Would stun me into deep and senseless quiet;
As the storm-beaten traveller droops his head,
In heavy, dull, lethargick weariness,
And, midst the roar of jarring elements,
Sleeps to awake no more.
What am I grown? all things are hateful to me.

Enter Manuel.

(*Stamping with his foot.*) Who bids thee break upon my privacy?
Man. Nay, good my lord! I heard you speak aloud,
And dreamt not, surely, that you were alone.
De Mon. What, dost thou watch, and pin thine ears to holes,
To catch those exclamations of the soul,
Which heaven alone should hear? Who hired thee pray?
Who basely hired thee for a task like this?
Man. My lord, I cannot hold. For fifteen years
Long troubled years, I have your servant been,
Nor hath the proudest lord in all the realm,
With firmer, with more honourable faith
His sovereign served, than I have served you;
But if my honesty is doubted now,
Let him who is more faithful take my place,
And serve you better.
De Mon. Well, be it as thou wilt. Away with thee!
Thy loud-mouth'd boasting is no rule for me
To judge thy merit by.

Enter Jerome hastily, and pulls Manuel away.

Jer. Come, Manuel, come away; thou art not wise.
The stranger must depart and come again,
For now his honour will not be disturb'd.
[Exit Manuel, sullenly.
De Mon. A stranger said'st thou?
(*Drops his handkerchief.*)
Jer. I did, good sir, but he shall go away;

You shall not be disturb'd.
(*Stooping to lift the handkerchief.*)
You have dropp'd somewhat.
De Mon. (*preventing him.*) Nay, do not stoop, my friend! I pray thee not!
Thou art too old to stoop.—
I'm much indebted to thee.—Take this ring—
I love thee better than I seem to do.
I pray thee do it—thank me not—What stranger?
Jer. A man who does most earnestly entreat
To see your honour; but I know him not.
De Mon. Then let him enter. [Exit Jerome.

A pause. Enter Conrad.

De Mon. You are the stranger who would speak with me?
Con. I am so far unfortunate, my lord,
That, though my fortune on your favour hangs,
I am to you a stranger.
De Mon. How may this be? What can I do for you?
Con. Since thus your lordship does so frankly ask,
The tiresome preface of apology
I will forbear, and tell my tale at once.—
In plodding drudgery I've spent my youth,
A careful penman in another's office;
And now, my master and employer dead,
They seek to set a stripling o'er my head,
And leave me on to drudge, e'en to old age,
Because I have no friend to take my part.
It is an office in your native town,
For I am come from thence, and I am told
You can procure it for me. Thus, my lord,
From the repute of goodness which you bear,
I have presumed to beg.
De Mon. They have befool'd thee with a false report.
Con. Alas! I see it is in vain to plead.
Your mind is prepossess'd against a wretch,
Who has, unfortunately for his weal,
Offended the revengeful Rezenvelt.
De Mon. What dost thou say?
Con. What I, perhaps, had better leave unsaid.
Who will believe my wrongs if I complain?
I am a stranger, Rezenvelt my foe.
Who will believe my wrongs?
De Mon. (*eagerly catching him by the coat.*)
I will believe them!
Though they were base as basest, vilest deeds,
In ancient record told, I would believe them!
Let not the smallest atom of unworthiness
That he has put upon thee be conceal'd.
Speak boldly, tell it all; for, by the light!
I'll be thy friend, I'll be thy warmest friend,
If he has done thee wrong.
Con. Nay, pardon me, it were not well advised,
If I should speak so freely of the man
Who would so soon your nearest kinsman be.
De Mon. What canst thou mean by this?
Con. That Marquis Rezenvelt
Has pledged his faith unto your noble sister,
And soon will be the husband of her choice.
So I am told, and so the world believes.
De Mon. 'Tis false! 'tis basely false!
What wretch could drop from his envenom'd tongue
A tale so damn'd?—It chokes my breath—
(*Stamping with his foot.*) What wretch did tell it thee?
Con. Nay, every one with whom I have conversed
Has held the same discourse. I judge it not.
But you, my lord, who with the lady dwell,
You best can tell what her deportment speaks;
Whether her conduct and unguarded words
Belie such rumour.
(De Monfort *pauses, staggers backward, and sinks into a chair; then starting up hastily.*)
De Mon. Where am I now? midst all the cursed thoughts,
That on my soul like stinging scorpions prey'd,
This never came before——O, if it be!
The thought will drive me mad.—Was it for this
She urged her warm request on bended knee?
Alas! I wept, and thought of sister's love,
No damned love like this.
Fell devil! 'tis hell itself has lent thee aid
To work such sorcery! (*Pauses.*) I'll not believe it,
I must have proof clear as the noonday sun
For such foul charge as this! Who waits without?
(*Paces up and down, furiously agitated.*)
Con. (*aside.*) What have I done? I've carried this too far.
I've roused a fierce, ungovernable madman.

Enter Jerome.

De Mon. (*in a loud, angry voice.*) Where did she go, at such an early hour,
And with such slight attendance?
Jer. Of whom inquires your honour.
De Mon. Why, of your lady. Said I not my sister?
Jer. The Lady Jane, your sister?
De Mon. (*in a faltering voice.*) Yes, I did call her so.
Jer. In truth, I cannot tell you where she went.
E'en now, from the short beechen walk hard by,
I saw her through the garden gate return.
The Marquis Rezenvelt, and Freberg's Countess,
Are in her company. This way they come,
As being nearer to the back apartments;
But I shall stop them if it be your will,
And bid them enter here.
De Mon. No, stop them not. I will remain unseen,
And mark them as they pass. Draw back a little.
(Conrad *seems alarmed, and steals off unnoticed.* De Monfort *grasps* Jerome *tightly by the hand, and drawing back with him two or three steps, not to be seen from the garden, waits in silence, with his eyes fixed on the glass door.*)
I hear their footsteps on the grating sand:
How like the croaking of a carrion bird,
That hateful voice sounds to the distant ear!
And now she speaks—her voice sounds cheerly too—
Cursed be their mirth!
Now, now, they come; keep closer still! keep steady!
(*Taking hold of* Jerome *with both hands.*)
Jer. My lord, you tremble much.
De Mon. What, do I shake?

Jer. You do, in truth, and your teeth chatter too.
De Mon. See! see they come! he strutting by her side.
(Jane, Rezenvelt, *and* Countess Freberg *appear through the glass door, pursuing their way up a short walk leading to the other wing of the house.*)
See, his audacious face he turns to hers;
Uttering with confidence some nauseous jest.
And she endures it too—O this looks vilely!
Ha! mark that courteous motion of his arm—
What does he mean?—he dares not take her hand!
(*Pauses and looks eagerly.*) By heaven and hell he does!
(*Letting go his hold of* Jerome, *he throws out his hands vehemently, and thereby pushes him against the scene.*)
Jer. O! I am stunn'd! my head is crack'd in twain:
Your honour does forget how old I am.
De Mon. Well, well, the wal is harder than I wist.
Begone, and whine within.
[Exit Jerome, *with a sad, rueful countenance.*
De Monfort *comes forward to the front of the stage, and makes a long pause, expressive of great agony of mind.*)
It must be so: each passing circumstance;
Her hasty journey here; her keen distress
Whene'er my soul's abhorrence I express'd;
Ay, and that damned reconciliation,
With tears extorted from me; O, too well!
All, all too well bespeak the shameful tale.
I should have thought of heaven and hell conjoin'd,
The morning star mix'd with infernal fire,
Ere I had thought of this—
Hell's blackest magic, in the midnight hour,
With horrid spells and incantation dire,
Such combination opposite, unseemly,
Of fair and loathsome, excellent and base,
Did ne'er produce—But every thing is possible,
So as it may my misery enhance!
O! I did love her with such pride of soul!
When other men, in gay pursuit of love,
Each beauty follow'd, by her side I stay'd
Far prouder of a brother's station there,
Than all the favours favour'd lovers boast.
We quarrell'd once, and when I could no more
The alter'd coldness of her eye endure,
I slipp'd o' tip-toe to her chamber door;
And when she ask'd who gently knock'd—O! O!
Who could have thought of this?
(*Throws himself into a chair, covers his face with his hand, and bursts into tears. After some time he starts up from his seat furiously.*)
Hell's direst torment seize the infernal villain!
Detested of my soul! I will have vengeance!
'll crush thy swelling pride—I'll still thy vaunting—
I'll do a deed of blood!—Why shrink I thus?
If, by some spell or magic sympathy,
Piercing the lifeless figure on that wall
Could pierce his bosom too, would I not cast it?
(*Throwing a dagger against the wall.*)
Shall groans and blood affright me? No, I'll do it.
ough gasping life beneath my pressure heaved,
And my soul shudder'd at the horrid brink,
I would not flinch.—Fy, this recalling nature!
O that his sever'd limbs were strew'd in air,
So as I saw it not!

Enter Rezenvelt behind from the glass door. De Monfort turns round, and on seeing him starts back, then drawing his sword, rushes furiously upon him.

Detested robber! now all forms are over;
Now open villany, now open hate!
Defend thy life!
Rez. De Monfort, thou art mad.
De Mon. Speak not, but draw. Now for thy hated life!
(*They fight:* Rezenvelt *parries his thrusts with great skill, and at last disarms him.*)
Then take my life, black fiend, for hell assists thee.
Rez. No, Monfort, but I'll take away your sword,
Not as a mark of disrespect to you,
But for your safety. By to-morrow's eve
I'll call on you myself and give it back;
And then, if I am charged with any wrong,
I'll justify myself. Farewell, strange man!
[Exit.
(De Monfort *stands for some time quite motionless, like one stupified. Enters to him a* Servant: *he starts.*)
De Mon. Ha! who art thou?
Ser. 'Tis I, an' please your honour.
De Mon. (*staring wildly at him.*) Who art thou?
Ser. Your servant Jacques.
De Mon. Indeed I knew thee not.
Leave me, and when Rezenvelt is gone,
Return and let me know.
Ser. He's gone already.
De Mon. How! is he gone so soon?
Ser. His servant told me,
He was in haste to go; as night comes on,
And at the evening hour he purposes
To visit some old friend, whose lonely mansion
Stands a short mile beyond the farther wood,
In which a convent is of holy nuns
Who chant this night a requiem to the soul
Of a departed sister. For so well
He loves such solemn music, he has order'd
His horses onward by the usual road,
Meaning on foot to cross the wood alone.
So says his knave. Good may it do him, sooth!
I would not walk through those wild dells alone
For all his wealth. For there, as I have heard,
Foul murders have been done, and ravens scream,
And things unearthly, stalking through the night
Have scared the lonely traveller from his wits.
(De Monfort *stands fixed in thought.*)
I've ta'en your mare, an' please you, from her field.
And wait your farther orders.
(De Monfort *heeds him not.*)
Her hoofs are sound, and where the saddle gall'd,
Begins to mend. What further must be done?
(De Monfort *still heeds him not.*)
His honour heeds me not. Why should I stay?
De Mon. (*eagerly, as he is going.*) He goes alone, saidst thou?

Ser. His servant told me so.
De Mon. And at what hour?
Ser. He 'parts from Amberg by the fall of eve.
Save you, my lord! how changed your countenance is!
Are you not well?
De Mon. Yes, I am well: begone,
And wait my orders by the city wall:
I'll that way bend, and speak to thee again.
[Exit Servant.

(De Monfort *walks rapidly two or three times across the stage; then seizes his dagger from the wall; looks steadfastly at its point, and* Exit *hastily.*)

Scene III.—Moonlight. A wild path in a wood, shaded with trees.

Enter De Monfort, with a strong expression of disquiet, mixed with fear, upon his face, looking behind him, and bending his ear to the ground, as if he listened to something.

De Mon. How hollow groans the earth beneath my tread!
Is there an echo here? Methinks it sounds
As though some heavy footstep follow'd me
I will advance no farther.
Deep settled shadows rest across the path,
And thickly-tangled boughs o'erhang this spot.
O that a tenfold gloom did cover it!
That midst the murky darkness I might strike;
As in the wild confusion of a dream,
Things horrid, bloody, terrible do pass,
As though they pass'd not; nor impress the mind
With the fix'd clearness of reality.
(*An owl is heard screaming near him.*)
(*Starting.*) What sound is that?
(*Listens, and the owl cries again.*)
It is the screech owl's cry.
Foul bird of night! what spirit guides thee here?
Art thou instinctive drawn to scenes of horror?
I've heard of this. (*Pauses and listens.*)
How those fall'n leaves so rustle on the path,
With whispering noise, as though the earth around me
Did utter secret things!
The distant river too, bears to mine ear
A dismal wailing. O mysterious night!
Thou art not silent; many tongues hast thou.
A distant gathering blast sounds through the wood,
And dark clouds fleetly hasten o'er the sky:
O! that a storm would rise, a raging storm;
Amidst the roar of warring elements
I'd lift my hand and strike! but this pale light,
The calm distinctness of each stilly thing,
Is terrible. (*Starting.*) Footsteps are near—
He comes! he comes! I'll watch him farther on—
I cannot do it here. [Exit.

Enter Rebenvelt, and continues his way slowly from the bottom of the stage: as he advances to the front, the owl screams, he stops and listens, and the owl screams again.

Rez. Ha! does the night-bird greet me on my way?
How much his hooting is in harmony
With such a scene as this! I like it well.
Oft when a boy, at the still twilight hour,
I've leant my back against some knotted oak,
And loudly mimick'd him, till to my call
He answer would return, and through the gloom,
We friendly converse held.
Between me and the star-bespangled sky,
Those aged oaks their crossing branches wave,
And through them looks the pale and placid moon.
How like a crocodile, or winged snake,
Yon sailing cloud bears on its dusky length!
And now transformed by the passing wind,
Methinks it seems a flying Pegasus.
Ay, but a shapeless band of blacker hue
Come swiftly after.—
A hollow murmuring wind sounds through the trees;
I hear it from afar; this bodes a storm.
I must not linger here—
(*A bell heard at some distance.*)
The convent bell.
'Tis distant still: it tells their hour of prayer.
It sends a solemn sound upon the breeze,
That, to a fearful superstitious mind,
In such a scene, would like a death-knell come.
[Exit.

ACT V.

Scene I.—The inside of a convent chapel, of old Gothic architecture, almost dark: two torches only are seen at a distance, burning over a newly-covered grave. Lightning is seen flashing through the windows, and thunder heard, with the sound of wind beating upon the building.

Enter two Monks.

1st Monk. The storm increases: hark how dismally
It howls along the cloisters. How goes time?
2d Monk. It is the hour: I hear them near at hand:
And when the solemn requiem has been sung
For the departed sister, we'll retire.
Yet, should this tempest still more violent grow,
We'll beg a friendly shelter till the morn.
1st Monk. See, the procession enters: let us join.
(*The organ strikes up a solemn prelude.*)

Enter a procession of Nuns, with the Abbess, bearing torches. After compassing the grave twice, and remaining there some time, the organ plays a grand dirge, whilst they stand round the grave.

THE BURIAL.

Departed soul, whose poor remains
This hallow'd lonely grave contains;
Whose passing storm of life is o'er,
Whose pains and sorrows are no more;
Bless'd be thou with the bless'd above!
Where all is joy, and purity, and love.

Let HIM, in might and mercy dread,
Lord of the living and the dead;
In whom the stars of heaven rejoice,
And the ocean lifts its voice;
Thy spirit, purified, to glory raise
To sing with holy saints his everlasting praise!

Departed soul, who in this earthly scene
Hast our lowly sister been,
Swift be thy way to where the blessed dwell!
Until we meet thee there, farewell! farewell!

Enter a young PENSIONER, with a wild, terrified look, her hair and dress all scattered, and rushes forward amongst them.

Abb. Why comest thou here, with such disorder'd looks,
To break upon our sad solemnity?

Pen. O! I did hear through the receding blast,
Such horrid cries! they made my blood run chill.

Abb. 'Tis but the varied voices of the storm,
Which many times will sound like distant screams;
It has deceived thee.

Pen. O no, for twice it call'd, so loudly call'd,
With horrid strength, beyond the pitch of nature;
And murder! murder! was the dreadful cry.
A third time it return'd with feeble strength,
But o' the sudden ceased, as though the words
Were smother'd rudely in the grappled throat,
And all was still again, save the wild blast
Which at a distance growl'd—
O! it will never from my mind depart!
That dreadful cry, all i' the instant still'd:
For then, so near, some horrid deed was done,
And none to rescue.

Abb. Where didst thou hear it?

Pen. In the higher cells,
As now a window, open'd by the storm,
I did attempt to close.

1st Monk. I wish our brother Bernard were arrived;
He is upon his way.

Abb. Be not alarm'd; it still may be deception.
'Tis meet we finish our solemnity,
Nor show neglect unto the honour'd dead.

(*Gives a sign, and the organ plays again: just as it ceases a loud knocking is heard without.*)

Abb. Ha! who may this be? hush!

(*Knocking heard again.*)

2d Monk. It is the knock of one in furious haste,
Hush! hush! What footsteps come? Ha! brother Bernard.

Enter BERNARD, bearing a lantern.

1st Monk. See, what a look he wears of stiffen'd fear.
Where hast thou been, good brother?

Bern. I've seen a horrid sight!

(*All gathering round him and speaking at once.*)
What hast thou seen?

Bern. As on I hasten'd, bearing thus my light,
Across the path, not fifty paces off,
I saw a murder'd corse, stretch'd on his back,
Smear'd with new blood, as though but newly slain.

Abb. A man or woman was't?

Bern. A man, a man!

Abb. Didst thou examine if within its breast
There yet were lodged some small remains of life?
Was it quite dead?

Bern. Naught in the grave is deader.
look'd but once, yet life did never lodge
In any form so laid.—
A chilly horror seized me, and I fled.

1st Monk. And does the face seem all unknown to thee?

Bern. The face! I would not on the face have look'd
For e'en a kingdom's wealth, for all the world!
O no! the bloody neck, the bloody neck!

(*Shaking his head and shuddering with horror. Loud knocking heard without.*)

Sist. Good mercy! who comes next?

Bern. Not far behind
I left our brother Thomas on the road;
But then he did repent him as he went
And threaten'd to return.

2d Monk. See, here he comes.

Enter Brother THOMAS, with a wild, terrified look.

1st Monk. How wild he looks!

Bern. (*going up to him eagerly.*) What, hast thou seen it too?

Thom. Yes, yes! it glared upon me as it pass'd.

Bern. What glared upon thee?

(*All gathering round* Thomas, *and speaking at once.*)
O! what hast thou seen

Thom. As, striving with the blast, I onward came,
Turning my feeble lantern from the wind,
Its light upon a dreadful visage gleam'd,
Which paused and look'd upon me as it pass'd.
But such a look, such wildness of despair,
Such horror-strain'd features, never yet
Did earthly visage show. I shrunk and shudder'd.
If a damn'd spirit may to earth return,
I've seen it.

Bern. Was there any blood upon it?

Thom. Nay, as it pass'd, I did not see its form;
Naught but the horrid face.

Bern. It is the murderer.

1st Monk. What way went it?

Thom. I durst not look till I had pass'd it far.
Then turning round, upon the rising bank,
I saw, between me and the paly sky,
A dusky form, tossing and agitated.
I stopp'd to mark it; but, in truth, I found
'Twas but a sapling bending to the wind,
And so I onward hied, and look'd no more.

1st Monk. But we must look to't; we must follow it:
Our duty so commands. (*To 2d* Monk.) Will you go, brother?
(*To* Bernard.) And you, good Bernard?

Bern. If I needs must go.

1st Monk. Come, we must all go.

Abb. Heaven be with you, then!

[EXEUNT Monks.

Pen. Amen! amen! Good heaven be with us all!
O what a dreadful night!

Abb. Daughters, retire; peace to the peaceful dead!
Our solemn ceremony now is finish'd. [EXEUNT

SCENE II.—A LARGE ROOM IN THE CONVENT, VERY DARK.

Enter the ABBESS, young PENSIONER bearing a light, and several NUNS; she sets down the light on a table at the bottom of the stage, so that the room is still very gloomy.

Abb. They have been longer absent than I thought;
I fear he has escaped them.

1st Nun. Heaven forbid!

Pen. No, no, found out foul murder ever is,
And the foul murderer too.
2d Nun. The good Saint Francis will direct their search;
The blood so near this holy convent shed
For threefold vengeance calls.
Abb. I hear a noise within the inner court—
They are return'd; (*listening;*) and Bernard's voice I hear:
They are return'd.
Pen. Why do I tremble so?
It is not I who ought to tremble thus.
2d Nun. I hear them at the door.
Bern. (*without.*) Open the door, I pray thee, brother Thomas;
I cannot now unhand the prisoner.
(*All speak together, shrinking back from the door, and staring upon one another.*)
He is with them!
(*A folding door at the bottom of the stage is opened, and enter* Bernard, Thomas, *and the other two* Monks, *carrying lanterns in their hands and bringing in* De Monfort. *They are likewise followed by other* Monks. *As they lead forward* De Monfort, *the light is turned away, so that he is seen obscurely; but when they come to the front of the stage, they turn the light side of their lanterns on him at once, and his face is seen in all the strengthened horror of despair, with his hands and clothes bloody.* Abbess *and* Nuns *speak at once, and start back.*)
Holy saints be with us!
Bern. (*to* Abb.) Behold the man of blood!
Abb. Of misery too; I cannot look upon him.
Bern. (*to* Nuns.) Nay, holy sisters, turn not thus away.
Speak to him, if, perchance, he will regard you:
For from his mouth we have no utterance heard,
Save one deep groan and smother'd exclamation,
When first we seized him.
Abb. (*to* De Mon.) Most miserable man, how art thou thus? (*Pause.*)
Thy tongue is silent, but those bloody hands
Do witness horrid things. What is thy name?
De Mon. (*roused, looks steadfastly at the* Abbess *for some time, then speaking in a short hurried voice.*) I have no name.
Abb. (*to* Bern.) Do it thyself; I'll speak to him no more.
Pen. O holy saints! that this should be the man
Who did against his fellow lift the stroke,
Whilst he so loudly call'd.—
Still in my ears it rings: O murder! murder!
De Mon. (*starting.*) He calls again!
Pen. No, he did call, but now his voice is still'd.
'Tis past.
De Mon. 'Tis past.
Pen. Yes, it is past! art thou not he who did it?
(De Monfort *utters a deep groan, and is supported from falling by the* Monks. *A noise is heard without.*)
Abb. What noise is this of heavy lumbering steps,
Like men who with a weighty burden come?
Bern. It is the body: I have orders given
That here it should be laid.
(*Enter men, bearing the body of* Rezenvelt, *covered with a white cloth, and set it down in the middle of the room: they then uncover it.* De Monfort *stands fixed and motionless with horror, only that a sudden shivering seems to pass over him when they uncover the corpse. The* Abbess *and* Nuns *shrink back and retire to some distance, all the rest fixing their eyes steadfastly upon* De Monfort. *A long pause.*)
Bern. (*to* De Mon.) Seest thou that lifeless corpse, those bloody wounds?
See how he lies, who but so shortly since
A living creature was, with all the powers
Of sense, and motion, and humanity!
O! what a heart had he who did this deed!
1st Monk. (*looking at the body.*) How hard those teeth against the lips are press'd,
As though he struggled still!
2d Monk. The hands, too, clench'd: the last efforts of nature.
(De Monfort *still stands motionless. Brother* Thomas *then goes to the body, and raising up the head a little, turns it toward* De Monfort.)
Thom. Know'st thou this ghastly face?
De Mon. (*putting his hands before his face in violent perturbation.*) O do not! do not! Veil it from my sight!
Put me to any agony but this!
Thom. Ha! dost thou then confess the dreadful deed?
Hast thou against the laws of awful Heaven
Such horrid murder done? What fiend could tempt thee?
(*Pauses and looks steadfastly at* De Monfort.)
De Mon. I hear thy words, but do not hear their sense—
Hast thou not cover'd it?
Bern. (*to* Thom.) Forbear, my brother, for thou seest right well
He is not in a state to answer thee.
Let us retire and leave him for a while.
These windows are with iron grated o'er;
He is secured, and other duty calls.
Thom. Then let it be.
Bern. (*to* Monks, *&c.*) Come, let us all depart.
(EXEUNT Abbess *and* Nuns, *followed by the* Monks. *One* Monk *lingering a little behind.*)
De Mon. All gone! (*Perceiving the* Monk.) O stay thou here!
Monk. It must not be.
De Mon. I'll give thee gold; I'll make thee rich in gold,
If thou wilt stay e'en but a little while.
Monk. I must not, must not stay.
De Mon. I do conjure thee!
Monk. I dare not stay with thee. (*Going.*)
De Mon. And wilt thou go?
(*Catching hold of him eagerly.*)
O! throw thy cloak upon this grisly form!
The unclosed eyes do stare upon me still.
O do not leave me thus!
[Monk *covers the body, and* EXIT.
De Mon. (*alone, looking at the covered body, but at a distance.*) Alone with thee! but thou art nothing now.
'Tis done, 'tis number'd with the things o'erpast;

Would, would it were to come!—
What fated end, what darkly gathering cloud
Will close on all this horror?
O that dire madness would unloose my thoughts,
And fill my mind with wildest fantasies,
Dark, restless, terrible! aught, aught but this!
(*Pauses and shudders.*)
How with convulsive life he heaved beneath me,
E'en with the death's wound gored! O horrid, horrid!
Methinks I feel him still.—What sound is that?
I heard a smother'd groan.—It is impossible!
(*Looking steadfastly at the body.*)
It moves! it moves! the cloth doth heave and swell.
It moves again! I cannot suffer this—
Whate'er it be, I will uncover it.
(*Runs to the corpse, and tears off the cloth in despair.*)
All still beneath.
Naught is there here but fix'd and gaisly death.
How sternly fix'd! O! those glazed eyes!
They look upon me still.
(*Shrinks back with horror.*)
Come, madness! come unto me, senseless death!
I cannot suffer this! Here, rocky wall,
Scatter these brains, or dull them!
(*Runs furiously, and, dashing his head against the wall, falls upon the floor.*)

Enter two Monks hastily.

1*st Monk.* See; wretched man, he hath destroy'd himself.

2*d Monk.* He does but faint. Let us remove him hence.

1*st Monk.* We did not well to leave him here alone.

2*d Monk.* Come, let us bear him to the open air.

[Exeunt, *bearing out* De Monfort.

SCENE III.—BEFORE THE GATES OF THE CONVENT.

Enter Jane De Monfort, Freberg, and Manuel. As they are proceeding towards the gate, Jane stops short and shrinks back.

Freb. Ha! wherefore? has a sudden illness seized thee?

Jane. No, no, my friend.—And yet I'm very faint—
I dread to enter here.

Man. Ay, so I thought:
For, when between the trees, that abbey tower
First show'd its top, I saw your countenance change.
But breathe a little here; I'll go before,
And make inquiry at the nearest gate.

Freb. Do so, good Manuel.
(Manuel *goes and knocks at the gate.*)
Courage, dear madam: all may yet be well.
Rezenvelt's servant, frighten'd with the storm,
And seeing that his master join'd him not,
As by appointment, at the forest edge,
Might be alarm'd, and give too ready ear
To an unfounded rumour.
He saw it not; he came not here himself.

Jane. (*looking eagerly to the gate, where* Manuel *talks with the Porter.*) Ha! see, he talks with some one earnestly.
And seest thou not that motion of his hands?
He stands like one who hears a horrid tale.
Almighty God! (Manuel *goes into the convent.*)
He comes not back; he enters.

Freb. Bear up, my noble friend.

Jane. I will, I will! But this suspense is dreadful.

(*A long pause.* Manuel *re-enters from the convent, and comes forward slowly with a sad countenance.*)

Is this the face of one who bears good tidings!
O God! his face doth tell the horrid fact;
There is naught doubtful here.

Freb. How is it, Manuel?

Man. I've seen him through a crevice in his door:
It is indeed my master. (*Bursting into tears.*)

(Jane *faints, and is supported by* Freberg.)

Enter Abbess and several Nuns from the convent, who gather about her, and apply remedies. She recovers.

1*st Nun.* The life returns again.

2*d Nun.* Yes, she revives.

Abb. (*to* Freb.) Let me entreat this noble lady's leave
To lead her in. She seems in great distress.
We would with holy kindness soothe her wo,
And do by her the deeds of Christian love.

Freb. Madam, your goodness has my grateful thanks.

Exeunt, *supporting* Jane *into the convent.*

SCENE IV.—DE MONFORT IS DISCOVERED SITTING IN A THOUGHTFUL POSTURE. HE REMAINS SO FOR SOME TIME. HIS FACE AFTERWARD BEGINS TO APPEAR AGITATED, LIKE ONE WHOSE MIND IS HARROWED WITH THE SEVEREST THOUGHTS; THEN, STARTING FROM HIS SEAT, HE CLASPS HIS HANDS TOGETHER, AND HOLDS THEM UP TO HEAVEN.

De Mon. O that I ne'er had known the light of day!
That filmy darkness on mine eyes had hung,
And closed me out from the fair face of nature!
O that my mind in mental darkness pent,
Had no perception, no distinction known,
Of fair, or foul, perfection, or defect,
Nor thought conceived of proud pre-eminence!
O that it had! O that I had been form'd
An idiot from the birth! a senseless changeling,
Who eats his glutton's meal with greedy haste,
Nor knows the hand who feeds him.—
(*Pauses; then, in a calmer, sorrowful voice.*)
What am I now? how ends the day of life?
For end it must; and terrible this gloom,
This storm of horrors that surrounds its close.
This little term of nature's agony
Will soon be o'er, and what is past is past:
But shall I then, on the dark lap of earth
Lay me to rest, in still unconsciousness,
Like senseless clod that doth no pressure feel
From wearing foot of daily passenger;
Like steeped rock o'er which the breaking waves
Bellow and foam unheard? O would I could!

Enter Manuel, who springs forward to his master, but is checked upon perceiving De Monfort draw back and look sternly at him.

Man. My lord, my master! O my dearest master!
(De Monfort *still looks at him without speaking.*)

Nay, do not thus regard me, good my lord!
Speak to me: am I not your faithful Manuel?
De Mon. (*in a hasty, broken voice.*) Art thou alone?
Man. No, sir, the Lady Jane is on her way;
She is not far behind.
De Mon. (*tossing his arm over his head in an agony.*) This is too much! All I can bear but this!
It must not be.—Run and prevent her coming.
Say, he who is detain'd a prisoner here
Is one to her unknown. I now am nothing.
I am a man of holy claims bereft;
Out of the pale of social kindred cast;
Nameless and horrible.—
Tell her De Monfort far from hence is gone
Into a desolate and distant land,
Ne'er to return again. Fly, tell her this;
For we must meet no more.

Enter JANE DE MONFORT, bursting into the chamber, and followed by FREBERG, ABBESS, and several NUNS.

Jane. We must! we must! My brother, O my brother!
(De Monfort *turns away his head and hides his face with his arm.* Jane *stops short, and, making a great effort, turns to* Freberg, *and the others who followed her, and with an air of dignity stretches out her hand, beckoning them to retire. All retire but* Freberg, *who seems to hesitate.*)
And thou too, Freberg: call it not unkind.
[EXIT Freberg, Jane *and* De Monfort *only remain.*
Jane. My hapless Monfort!
(De Monfort *turns round and looks sorrowfully upon her; she opens her arms to him, and he, rushing into them, hides his face upon her breast and weeps.*)
Jane. Ay, give thy sorrow vent; here mayst thou weep.
De Mon. (*in broken accents.*) O! this, my sister, makes me feel again
The kindness of affection.
My mind has in a dreadful storm been tost;
Horrid and dark.—I thought to weep no more.
I've done a deed—But I am human still.
Jane. I know thy sufferings: leave thy sorrow free:
Thou art with one who never did upbraid;
Who mourns, who loves thee still.
De Mon. Ah! sayst thou so? no, no; it should not be.
(*Shrinking from her.*) I am a foul and bloody murderer,
For such embrace unmeet: O leave me! leave me!
Disgrace and public shame abide me now;
And all, alas! who do my kindred own,
The direful portion share.—Away, away!
Shall a disgraced and public criminal
Degrade thy name, and claim affinity
To noble worth like thine?—I have no name—
I'm nothing now, not e'en to thee; depart.
(*She takes his hand, and grasping it firmly, speaks with a determined voice.*)
Jane. De Monfort, hand in hand we have enjoy'd
The playful term of infancy together;
And in the rougher path of ripen'd years
We've been each other's stay. Dark lowers our fate,
And terrible the storm that gathers o'er us;
But nothing, till that latest agony
Which severs thee from nature, shall unloose
This fix'd and sacred hold. In thy dark prison-house;
In the terrific face of armed law;
Yea, on the scaffold, if it needs must be,
I never will forsake thee.
De Mon. (*looking at her with admiration.*) Heaven bless thy generous soul, my noble Jane!
I thought to sink beneath this load of ill,
Depress'd with infamy and open shame;
I thought to sink in abject wretchedness:
But for thy sake I'll rouse my manhood up,
And meet it bravely; no unseemly weakness,
I feel my rising strength, shall blot my end,
To clothe thy cheek with shame.
Jane. Yes, thou art noble still.
De Mon. With thee I am; who were not so with thee?
But ah! my sister, short will be the term.
Death's stroke will come, and in that state beyond,
Where things unutterable wait the soul,
New from its earthly tenement discharged,
We shall be sever'd far.
Far as the spotless purity of virtue
Is from the murderer's guilt, far shall we be.
This is the gulf of dead uncertainty
From which the soul recoils.
Jane. The God who made thee is a God of mercy;
Think upon this.
De Mon. (*shaking his head.*) No, no! this blood! this blood!
Jane. Yes, e'en the sin of blood may be forgiven,
When humble penitence hath once atoned.
De Mon. (*eagerly.*) What, after terms of length-en'd misery,
Imprison'd anguish of tormented spirits,
Shall I again, a renovated soul,
Into the blessed family of the good
Admittance have? Think'st thou that this may be?
Speak if thou canst: O speak me comfort here!
For dreadful fancies, like an armed host,
Have push'd me to despair. It is most horrible—
O speak of hope! If any hope there be.
(Jane *is silent, and looks sorrowfully upon him; then clasping her hands, and turning her eyes to heaven, seems to mutter a prayer.*)
De Mon. Ha! dost thou pray for me? Heaven hear thy prayer!
I fain would kneel.—Alas! I dare not do it.
Jane. Not so! all by th' Almighty Father form'd
May in their deepest misery call on him.
Come, kneel with me, my brother.
(*She kneels and prays to herself; he kneels by her, and clasps his hands fervently, but speaks not. A noise of chains clanking is heard without, and they both rise.*)
De Mon. Hear'st thou that noise? They come to interrupt us.
Jane. (*moving towards a side door.*) Then let us enter here.

De Mon. (*catching hold of her with a look of horror.*) Not there—not there—the corpse —the bloody corpse!

Jane. What, lies he there?—Unhappy Rezenvelt?

De Mon. A sudden thought has come across my mind;
How came it not before? Unhappy Rezenvelt!
Sayst thou but this?

Jane. What should I say? he was an honest man;
I still have thought him such, as such lament him.
(De Monfort *utters a deep groan.*)
What means this heavy groan?

De Mon. It hath a meaning.

Enter ABBESS and MONKS, with two OFFICERS of justice carrying fetters in their hands to put upon DE MONFORT.

Jane. (*starting.*) What men are these?

1*st Off.* Lady, we are the servants of the law,
And bear with us a power, which doth constrain
To bind with fetters this our prisoner.
(*Pointing to* De Monfort.)

Jane. A stranger uncondemn'd? this cannot be.

1*st Off.* As yet, indeed, he is by law unjudged,
But is so far condemn'd by circumstance,
That law, or custom sacred held as law,
Doth fully warrant us, and it must be.

Jane. Nay, say not so; he has no power t' escape:
Distress hath bound him with a heavy chain;
There is no need of yours.

1*st Off.* We must perform our office.

Jane. O! do not offer this indignity!

1*st Off.* Is it indignity in sacred law
To bind a murderer? (*To* 2*d* Officer.) Come, do thy work.

Jane. Harsh are thy words, and stern thy harden'd brow;
Dark is thine eye; but all some pity have
Unto the last extreme of misery.
I do beseech thee! if thou art a man—
(*Kneeling to him.*)

(De Monfort, *roused at this, runs up to* Jane, *and raises her hastily from the ground: then stretches himself up proudly.*)

De Mon. (*to* Jane.) Stand thou erect in native dignity;
And bend to none on earth the suppliant knee,
Though clothed in power imperial. To my heart
It gives a feller gripe than many irons.
(*Holding out his hands.*) Here, officers of law, bind on those shackles;
And, if they are too light, bring heavier chains.
Add iron to iron; load, crush me to the ground:
Nay, heap ten thousand weight upon my breast,
For that were best of all.

(*A long pause, whilst they put irons upon him. After they are on,* Jane *looks at him sorrowfully, and lets her head sink on her breast.* De Monfort *stretches out his hand, looks at them, and then at* Jane; *crosses them over his breast, and endeavours to suppress his feelings.*)

1*st Off.* I have it, too, in charge to move you hence, (*To* De Monfort.)
Into another chamber more secure.

De Mon. Well, I am ready, sir.

(*Approaching* Jane, *whom the* Abbess *is endeavouring to comfort, but to no purpose.*)

Ah! wherefore thus! most honour'd and most dear?
Shrink not at the accoutrements of ill,
Daring the thing itself.
(*Endeavouring to look cheerful.*)
Wilt thou permit me with a gyved hand?
(*She gives her hand, which he raises to his lips.*)
This was my proudest office.
[EXEUNT, De Monfort *leading out* Jane.

SCENE V.—AN APARTMENT IN THE CONVENT, OPENING INTO ANOTHER ROOM, WHOSE LOW, ARCHED DOOR IS SEEN IN THE BOTTOM OF THE STAGE. IN ONE CORNER A MONK IS SEEN KNEELING.

Enter another Monk, who, on perceiving him, stops till he rises from his knees, and then goes eagerly up to him.

1*st Monk.* How is the prisoner?

2*d Monk.* (*pointing to the door.*) He is within,
and the strong hand of death
Is dealing with him.

1*st Monk.* How is this, good brother?
Methought he braved it with a manly spirit;
And led, with shackled hands, his sister forth,
Like one resolved to bear misfortune bravely.

2*d Monk.* Yes, with heroic courage, for a while
He seem'd inspired; but, soon depress'd again,
Remorse and dark despair o'erwhelm'd his soul:
And, from the violent working of his mind,
Some stream of life within his breast has burst;
For many a time, within a little space,
The ruddy tide has rush'd into his mouth.
God grant his pains be short!

1*st Monk.* How does the lady?

2*d Monk.* She sits and bears his head upon her lap,
Wiping the cold drops from his ghastly face
With such a look of tender wretchedness,
It wrings the heart to see her.—
How goes the night?

1*st Monk.* It wears, methinks, upon the midnight hour.
It is a dark and fearful night: the moon
Is wrapp'd in sable clouds; the chill blast sounds
Like dismal lamentations. Ay, who knows
That voices mix with the dark midnight winds?
Nay, as I pass'd that yawning cavern's mouth,
A whispering sound, unearthly, reach'd my ear,
And o'er my head a chilly coldness crept.
Are there not wicked fiends and damned sprites,
Whom yawning charnels, and th' unfathom'd depths
Of secret darkness, at this fearful hour,
Do upwards send, to watch, unseen, around
The murderer's death-bed, at his fatal term,
Ready to hail with dire and horrid welcome,
Their future mate?—I do believe there are.

2*d Monk.* Peace, peace! a God of wisdom and of mercy,
Veils from our sight—Ha! hear that heavy groan.
(*A groan heard within.*)

1*st Monk.* It is the dying man.
(*Another groan.*)

2*d Monk.* God grant him rest!
(*Listening at the door.*)

I hear him struggling in the gripe of death.
O piteous heaven! (*Goes from the door.*)

Enter Brother THOMAS from the chamber.

How now, good brother?

Thom. Retire, my friends. O many a bed of death
With all its pangs and horrors I have seen,
But never aught like this! Retire, my friends;
The death-bell will its awful signal give,
When he has breathed his last.
I would move hence, but I am weak and faint:
Let me a moment on thy shoulder lean.
O, weak and mortal man!
(*Leans on second* Monk: *a pause.*)

Enter BERNARD from the chamber.

2d Monk. (*to* Bern.) How is your penitent?

Bern. He is with HIM who made him; HIM, who knows
The soul of man: before whose awful presence
Th' unsceptred tyrant, simple, helpless, stands
Like an unclothed babe. (*Bell tolls.*)
The dismal sound!
Retire and pray for the blood-stain'd soul:
May heaven have mercy on him! (*Bell tolls again.*)
[EXEUNT.

SCENE VI.—A HALL OR LARGE ROOM IN THE CONVENT. THE BODIES OF DE MONFORT AND REZENVELT ARE DISCOVERED LAID OUT UPON A LOW TABLE OR PLATFORM, COVERED WITH BLACK. FREBERG, BERNARD, ABBESS, MONKS, AND NUNS ATTENDING.

Abb. (*to* Freb.) Here must they lie, my lord, until we know
Respecting this the order of the law.

Freb. And you have wisely done, my reverend mother.

(*Goes to the table, and looks at the bodies, but without uncovering them.*)

Unhappy men! ye, both in nature rich,
With talents and with virtues were endued.
Ye should have loved, yet deadly rancour came,
And in the prime and manhood of your days
Ye sleep in horrid death. O direful hate!
What shame and wretchedness his portion is,
Who, for a secret inmate, harbours thee!
And who shall call him blameless, who excites,
Ungenerously excites, with careless scorn,
Such baleful passion in a brother's breast,
Whom heaven commands to love? Low are ye laid:
Still all contention now.—Low are ye laid:
I loved you both, and mourn your hapless fall.

Abb. They were your friends, my lord?

Freb. I loved them both. How does the Lady Jane?

Abb. She bears misfortune with intrepid soul.
I never saw in woman bow'd with grief,
Such moving dignity.

Freb. Ay, still the same.
I've known her long: of worth most excellent;
But in the day of wo, she ever rose
Upon the mind with added majesty,
As the dark mountain more sublimely towers
Mantled in clouds and storm.

Enter MANUEL and JEROME.

Man. (*pointing.*) Here, my good Jerome, here's a piteous sight.

Jer. A piteous sight! yet I will look upon him:
I'll see his face in death. Alas, alas!
I've seen him move a noble gentleman;
And when with vexing passion undisturb'd,
He look'd most graciously.
(*Lifts up in mistake the cloth from the body of* Rezenvelt, *and starts back with horror.*)
Oh! this was the bloody work! Oh, oh! oh, oh
That human hands could do it!
(*Drops the cloth again.*)

Man. That is the murder'd corpse; here lies De Monfort.
(*Going to uncover the other body.*)

Jer. (*turning away his head.*) No, no! I cannot look upon him now.

Man. Didst thou not come to see him?

Jer. Fy! cover him—inter him in the dark—
Let no one look upon him.

Bern. (*To* Jer.) Well dost thou show the abhorrence nature feels
For deeds of blood, and I commend thee well.
In the most ruthless heart compassion wakes
For one, who, from the hand of fellow man,
Hath felt such cruelty.
(*Uncovering the body of* Rezenvelt.)
This is the murder'd corse:
(*Uncovering the body of* De Monfort)
But see, I pray!
Here lies the murderer. What think'st thou here?
Look on those features, thou hast seen them oft,
With the last dreadful conflict of despair,
So fix'd in horrid strength.
See those knit brows; those hollow sunken eyes;
The sharpen'd nose, with nostrils all distent;
That writhed mouth, where yet the teeth appear,
In agony, to gnash the nether lip.
Think'st thou, less painful than the murderer's knife
Was such a death as this
Ay, and how changed too those matted locks!

Jer. Merciful heaven! his hair is grisly grown,
Changed to white age, that was, but too days since,
Black as the raven's plume. How may this be?

Bern. Such change, from violent conflict of the mind,
Will sometimes come.

Jer. Alas, alas! most wretched!
Thou wert too good to do a cruel deed,
And so it kill'd thee. Thou hast suffer'd for it.
God rest thy soul! I needs must touch thy hand,
And bid thee long farewell.
(*Laying his hand on* De Monfort.)

Bern. Draw back, draw back; see where the lady comes.

Enter JANE DE MONFORT.

'Freberg, *who has been for some time retired by himself to the bottom of the stage, now steps forward to lead her in, but checks himself on seeing the fixed sorrow of her countenance, and draws back respectfully.* Jane *advances to the table, and looks attentively at the covered bodies.* Manuel *points out the body of* De

Monfort, *and she gives a gentle inclination of the head, to signify that she understands him. She then bends tenderly over it, without speaking.*

Man. (*to* Jane, *as she raises her head.*) O, madam! my good lord.

Jane. Well says thy love, my good and faithful Manuel;
But we must mourn in silence.

Man. Alas! the times that I have follow'd him!

Jane. Forbear, my faithful Manuel. For this love
Thou hast my grateful thanks; and here's my hand:
Thou hast loved him, and I'll remember thee.
Where'er I am; in whate'er spot of earth
I linger out the remnant of my days,
I will remember thee.

Man. Nay, by the living God! where'er you are,
There will I be. I'll prove a trusty servant:
I'll follow you, even to the world's end.
My master's gone; and I indeed am mean,
Yet will I show the strength of nobler men,
Should any dare upon your honour'd worth
To put the slightest wrong. Leave you, dear lady!
Kill me, but say not this!

(*Throwing himself at her feet.*)

Jane. (*raising him.*) Well, then! be thou my servant, and my friend.
Art thou, good Jerome, too, in kindness come?
I see thou art. How goes it with thine age?

Jer. Ah, madam! wo and weakness dwell with age:
Would I could serve you with a young man's strength!
I'd spend my life for you.

Jane. Thanks, worthy Jerome.
O! who hath said the wretched have no friends?

Freb. In every sensible and generous breast
Affliction finds a friend; but unto thee,
Thou most exalted and most honourable,
The heart in warmest adoration bows,
And even a worship pays.

Jane. Nay, Freberg, Freberg! grieve me not, my friend.
He to whose ear my praise most welcome was,
Hears it no more; and, O our piteous lot!
What tongue will talk of him? Alas, alas!
This more than all will bow me to the earth;
I feel my misery here.
The voice of praise was wont to name us both;
I had no greater pride.

(*Covers her face with her hands, and bursts into tears. Here they all hang about her:* Freberg *supporting her tenderly.* Manual *embracing her knees, and old* Jerome *catching hold of her robe affectionntely.* Bernard, Abbess, Monks, *and* Nuns, *likewise, gather round her, with looks of sympathy.*)

Enter two Officers of law.

1*st Off.* Where is the prisoner?
into our hands he straight must be consign'd.

Bern. He is not subject now to human laws;
The prison that awaits him is the grave.

1*st Off.* Ha! say'st thou so? there is foul play in this.

Man. (*to* Off.) Hold thy unrighteous tongue, or hie thee hence,
Nor, in the presence of this honour'd dame,
Utter the slightest meaning of reproach.

1*st Off.* I am an officer on duty call'd,
And have authority to say, "How died he?"

(*Here* Jane *shakes off the weakness of grief, and repressing* Manuel, *who is about to reply to the* Officer, *steps forward with dignity.*)

Jane. Tell them, by whose authority you come
He died that death which best becomes a man
Who is with keenest sense of conscious ill
And deep remorse assail'd, a wounded spirit:
A death that kills the noble and the brave,
And only them. He had no other wound.

1*st Off.* And shall I trust to this?

Jane. Do as thou wilt
To one who can suspect my simple word
I have no more reply. Fulfil thine office.

1*st Off.* No, lady, I believe your honoured word,
And will no further search.

Jane. I thank your courtesy: thanks, thanks to all.
My reverend mother, and ye honour'd maids;
Ye holy men, and you, my faithful friends;
The blessing of the afflicted rest with you!
And He, who to the wretched is most piteous,
Will recompense you.—Freberg, thou art good;
Remove the body of the friend you loved:
'Tis Rezenvelt I mean. Take thou this charge:
'Tis meet, that with his noble ancestors
He lie entomb'd in honourable state.
And now I have a sad request to make,
Nor will these holy sisters scorn my boon:
That I, within these sacred cloister walls,
May raise a humble, nameless tomb to him,
Who, but for one dark passion, one dire deed,
Had claim'd a record of as noble worth
As e'er enrich'd the sculptured pedestal. [Exeunt

THE MARTYR.

PERSONS OF THE DRAMA.

MEN.

Nero, *Emperor of Rome.*
Cordenius Maro, *Officer of the Imperial Guard.*
Orcebe, *a Parthian Prince, visiting Rome.*
Sulpicius, *a Senator.*
Sylvius, *a brave Centurion.*
Roman Pontiff.
Christian Father or Bishop, Christian Brother, &c.
A Page, *in the family of* Sulpicius.
Senators, Christians, Soldiers, &c.

WOMEN.

Portia, *Daughter of* Sulpicius.
Christian Women.

Scene, Rome.

ACT I.

Scene I.—A private apartment in the house of Sulpicius.

Enter Sulpicius and Orcebe by opposite sides.

Sul. So soon return'd!—I read not in thy face
Aught to encourage or depress my wishes.
How is it, noble friend?

Orc. E'en as it was e'er I received my mission.
Cordenius Maro is on public duty;
I have not seen him.—When he knows your offer
His heart will bound with joy, like eaglet plumed
Whose out-stretch'd pinions wheeling round and round,
Shape their first circles in the sunny air.
Sul. And with good cause.
Orc. Methinks I see him now!
A face with blushes mantling to the brow,
Eyes with bright tears surcharged, and parted lips
Quivering to utter joy which hath no words.
Sul. His face, indeed, as I have heard thee say,
Is like a wave which sun and shadow cross;
Each thought makes there its momentary mark.
Orc. And then his towering form, and vaulting step,
As tenderness gives way to exultation!
O it had been a feast to look upon him;
And still shall be.
Sul. Art thou so well convinced—
He loves my little damsel? she is fair,
But seems to me too simple, gay, and thoughtless,
For noble Maro. Heiress as she is
To all my wealth, had I suspected sooner,
That he had smother'd wishes in his breast
As too presumptuous, or that she in secret
Preferr'd his silent homage to the praise
Of any other man, I had most frankly
Removed all hinderance to so fair a suit.
For, in these changeling and degenerate days,
I scarcely know a man of nobler worth.
Orc. Thou scarcely know'st! Say certainly thou dost not.
He is, to honest right, as simply true
As shepherd child on desert pasture bred,
Where falsehood and deceit have never been;
And to maintain them, ardent, skilful, potent,
As the shrewd leader of unruly tribes.
A simple heart and subtle spirit join'd,
Make such an union as in Nero's court
May pass for curious and unnatural.
Sul. But is the public duty very urgent,
That so untowardly delays our happiness?
Orc. The punishment of those poor Nazarenes,
Who, in defiance of imperial power,
To their forbidden faith and rites adhere
With obstinacy most astonishing.
Sul. A stubborn contumacy unaccountable!
Orc. There's sorcery in it, or some stronger power.
But be it what it may, or good or ill,
They look on death in its most dreadful form,
As martial heroes on a wreath of triumph.
The fires are kindled in the place of death,
And bells toll dismally. The life of Rome
In one vast clustering mass hangs round the spot,
And no one to his neighbour utters word,
But in an alter'd voice; with breath restrain'd,
Like those who speak at midnight near the dead.
Cordenius heads the band that guards the pile;
So station'd, who could speak to him of pleasure?
For it would seem as an ill-omen'd thing.
Sul. Cease; here comes Portia, with a careless face:
She knows not yet the happiness that waits her.
Orc. Who brings she with her thus, as if compell'd
By playful force?
Sul. 'Tis her Numidian page; a cunning imp,
Who must be woo'd to do the thing he's proud of.

Enter PORTIA, dragging SYPHAX after her, speaking as she enters.

Por. Come in, deceitful thing!—I know thee well;
With all thy sly affected bashfulness,
Thou'rt bold enough to sing in Cesar's court,
With the whole senate present. (*To* Orc.) Prince of Parthia,
I knew not you were here; but yet I guess
The song which this sly creature sings so well,
Will please you also.
Orc. How can it fail, fair Portia, so commended?
Sul. What is this boasted lay?
Por. That tune, my father,
Which you so oft have tried to recollect;
But link'd with other words, of new device,
That please my fancy well.—Come, sing it, boy!
Sul. Nay, sing it, Syphax, be not so abash'd,
If thou art really so.—Begin, begin!
But speak thy words distinctly as thou sing'st,
That I may have their meaning perfectly.

SONG.

The storm is gathering far and wide,
Yon mortal hero must abide.
Power on earth, and power in air,
Falchion's gleam and lightning's glare;
Arrows hurtling through the blast;
Stones from flaming meteor cast:
Floods from burden'd skies are pouring,
O'er mingled strife of battle roaring;
Nature's rage and Demon's ire,
Belt him round with turmoil dire:
Noble hero! earthly wight!
Brace thee bravely for the fight.

And so, indeed, thou takest thy stand,
Shield on arm and glaive in hand;
Breast encased in burnish'd steel,
Helm on head, and pike on heel;
And, more than meets the outward eye
The soul's high-temper'd panoply,
Which every limb for action lightens,
The form dilates, the visage brightens:
Thus art thou, lofty, mortal wight
Full nobly harness'd for the fight.

Orc. The picture of some very noble hero
These lines portray.
Sul. So it should seem; one of the days of old.
Por. And why of olden days? There liveth now
The very man—a man—I mean to say,
There may be found amongst our Roman youth,
One, who in form and feelings may compare
With him whose lofty virtues these few lines
So well describe.
Orc. Thou mean'st the lofty Gorbus.
Por. Out on the noisy braggart! Arms without
He hath, indeed, well burnish'd and well plumed,
But the poor soul, within, is pluck'd and bare,
Like any homely thing.
Orc. Sertorius Galba then?
Por. O, stranger still!
For if he hath no lack of courage, certes,
He hath much lack of grace. Sertorius Galba!

Orc. Perhaps thou mean'st Cordenius Maro, lady.
Thy cheeks grow scarlet at the very name,
Indignant that I still should err so strangely.
Por. No, not indignant, for thou errest not;
Nor do I blush, albeit thou think'st I do,
To say, there is not of our Romans one,
Whose martial form a truer image gives
Of firm, heroic courage.
Sul. Cease, sweet Portia;
He only laughs at thy simplicity.
Orc. Simplicity seen through a harmless wile,
Like to the infant urchin, half conceal'd
Behind his smiling dam's transparent veil.
The song is not a stranger to mine ear,
Methinks I've heard it, passing through those wilds,
Whose groves and caves, if rumour speak the truth,
Are by the Nazarenes or Christians haunted.
Sul. Let it no more be sung within my walls:
A chant of theirs to bring on pestilence!
Sing it no more. What sounds are those I hear?
Orc. The dismal death-drum and the crowd without.
They are this instant leading past your door
Those wretched Christians to their dreadful doom.
Sul. We'll go and see them pass.
[EXEUNT *hastily* Sulpicius, Orceres.
Por. (*Stopping her ears.*) I cannot look on them, nor hear the sound.
I'll to my chamber.
Page. May not I, I pray,
Look on them as they pass?
Por. No; go not, child:
'Twill frighten thee; it is a horrid sight.
Page. Yet, and it please you, lady, let me go.
Por. I say it is a horrid, piteous sight,
Thou wilt be frighten'd at it.
Page. Nay, be it e'er so piteous or so horrid,
I have a longing, strong desire to see it.
Por. Go, then; there is in this no affectation:
There's all the harden'd cruelty of man
Lodged in that tiny form, child as thou art.
[EXEUNT, *severally.*

SCENE II.—AN OPEN SQUARE WITH BUILDINGS.

Enter CORDENIUS MARO, at the head of his SOLDIERS, who draw up on either side: then enters along procession of public Functionaries, &c. conducting MARTYRS to the place of execution, who, as they pass on, sing together in unison: one more noble than the others, walking first.

SONG.

A long farewell to sin and sorrow,
To beam of day and evening shade!
High in glory breaks our morrow,
With light that cannot fade.

While mortal flesh in flame is bleeding,
For humble penitence and love,
Our brother and our Lord is pleading
At mercy's throne above.

We leave the hated and the hating,
Existence sad in toil and strife;
The great, the good, the brave are waking
To hail our opening life.

Earth's fated sounds our ears forsaking,
A moment's silence death shall be;
Then, to heaven's jubilee awaking,
Faith ends in victory.

[EXEUNT Martyrs, *&c. &c.* Cordenius *with his Officers and Soldiers still remaining; the Officers on the front, and Cordenius apart from them in a thoughtful posture.*)

First Off. Brave Varus marches boldly at the head
Of that deluded band.
Second Off. Are these the men, who hateful orgies hold
In dens and deserts, courting, with enchantments,
The intercourse of demons?
Third Off. Ay, with rites
Cruel and wild. To crucify a babe;
And while it yet hangs shrieking on the rood
Fall down and worship it! device abominable!
First Off. Dost thou believe it?
Third Off. I can believe all this or any thing
Of the possess'd and mad.
First Off. What demonry, thinkest thou, possesses Varus?
Second Off. That is well urged. (*To the other.*) Is he a maniac?
Alas, that I should see so brave a soldier
Thus, as a malefactor, led to death!
First Off. Viewing his keen, enliven'd countenance
And stately step, one should have rather guess'd
He led victorious soldiers to the charge:
And they, indeed, appear to follow him
With noble confidence.
Third Off. 'Tis all vain seeming.
He is a man, who makes a show of valour
To which his deeds have borne slight testimony.
Cor. (*advancing indignantly.*) Thou liest: a better and a braver soldier
Ne'er fronted foe, or closed in bloody strife.
(*Turning away angrily to the back ground.*)
First Off. Our chief, methinks, is in a fretful mood,
Which is not usual with him.
Second Off. He did not seem to listen to our words.
But see he gives the signal to proceed;
We must advance, and with our closing ranks
The fatal pile encircle.
[EXEUNT *in order, whilst a chorus of* Martyrs *is heard at a distance.*]

SCENE III.—AN APARTMENT IN A PRIVATE HOUSE.

Enter two CHRISTIAN WOMEN, by opposite sides.

First Wom. Hast thou heard any thing?
Second Wom. Naught, save the murmur of the multitude,
Sinking at times to deep and awful silence,
From which again a sudden burst will rise
Like mingled exclamations, as of horror
Or admiration. In these neighbouring streets
I have not met a single citizen,
The town appearing uninhabited.
But wherefore art thou here? Thou should'st have stay'd
With the unhappy mother of poor Cælus.
First Wom. She sent me hither in her agony
Of fear and fearful hope.
Second Wom. Ha! does she hope deliverance from death?

First Wom. O no! thou wrong'st her, friend; it is not that:
Deliverance is her fear, and death her hope.
A second time she bears a mother's throes
For her young stripling, whose exalted birth
To endless life is at this fearful crisis,
Or earn'd or lost. May heaven forefend the last.
He is a timid youth, and soft of nature:
God grant him strength to bear that fearful proof!
Second Wom. Here comes our reverend father.

Enter a CHRISTIAN FATHER.

What tidings dost thou bring? are they in bliss?
Fath. Yes, daughter, as I trust, they are ere this
In high immortal bliss. Cælus alone—
First Wom. He hath apostatized! O wo is me!
O wo is me for his most wretched mother!
Fath. Apostatized! No; stripling as he is,
His fortitude, where all were braced and brave,
Shone paramount.
For his soft downy cheek and slender form
Made them conceive they might subdue his firmness,
Therefore he was reserved till noble Varus
And his compeers had in the flames expired.
Then did they court and tempt him with fair promise
Of all that earthly pleasure or ambition
Can offer, to deny his holy faith.
But he, who seem'd before so meek and timid,
Now suddenly imbued with holy grace,
Like the transition of some watery cloud
In passing o'er the moon's refulgent disc,
Glow'd with new life; and from his fervid tongue
Words of most firm, indignant constancy
Pour'd eloquently forth; then to the pile
Sprung lightly up, like an undaunted warrior
Scaling the breach of honour; or, alas!
As I have seen him midst his boyish mates,
Vaulting aloft for every love of motion.
First Wom. High heaven be praised for this!—Thine eyes beheld it?
Fath. I saw it not: the friend who witness'd it,
Left him yet living midst devouring flame;
Therefore I spoke of Cælus doubtfully,
If he as yet belong'd to earth or heaven.
(*They cover their faces, and remain silent.*)

Enter a CHRISTIAN BROTHER.

Broth. Lift up your heads, my sisters! let your voices
In grateful thanks be raised! Those ye lament,
Have earthly pangs for heavenly joy exchanged.
The manly Varus and the youthful Cælus,
The lion and the dove, yoke-fellows link'd,
Have equal bliss and equal honour gain'd.
First Wom. And praised be God, who makes the weakest strong!
I'll to his mother with the blessed tidings. [EXIT.
Fath. Let us retire and pray. How soon our lives
May have like ending, God alone doth know!
O may like grace support us in our need!
[EXEUNT.

SCENE IV.—AN OPEN SPACE IN FRONT OF A TEMPLE.

Enter CORDENIUS, as returning from the execution with his SOLDIERS, who, upon a signal from him, disperse and leave him alone. He walks a few paces slowly, then stops and continues for a short time in a thoughtful posture.

Cor. There is some power in this, or good or ill,
Surpassing nature. When the soul is roused
To desperate sacrifice, 'tis ardent passion,
Or high exalted virtue that excites it.
Can loathsome demonry in dauntless bearing,
Outdo the motives of the lofty brave?
It cannot be! There is some power in this
Mocking all thought—incomprehensible.
(*Remains for a moment silent and thoughtful, while* Sylvius *enters behind him unperceived.*
Delusion! ay, 'tis said the cheated sight
Will see unreal things; the cheated ear
List to sweet sounds that are not; even the reason
Maintain conclusions wild and inconsistent.
We hear of this:—the weak may be deluded;
But is the learn'd, th' enlighten'd, noble Varus
The victim of delusion?—Can it be?
I'll not believe it.
Syl. (*advancing to him.*) No, believe it not.
Cor. (*starting.*) Ha! one so near me!
I have seen thy face before; but where?—who art thou?
Syl. E'en that centurion of the seventh legion
Who, with Cordenius Maro, at the siege
Of Fort *Volundum*, mounted first the breach;
And kept the clustering enemy in check,
Till our encouraged Romans follow'd us.
Cor. My old companion then, the valiant Sylvius.
Thou'st done hard service since I saw thee last:
Thy countenance is mark'd with graver lines
Than in those greener days: I knew thee not.
Where goest thou now? I'll bear thee company.
Syl. I thank thee: yet thou may'st not go with me.
The way that I am wending suits not thee,
Though suiting well the noble and the brave.
It were not well, in fiery times like these,
To tempt thy generous mind.
Cor. What dost thou mean?
Syl. (*after looking cautiously round to see that nobody is near.*) Did I not hear thee commune with thyself
Of that most blessed martyr gone to rest,
Varus Dobella?
Cor. How blessed? My unsettled thoughts were busy
With things mysterious; with those magic powers
That work the mind to darkness and destruction;
With the sad end of the *deluded* Varus.
Syl. Not so, not so! The wisest prince on earth,
With treasured wealth and armies at command,
Ne'er earn'd withal such lofty exaltation
As Varus now enjoys.
Cor. Thy words amaze me, friend; what is their meaning?
Syl. They cannot be explain'd with hasty speech
In such a place. If thou would'st really know—
And may such light———
Cor. Why dost thou check thy words,
And look so much disturb'd, like one in doubt?
Syl. What am I doing! Zeal, perhaps, betrays me.

Yet, wherefore hide salvation from a man
Who is so worthy of it?
Cor. Why art thou agitated thus? What moves thee?
Syl. And would'st thou really know it?
Cor. Dost thou doubt me?
I have an earnest, most intense desire.
Syl. Sent to thy heart, brave Roman, by a power
Which I may not resist. (*Bowing his head.*)
But go not with me now in open day.
At fall of eve, I'll meet thee in the suburb
Close to the pleasure garden of Sulpicius;
Where in a bushy crevice of the rock
There is an entry to the catacombs,
Known but to few
Cor. Ha! to the catacombs!
Syl. A dismal place, I own, but heed not that;
For there thou'lt learn what, to thy ardent mind,
Will make this world but as a thorny pass
To regions of delight; man's natural life
With all its varied turmoil of ambition,
But as the training of a wayward child
To manly excellence; yea, death itself
But as a painful birth to life unending.
The word eternal has not to thine ears,
As yet, its awful, ample sense convey'd.
Cor. Something possesses thee.
Syl. Yes, noble Maro;
But it is something which can ne'er possess
A mind that is not virtuous.—Let us part;
It is expedient now.—All good be with thee!
Cor. And good be with thee, also, valiant soldier!
Syl. (*returning as he is about to go out.*) At close of day, and near the pleasure garden,—
The garden of Sulpicius.
Cor. I know the spot, and will not fail to meet thee. [EXEUNT.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—THE CATACOMBS, SHOWING LONG, LOW-ROOFED AISLES, IN DIFFERENT DIRECTIONS, SUPPORTED BY THICK PILLARS OF THE ROUGH UNHEWN ROCK, WITH RUDE TOMBS AND HEAPS OF HUMAN BONES, AND THE WALLS IN MANY PLACES LINED WITH HUMAN SKULLS.

Enter CORDENIUS MARO, speaking to a CHRISTIAN FATHER, on whose arm he leans, and followed by SYLVIUS.

Cor. One day and two bless'd nights, spent in acquiring
Your heavenly lore, so powerful and sublime—
O! what an alter'd creature they have made me!
Fath. Yes, gentle son, I trust that thou art alter'd.
Cor. I am, methinks, like one, who, with bent back
And downward gaze—if such a one might be—
Hath only known the boundless azure sky
By the strait circle of reflected beauty,
Seen in the watery gleam of some deep pit,
Till of a sudden roused, he stands erect,
And wondering looks aloft and all around
On the bright sunny firmament:—like one
(Granting again that such a one might be,)
Who hath but seen the element of fire
On household earth or woodman's smoky pile,
And looks at once, midst 'stounding thunder-peals,
On Jove's magnificence of lightning.—Pardon,
I pray you pardon me! I mean *his* lightning,
Who is the Jove of Jove, the great Jehovah.
Fath. (*smiling.*) Be not disturb'd, my son: the lips will utter,
From lengthen'd habit, what the mind rejects.
Cor. These blessed hours which I have pass'd with you
Have to my intellectual being given
New feelings and expansion, like to that
Which once I felt, on viewing by degrees
The wide development of nature's amplitude.
Fath. And how was that, my son?
Cor. I well remember it; even at this moment
Imagination sees it all again.
'Twas on a lofty mountain of Armenia,
O'er which I led by night my martial cohort,
To shun the fierce heat of a summer's day.
Close round us hung, the vapours of the night
Had form'd a woofy curtain, dim and pale,
Through which the waning moon did faintly mark
Its slender crescent.
Fath. Ay, the waned moon through midnight vapours seen,
Fit emblem is of that retrenching light,
Dubious and dim, which to the earliest patriarchs
Was at the first vouchsafed; a moral guide,
Soon clouded and obscured to their descendants,
Who peopled far and wide, in scatter'd tribes,
The fertile earth.—But this is interruption.
Proceed, my son.
Cor. Well, on the lofty summit
We halted, and the day's returning light
On this exalted station found us. Then
Our brighten'd curtain, wearing into shreds
And rifted masses, through its opening gave
Glimpse after glimpse of slow revealed beauty,
Which held th' arrested senses magic bound,
In the intensity of charm'd attention.
Fath. From such an eminence, the opening mist
Would to the eye reveal most beauteous visions.
Cor. First, far beneath us, woody peaks appear'd,
And knolls with cedars crested; then, beyond,
And lower still, the herdsmen's cluster'd dwellings
With pasture slopes, and flocks just visible;
Then, further still, soft wavy wastes of forest,
In all the varied tints of sylvan verdure,
Descending to the plain; then wide and boundless
The plain itself, with towns and cultured tracts,
And its fair river gleaming in the light,
With all its sweepy windings, seen and lost,
And seen again, till through the pale gray tint
Of distant space, it seem'd a loosen'd cestus
From virgin's tunic blown; and still beyond,
The earth's extended vastness from the sight,
Wore like the boundless ocean.
My heart beat rapidly at the fair sight—
This ample earth, man's natural habitation.
But now, when to my mental eye reveal'd,
His moral destiny, so grand and noble
Lies stretching on e'en to immensity,

It overwhelms me with a flood of thoughts,
Of happy thoughts.
Fath. Thanks be to God that thou dost feel it so!
Cor. I am most thankful for the words of power
Which from thy gifted lips and sacred Scripture
I have received. What feelings they have raised!
O wha: a range of thought given to the mind!
And to the soul what loftiness of hope!
That future dreamy state of faint existence
Which poets have described and sages taught,
In which the brave and virtuous pined and droop'd
In useless indolence, changed for a state
Of social love, and joy, and active bliss,—
A state of brotherhood,—a state of virtue,
So grand, so purified;—O, it is excellent!
My soul is roused within me at the sound,
Like some poor slave, who from a dungeon issues
To range with free-born men his native land
Fath. Thou may'st, indeed, my son, redeem'd from thraldom,
Become the high compeer of blessed spirits.
Cor. The high compeer of such!—These gushing tears,
Nature's mysterious tears, will have their way.
Fath. To give thy heart relief.
Cor. And yet mysterious. Why do we weep
At contemplation of exalted virtue?
Perhaps in token of the fallen state
In which we are, as thrilling sympathy
Strangely acknowledges some sight and sound,
Connected with a dear and distant home,
Albeit the memory hath that link forgotten:
A kind of latent sense of what we were
Or might have been; a deep, mysterious token.
Fath. Perhaps thou'rt right, my son; for e'en the wicked
Will sometimes weep at lofty, generous deeds.
Some broken traces of our noble nature
Were yet preserved; therefore our great Creator
Still loved his work, and thought it worth redemption.
And therefore his bless'd Son, our generous master,
Did, as the elder brother of that race,
Whose form he took, lay down his life to save us.
But I have read thee, in our sacred Book,
His gentle words of love.
Cor. Thou hast! thou hast! they're stirring in my heart:
Each fibre of my body thrills: answer
To the high call.—
Fath. The spirit of power, my son, is dealing with thee.
Cor. (*after a pause.*) One thing amazes me, yet it is excellent.
Fath. And what amazes thee? Unbosom freely
What passes in thy mind.
Cor. That this religion which dilates our thoughts
Of God supreme to an infinity
Of awful greatness, yet connects us with him,
As children, loved and cherish'd;—
Adoring awe with tenderness united.
Syl. (*eagerly.*) Ay, brave Cordenius, that same thought more moved
My rude, unletter'd mind than all the rest.
I struck my hand against my soldier's mail,
And cried, "This faith is worthy of a man!"
Cor. Our best philosophers have raised their thoughts
To one great universal Lord of all,
Lord e'en of Jove himself and all the gods;
But who dost feel for that high, distant Essence
A warmer sentiment than deep submission?
But now, adoring love and grateful confidence
Cling to the infinity of power and goodness,
As the repentant child turns to his sire
With yearning looks that say, "Am I not thine?"
I am too bold: I should be humbled first
In penitence and sorrow, for the stains
Of many a hateful vice and secret passion.
Fath. Check not the generous tenor of thy thoughts:
O check it not! Love leads to penitence,
And is the noblest, surest path; whilst fear
Is dark and devious. To thy home return,
And let thy mind well weigh what thou hast heard.
If then thou feel'st within thee, faith assured
That faith, which may, even through devouring flames,
Its passage hold to heaven, baptismal rites
Shall give thee entrance to a purer life;
Receive thee, as thy Saviour's valiant soldier,
For his high warfare arm'd.
Cor. I am resolved, and feel that in my heart
There lives that faith; baptize me ere we part.
Fath. So be it then. But yet that holy rite
Must be preferr'd; for lo! our brethren come,
Bearing the ashes of our honour'd saints,
Which must, with hymns of honour be received.

Enter Christians, seen advancing slowly along one of the aisles, and bearing a large veiled urn; which they set down near the front. They then lift off the veil and range themselves round it, while one sings and the rest join in the chorus at the end of each short verse.

SONG.

Departed brothers, generous, brave,
Who for the faith have died,
Nor its pure source denied,
Your bodies from devouring flames to save.
Chorus.
Honour on earth, and bliss in heaven,
Be to your saintly valour given!

And we, who, left behind, pursue
A pilgrim's weary way
To realms of glorious day,
Shall rouse our fainting souls with thoughts of you.
Honour on earth, &c.

Your ashes mingled with the dust,
Shall yet be forms more fair
Than e'er breathed vital air,
When earth again gives up her precious trust.
Honour on earth, &c.

The trump of angels shall proclaim,
With tones far sent and sweet,
Which countless hosts repeat,
The generous martyr's never-fading name.
Honour on earth, and bliss in heaven,
Be to your saintly valour given!

Cor. (*to* Father.) And ye believe those, who a few hours since
Were clothed in flesh and blood, and here, before us,

Lie thus, even to a few dry ashes changed,
Are now exalted spirits, holding life
With blessed powers, and agencies, and all
Who have on earth a virtuous part fulfill'd?
The dear redeem'd of Godlike love, again
To their primeval destiny restored?
It is a generous, powerful, noble faith.

Syl. Did I not tell thee, as we pass'd along,
It well became a Roman and a soldier?

Fath. Nay, worthy Sylvius, somewhat more of meekness
And less of martial ardour were becoming
In those, whose humble Lord stretch'd forth his hand,
His saving hand, to e'en the meanest slave
Who bends beneath an earthly master's rod.
This faith is meet for all of human kind.

Cor. Forgive him, father: see, he stands reproved;
His heart is meek, though ardent;
It is, indeed, a faith for all mankind.

Fath. We feel it such, my son, press'd as we are;
On every side beset with threatening terrors.
Look on these ghastly walls, these shapeless pillars,
These heaps of human bones,—this court of death;
E'en here, as in a temple, we adore
The Lord of life, and sing our song of hope,
That death has lost his sting, the grave his triumph.

Cor. O make me then the partner of your hopes!
(*Taking the hand of* Sylvius, *and then of several other* Christians.)
Brave men! high destined souls! immortal beings!
The blessed faith and sense of what we are
Comes on my heart, like streams of beamy light
Pour'd from some opening cloud. O to conceive
What lies beyond the dim, dividing veil,
Of regions bright, of blest and glorious being:

Fath. Ay, when it is withdrawn, we shall behold
What heart hath ne'er conceived, nor tongue could utter.

Cor. When but a boy, I've gazed upon the sky,
With all its sparks of light, as a grand cope
For the benighted world. But now my fancy
Will greet each twinkling star, as the bright lamp
Of some fair angel on his guardian watch.
And think ye not, that from their lofty stations,
Our future glorious home, our Father's house,
May lie within the vast and boundless ken
Of such seraphic powers?

Fath. Thy fancy soars on wide and buoyant wings;
Speak on, my son, I would not check thy ardour.

Cor. This solid earth is press'd beneath our feet,
But as a step from which to take our flight;
What boots it then, if rough or smooth it be,
Serving its end?—Come, noble Sylvius!
We've been companions in the broil of battle,
Now be we fellow soldiers in that warfare
Which best becomes the brave.

Syl. Cordenius Maro, we shall be companions
When this wide earth with all its fields of blood,
Where war hath raged, and all its towers of strength
Which have begirded been with iron hosts,
Are shrunk to nothing, and the flaming sun
Is in his course extinguish'd.

Cor. Come, lead me, father, to the holy fount,
If I in humble penitence may be
From worldly vileness clear'd.

Fath. I gladly will, my son. The spirit of grace
Is dealing with thy spirit: be received,
A ransom'd penitent, to the high fellowship
Of all the good and bless'd in earth and heaven!

Enter a Convert.

Whence comest thou, Fearon? Why wert thou prevented
From joining in our last respectful homage
To those, who have so nobly for the truth
Laid down their lives?

Con. I have been watching near the grated dungeon
Where Ethocles, the Grecian, is immured.

Fath. Thou say'st not so! A heavier loss than this,
If they have seized on him, the righteous cause
Could not have suffer'd. Art thou sure of it?
We had not heard of his return from Syria.

Con. It is too true: he landed ten days since
On the Brundusian coast, and as he enter'd
The gates of Rome, was seized and dragg'd to prison.

Fath. And we in utter ignorance of this!

Con. He travell'd late and unaccompanied,
So this was done at nightfall and conceal'd.
But see his writing, given me by a guard,
Who has for pity's sake betray'd his trust:
It is address'd to thee. (*Giving him a paper.*)

Fath. (*after reading it.*) Alas, alas: it is a brief account
Of his successful labours in the East;
For with his excellent gifts of eloquence,
Learning, and prudence, he has made more converts
Than all our zealous brotherhood besides.
What can we do? He will be sacrificed:
The church in him must bleed, if God so wills.
It is a dreadful blow.

Cor. (*to the* Convert.) I pray thee, in what prison is he kept?

Con. In Sylla's tower, that dwelling of despair.

Cor. Guarded by Romans?

Con. Yes; and strongly guarded.

Cor. Yet, he shall be released.

Fath. (*to* Cordenius.) Beware, my son, of rash, imprudent zeal:
The truth hath suffer'd much from this; beware;
Risk not thyself: thy life is also precious.

Cor. My whole of life is precious; but this shred,
This earthly portion of it, what is that,
But as it is employ'd in holy acts?
Am I Christ's soldier at a poorer rate
Than I have served an earthly master? No;
I feel within my glowing breast a power
Which says I am commission'd for this service.
Give me thy blessing—thy baptismal blessing,
And then God's spirit guide me! Serving God,
I will not count the cost but to discharge it.

Fath. His will direct thee then, my generous son!
His blessing be upon thee!—Lead him, Sylvius,
To the blest fount, where from his former sins
He shall by heavenly grace be purified. [Exeunt.

SCENE II.—THE GARDEN OF SULPICIUS.

Enter SULPICIUS, and PORTIA, with flowers in her hand.

Por. Was it not well to rise with early morn
And pay my homage to sweet Flora? Never
Were flowers by midday cull'd so fair, so fragrant,
With blending streaky tints, so fresh and bright.
See; twinkling dew-drops lurk in every bell,
And on the fibred leaves stray far apart,
Like little rounded gems of silver sheen,
Whilst curling tendrils grasp with vigorous hold
The stem that bears them! All looks young and fresh.
The very spider through his circled cage
Of wiry woof, amongst the buds suspended,
Scarce seems a loathly thing, but like the small
Imprison'd bird of some capricious nymph.
Is it not so, my father?

Sul. Yes, morn and youth and freshness sweetly join,
And are the emblems of dear changeful days.
By night those beauteous things—

Por. And what of night?
Why do you check your words? You are not sad?

Sul. No; Portia, only angry with myself
For crossing thy gay stream of youthful thoughts
With those of sullen age. Away with them!
What if those bright-leaved flowers, so soft and silken,
Are gathered into dank and wrinkled folds
When evening chills them, or upon the earth
With broken stems and buds torn and dispersed,
Lie prostrate, of fair form and fragrance reft
When midnight winds pass o'er them; be it so!
All things but have their term.
In truth, my child, I'm glad that I indulged thee
By coming forth at such an early hour
To pay thy worship to so sweet a goddess,
Upon her yearly feast.

Por. I thank you, father! On her feast, 'tis said,
That she, from mortal eye conceal'd, vouchsafes
Her presence in such sweet and flowery spots:
And where due offerings on her shrine are laid,
Blesses all seeds and shoots, and things of promise.

Sul. How many places in one little day
She needs must visit then!

Por. But she moves swift as thought. The hasty zephyr
That stirr'd each slender leaf, now as we enter'd,
And made a sudden sound, by stillness follow'd,
Might be the rustling of her passing robe.

Sul. A pleasing fancy, Portia, for the moment,
Yet wild as pleasing.

Por. Wherefore call it wild?
Full many a time I've listen'd when alone
In such fair spots as this, and thought I heard
Sweet mingled voices uttering varied tones
Of question and reply, pass on the wind,
And heard soft steps upon the ground; and then
The notion of bright Venus or Diana,
Or goddess nymphs, would come so vividly
Into my mind, that I am almost certain
Their radiant forms were near me, though conceal'd
By subtle drapery of the ambient air.
And O, how I have long'd to look upon them;
An ardent, strange desire, though mix'd with fear.
Nay, do not smile, my father: such fair sights
Were seen—were often seen in ancient days;
The poets tell us so.
But look, the Indian roses I have foster'd
Are in full bloom; and I must gather them!
[EXIT *eagerly.*

Sul. (*alone.*) Go, gentle creature, thou art careless yet:
Ah! could'st thou so remain, and still with me
Be as in years gone by!—It may not be;
Nor should I wish it: all things have their season:
She may not now remain an old man's treasure.
With all her woman's beauty grown to blossom.

Enter ORCHANES.

The Parthian prince at such an early hour?

Orc. And who considers hours, whose heart is bent
On what concerns a lover and a friend?
Where is thy daughter?

Sul. Within yon flowery thicket, blithe and careless;
For though she loves, 'tis with sweet, maiden fancy,
Which, not impatient, looks in cheering hope
To future years.

Orc. Ay, 'tis a shelter'd passion,
A cradled love, by admiration foster'd:
A showy, toward nurse for babe so bashful.
Thus in the shell athwart whose snowy lining
Each changeful tint of the bright rainbow plays,
A little pearl is found, in secret value
Surpassing all the rest.

Sul. But say'st thou nothing
Of what I wish to hear? What of Cordenius?

Orc. By my good war-bow and its barbed shafts,
By the best war-horse archer e'er bestrode!
I'm still in ignorance: I have not seen him.

Sul. Thou hast not seen him! this is very strange.

Orc. So it indeed appears.—My wayward friend
Has from his home been absent. Yesterday
There and elsewhere I sought, but found him not.
This morning by the dawn again I sought him,
Thinking to find him surely, and alone;
But his domestics, much amazed, have told me
He is not yet return'd.

Sul. Hush! through yon thicket I perceive a man.

Orc. Some thief or spy.

Sul. Let us withdraw a while,
And mark his motions; he observes us not.

Enter CORDENIUS from a thicket in the back ground.

Cor. (*after looking round him with delight.*)
Sweet light of day, fair sky, and verdant earth,
Enrich'd with every beauteous herb and flower,
And stately trees, that spread their boughs like tents
For shade and shelter, how I hail ye now!
Ye are his works, who made such fair abodes
For happy innocence, yet, in the wreck
Of foul perversion, has not cast us off.
(*Stooping to look at the flowers.*)
Ye little painted things, whose varied hues

Charm, even to wonderment; that mighty hand
Which dies the mountain's peak with rosy tints
Sent from the rising sun, and to the barb'd,
Destructive lightning gives its ruddy gleam,
Grand and terrific, thus adorns even you!
There is a father's full, unstinted love
Display'd o'er all, and thus on all I gaze
With the keen thrill of new-waked ecstasy.
What voice is that so near me and so sweet?
(Portia *without, singing some notes of prelude, and then a Song.*)

SONG.

The lady in her early bower
Is blest as bee in morning flower;
The lady's eye is flashing bright,
Like water in the morning light;
The lady's song is sweet and loud,
Like skylark o'er the morning cloud;
The lady's smiles are smiles that pass
Like morning's breath o'er wavy grass.

She thinks of one, whose harness'd car
In triumph comes from distant war;
She thinks of one, whose martial state
Will darken Rome's imperial gate;
She thinks of one, with laurel crown'd,
Who shall with sweeter wreaths be bound.
Voice, eye, and smiles, in mingled play,
The lady's happy thoughts betray.

Cor. Her voice indeed, and this my favourite song!
It is that gentle creature, my sweet Portia
I call her mine, because she is the image
Which hath possess'd my fancy. Such vain thoughts
Must now give place. I will not linger here.
This is the garden of Sulpicius;
How have I miss'd my path? She sings again.
(*Sings without, as before.*)
She wanders fitfully from lay to lay,
But all of them some air that I have praised
In happy hours gone by.

SONG.

The kind heart speaks with words so kindly sweet,
That kindred hearts the catching tones repeat;
And love, therewith his soft sigh gently blending,
Makes pleasing harmony. Thus softly sending
Its passing cheer across the stilly main,
Whilst in the sounding water dips the oar,
And glad response bursts from the nearing shore,
Comes to our ears the home-bound seamen's strain,
Who from the lofty deck, hail their own land again.

Cor. O gentle, sweet, and cheerful! form'd to be
Whate'er my heart could prize of treasured love!
Dear as thou art, I will not linger here.

Re-enter SULPICIUS and ORCERES, breaking out upon him, and ORCERES catching hold of his robe as he is going off.

Orc. Ha! noble Maro, to a coward turn'd,
Shunning a spot of danger!
Sul. Stay, Cordenius.
The fellest foe thou shalt contend with here,
Is her thou call'st so gentle. As for me,
I do not offer thee this hand more freely
Than I will grant all that may make thee happy,
If Portia has that power.
Cor. And dost thou mean, in very earnest mean,
That thou wilt give me Portia—thy dear Portia?
My fancy catches wildly at thy words.
Sul. And truly too, Cordenius. She is thine,
If thou wilt promise me to love her truly.
Cor. (*Eagerly clasping the knees, and then kissing the hands of* Sulpicius.) Thanks, thanks!—thanks from my swoll'n, o'erflowing heart,
Which has no words.—Friend, father, Portia's father!
The thought creates in me such sudden joy
I am bewilder'd with it.
Sul. Calm thy spirits.—
Thou shouldst in meeter form have known it sooner,
Had not the execution of those Christians—
(Pests of the earth, whom on one burning pile,
With all their kind, I would most gladly punish,)
Till now prevented me. Thy friend, Orceres—
Thou owest him thanks—plead for thee powerfully
And had my leave. But dost thou listen to me?
Thy face wears many colours, and big drops
Burst from thy brow, whilst thy contracted lips
Quiver, like one in pain.
Orc. What sudden illness racks thee?
Cor. I may not tell you now: let me depart.
Sul. (*holding him.*) Thou art my promised son; I have a right
To know whate'er concerns thee,—pain or pleasure.
Cor. And so thou hast, and I may not deceive thee.
Take, take, Sulpicius.—O such withering words!
The sinking, sickening heart and parched mouth!
I cannot utter them.
Sul. Why in this agony of perturbation?
Nay, strive not now to speak.
Cor. I must, I must!—
Take back thy proffer'd gift; all earth could give;—
That which it cannot give I must retain.
Sul. What words are these? If it were possible,
I could believe thee touch'd with sorcery,
The cursed art of those vile Nazarenes.
Where hast thou past the night? their haunts are near
Orc. Nay, nay; repress thine anger; noble Marc
May not be question'd thus.
Sul. He may, and shall. And yet I will not urge him,
If he, with hand press'd on his breast, will say,
That he detests those hateful Nazarènes.
Cor. No; though my life, and what is dearer far
My Portia's love, depended on the words,
I would not, and I durst not utter them.
Sul. I see it well: thou art insnared and blinded
By their enchantments. Demoniac power
Will drag thee to thy ruin. Cast it off;
Defy it. Say thou wilt forbear all intercourse
With this detested sect. Art thou a madman?
Cor. If I am mad, that which possesses me
Outvalues all philosophers e'er taught,
Or poets e'er imagined.—Listen to me.
Call ye these Christians vile, because they suffer
All nature shrinks from, rather than deny
What seems to them the truth? Call ye them sorcerers,

Because their words impart such high conceptions
Of power creative and parental love,
In one great Being join'd, as makes the heart
Bound with ennobling thoughts? Call ye them curst
Who daily live in steady strong assurance
Of endless blessedness? O, listen to me!

Re-enter PORTIA, bursting from a thicket close to them.

Por. O, listen to him, father!

Sul. Let go my robe, fond creature! Listen to him!
The song of syrens were less fatal. Charms
Of dire delusion, luring on to ruin,
Are mingled with the words that speak their faith;
They, who once hear them, flutter round destruction
With giddy fascination, like the moth,
Which, shorn of half its form, all scorch'd and shrivell'd,
Still to the torch returns. I will not listen;
No, Portia, nor shalt thou.

Por. O, say not so!
For if you listen to him, you may save him,
And win him from his errors.

Sul. Vain hope! vain hope! What is man's natural reason
Opposed to demon subtlety? Cordenius!
Cordenius Maro! I adjure thee, go!
Leave me; why wouldst thou pull destruction on me?
On one who loved thee so, that though possess'd
Of but one precious pearl, most dearly prized,
Prized more than life, yet would have given it to thee.
I needs must weep: e'en for thyself I weep.

Cor. Weep not, my kind Sulpicius! I will leave thee,
Albeit the pearl thou wouldst bestow upon me
Is, in my estimation, dearer far
Than life, or power, or fame, or earthly thing.
When these fierce times are past, thou wilt, perhaps,
Think of me with regard, but not with pity,
How fell soe'er my earthly end hath been,
For I shall then be blest. And thou, dear Portia,
Wilt thou remember me? That thought, alas!
Dissolves my soul in weakness.—
O, to be spared, if it were possible,
This stroke of agony. Is it not possible,
That I might yet———Almighty God forgive me!
Weak thoughts will lurk in the devoted heart,
But not be cherish'd there. I may not offer
Aught short of all to thee.——
Farewell, farewell! sweet Portia, fare thee well!
(Orceres *catches hold of him to prevent his going.*)
Retain me not: I am a Parthian now,
My strength is in retreat. [EXIT.

Por. That noble mind! and must it then be ruin'd?
O save him, save him, father! Brave Orceres,
Wilt thou not save thy friend, the noble Maro?

Orc. We will, sweet maid, if it be possible.
We'll keep his faith a secret in our breasts;
And he may yet, if not by circumstances
Provoked to speak, conceal it from the world.

Por And you, my father?

Sul. I will not betray him.

Por. Then all may yet be well; for our great gods,
Whom Cæsar and his subject nations worship,
Will not abandon Rome's best, bravest soldier
To power demoniac. That can never be
If they indeed regard us.

Orc. Were he in Parthia, our great god, the sun,
Or rather he who in that star resides,
Would not permit his power to be so thwarted,
For all the demonry that e'er exerted
Its baleful influence on wretched men.
Beshrew me! for a thought gleams through my brain,
It is this God, perhaps, with some new name,
Which these bewilder'd Nazarenes adore.

Sul. With impious rites, most strange and horrible.

Orc. If he, my friend, in impious rites hath join'd,
Demons, indeed, have o'er the soul of man
A power to change its nature. Ay, Sulpicius;
And thou and I may, ere a day shall pass,
Be very Nazarenes. We are in ignorance;
We shoot our arrow in the dark, and cry,
'It is to wound a foe.' Come, gentle Portia;
Be not so sad; the man thou lovest is virtuous,
And brave, and loves thee well; why then despair?

Por. Alas! I know he is brave and virtuous,
Therefore, I do despair.

Orc. In Nero's court, indeed,
Such men are ever on the brink of danger,
But wouldst thou have him other than he is?

Por. O no! I would not; that were base and sordid;
Yet shed I tears, e'en like a wayward child
Who weeps for that which cannot be attain'd,—
Virtue, and constancy, and safety join'd.
I pray thee pardon me, for I am wretched,
And that doth make me foolish and perverse.

[EXEUNT.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—BEFORE THE GATE OF NERO'S PALACE: GUARDS WITH THEIR OFFICERS, DISCOVERED ON DUTY.

Enter to them another OFFICER, speaking as he enters to the SOLDIERS.

First Offi. Strike up some sacred strain of Roman triumph;
The Pontiff comes to meet the summon'd council.
Omit not this respect, else he will deem
We are of those who love the Nazarenes
Sing loud and clearly.

Enter PONTIFF attended.

SACRED HYMN BY THE SOLDIERS.

That chief, who bends to Jove the suppliant knee,
Shall firm in power and high in honour be;
And who to Mars a soldier's homage yields,
Shall laurell'd glory reap in bloody fields;
Who vine-crown'd Bacchus, bounteous lord, adores,
Shall gather still, unscath'd, his vintage stores;
Who to fair Venus liberal offering gives,
Enrich'd with love, and sweet affection lives.
Then, be your praises still our sacred theme,
O Venus, Bacchus, Mars, and Jove supreme!

Pon. I thank ye, soldiers! Rome, indeed, hath triumph'd,
Bless'd in the high protection of her gods,
The sovereign warrior nation of the world;
And, favour'd by great Jove and mighty Mars,
So may she triumph still, nor meanly stoop
To worship strange and meaner deities,
Adverse to warlike glory. [Exit, *with his train.*

First Offi. The Pontiff seems disturb'd, his brow is lowering.

Second Offi. Reproof and caution, mingled with his thanks,
Though utter'd graciously.

First Offi. He is offended,
Because of late so many valiant soldiers
Have proselytes become to this new worship;
A worship too, as he insinuates,
Unsuited to the brave.

Third Offi. Ay, ay! the sacred chickens are in danger.

Second Offi. Sylvius is suspected, as I hear.

First Offi. Hush! let us to our duty; it is time
To change the inner guard.

[Exeunt *with music, into the gate of the palace.*

Scene II.—A council chamber in the palace, Nero with his counsellors discovered; Nero in the act of speaking.

Nero. Yes, Servius; formerly we have admitted,
As minor powers, amongst the ancient gods
Of high imperial Rome, the foreign deities
Of friendly nations; but these Nazarenes
Scorn such association, proudly claiming
For that which is the object of their faith,
Sole, undivided homage: and our altars,
Our stately temples, the majestic forms
Of Mars, Apollo, thundering Jove himself,
By sculptor's art divine, so nobly wrought,
Are held by these mad zealots in contempt.
Examine, sayest thou! shall imperial Cæsar
Deign to examine what withstands his power?
I marvel at thy folly, Servius Sillus.

Enter an Officer.

Offi. The Pontiff, mighty Cæsar, waits without,
And craves admittance.

Nero. Let him be admitted.

Enter Pontiff.

Pontiff, thy visage, if I read it well,
Says, that some weighty matter brings thee here:
Thou hast our leave to speak.

Pon. Imperial Nero, didst thou not condemn
That eloquent, but pestilential Nazarene,
The Grecian Ethocles, whose specious words
Wrap in delusion all who listen to him,
Spreading his baleful errors o'er the world?

Nero. Did I condemn him! E'en this very day,
He in the amphitheatre meets his doom;
Having, I trust, no power of words to charm
The enchated lion, or the famish'd wolf.

Pon. I am inform'd, and I believe it true
That this bold malefactor is enlarged.

Nero. It is impossible! Cordenius Maro
Is sworn to guard the prisoner; or, failing,
(How could he fail?) to pay with his own life
The forfeit. But behold his favourite friend,

Enter Orceres, followed by Sulpicius.

The Parthian prince, who will inform us truly.
Orceres, is thy friend Cordenius coming?
I have commanded him, and at this hour,
To bring his guarded prisoner to the palace,
Here to remain till the appointed time.

Orc. I know not; nor have I beheld Cordenius
Since yesterday; when, at an early hour,
Sulpicius and myself met him by chance:
But for the prisoner, he is at hand,
E'en at the palace gate; for as we enter'd
We saw him there, well circled round with guards
Though in the martial throng we saw not Maro.

Nero. (*To the* Pontiff.) Said I not so?
(*To an* Officer.) Command them instantly
To bring this wordy Grecian to our presence.
[Exit Officer.
Sulpicius, thou hast known this Ethocles,
Is he a madman or ambitious knave,
Who sought on human folly to erect
A kind of fancied greatness for himself?

Sul. I know not which, great Nero.

Nero. And didst thou not advise me earnestly
To rid the state of such a pestilence?

Sul. And still advise thee, Nero; for this Greek
Is dangerous above all, who, with their lives,
Have yet paid forfeit for their strange belief.
They come: the prisoner in foreign garb
So closely wrapp'd, I scarcely see his face.

Enter Prisoner, attended.

Pon. If it in truth be he.

Nero. (*To the* Pontiff.) Dost thou still doubt?
(*To the* Prisoner.) Stand forth, audacious rebel, to my will!
Dost thou still brave it, false and subtle spirit?

Cor. (*throwing off his Grecian cloak, and advancing to* Nero.) I am not false, Augustus, but if subtle,
Add to my punishment what shall be deem'd
Meet retribution. I have truly sworn,
Or to produce thy thrall, or, therein failing,
To give my life for his; and here I stand.
Ethocles, by a higher power than thine,
Is yet reserved for great and blessed ends.
Take thou the forfeit; I have kept my oath.

Nero. I am amazed beyond the power of utterance!
Grows it to such a pitch that Rome's brave captains
Are by this wizard sorcery so charm'd?
Then it is time, good sooth! that sweeping vengeance
Should rid the earth of every tainted thing
Which that curst sect hath touch'd. Cordenius Maro,
Thou who hast fought our battles, graced our state,
And borne a noble Roman's honour'd name,
What, O what power could tempt thee to this shame?

Cor. I have been tempted by that mighty Power
Who gave to Rome her greatness, to the earth
Form and existence; yea, and to the soul
Of living, active man, sense and perception:
But not to shame, O Cæsar! not to shame!

Nero. What, hast thou not become a Nazarene,

As now I apprehended? Say, thou hast not;
And though thy present act is most audacious,
Yet will I spare thy life.
Cor. If thou wouldst spare my life, and to that grace
Add all the wealth of Rome, and all the power
Of Rome's great lord, I would not for the bribe
Be other than I am, or what I am
Basely deny.
Nero. Thou art a Christian, then? Thou art a maniac!
Cor. I am a man, who, seeing in the flames
Those dauntless Christians suffer, long'd to know
What power could make them brave the fear of death,
Disgrace, and infamy.—And I have learnt
That they adore a God,—one God, supreme,
Who, over all men, his created sons,
Rules as a father; and beholding sin,
Growth of corruption, mar this earthly race,
Sent down to earth his sinless, heavenly Son,
Who left, with generous devoted love,
His state of exaltation and of glory,
To win them back to virtue, yea, to virtue
Which shall be crown'd with never-ending bliss.
I've learnt that they with deep adoring gratitude
Pay homage to that Son, the sent of God,
Who here became a willing sacrifice
To save mankind from sin and punishment,
And earn for them a better life hereafter,
When mortal life is closed. The heart's deep homage
Becoming well such creatures, so redeem'd.
Nero. Out on that dreaming madness?
Cor. Is it madness
To be the humble follower of Him,
Who left the bliss of heaven to be for us
A man on earth, in spotless virtue living
As man ne'er lived: such words of comfort speaking,
To rouse, and elevate, and cheer the heart,
As man ne'er spoke; and suffering poverty,
Contempt, and wrong, and pain, and death itself,
As man ne'er suffer'd?—O, if this be madness,
Which makes each generous impulse of my nature
Warm into ecstasy, each towering hope
Rise to the noblest height of bold conception;
That which is reason call'd, and yet has taught you
To worship different gods in every clime,
As dull and wicked as their worshippers,
Compared to it, is poor, confined, and mean,
As is the Scythian's curtain'd tent, compared
With the wide range of fair, expanded nature.
Nero. Away, away! with all those lofty words!
They but bewilder thee.
Cor. Yet hear them, Nero! O resist them not!
Perhaps they are appointed for thy good,
And for the good of thousands. When these hands
Which have so oft done Rome a soldier's service,
This tongue which speaks to thee, are turn'd to ashes,
What now appears so wild and fanciful,
May be remembered with far other feelings.
It is not life that I request of Nero,
Although I said these hands have fought for Rome.
No; in the presence of these senators,
First bind thyself by every sacred oath
To give this body to the flames, then hear me;
O could I speak what might convince Rome's chief,
Her senators, her tribes, her meanest slaves,
Of Christ's most blessed truth, the fatal pile
Would be to me a car of joyful triumph,
Mounted more gladly than the laurell'd hero
Vaults to his envied seat, while Rome's throng'd streets
Resound his shouted name. Within me stirs
The spirit of truth and power which spoke to me,
And will upon thy mind.—
Nero. I charge thee cease!
Orc. Nay, emperor! might I entreat for him?
Cor. (*catching hold of* Orceres *eagerly.*) Not for my life.
Orc. No; not for that, brave Maro!
(*To* Nero.) Let me entreat that he may freely speak.
Fear'st thou he should convince thee by his words?
That were a foul affront to thine own reason,
Or to the high divinities of Rome.
Nero. Cease, Prince of Parthia! nor too far presume
Upon a noble stranger's privilege.
Pon. Shall words so bold be to mine ear august
So freely utter'd with impunity?
Orc. Pontiff! I much revere thy sacred office,
But scorn thy paltry words. Not freely speak!
Not with impunity! Is this a threat?
Let Rome's great master, or his angry slaves,
Shed one drop of my blood, and on our plains
Where heretofore full many a Roman corse,
With Parthian arrows pierced, have vultures fed,
Twice thirty thousand archers in array,
Each with his bow strain'd for the distant mark,
Shall quickly stand, impatient for revenge.
Not with impunity!
Sul. Nay, nay, Orceres! with such haughty words
Thou'lt injure him thou plead'st for. Noble Cæsar!
Permit an aged man, a faithful servant,
To speak his thoughts. This brave deluded youth
Is now, as I sincerely do believe,
Beneath the power of strong and dire enchantment.
Hear not his raving words, but spare his life,
And when its power (for all delusion holds
Its power but for a season) shall be spent,
He will himself entreat your clemency,
And be again the soldier of the state,
Brave and obedient. Do not hear him now;
Command him to retire.
Cor. I thank thee, good Sulpicius, but my life,
For which thou plead'st, take no account of that;
I yield it freely up to any death,
Cruel or merciful, which the decree
Of Cæsar shall inflict, for leave to speak
E'en but a few short moments. Princely Nero!
The strong enchantment which deludes my soul
Is, that I do believe myself the creature,
Subject and soldier, if I so may speak,
Of an Almighty Father, King, and Lord,
Before whose presence, when my soul shall be
Of flesh and blood disrobed, I shall appear,
There to remain with all the great and good
That e'er have lived on earth; yea, and with spirits

Higher than earth e'er own'd, in such pure bliss
As human heart conceives not,—if my life,
With its imperfect virtue, find acceptance
From pardoning love and mercy; but, if otherwise,
That I shall pass into a state of misery
With souls of wicked men and wrathful demons.
That I believe this earth on which we stand
Is but the vestibule to glorious mansions,
Through which a moving crowd for ever press;
And do regard the greatest Prince, who now
Inflicts short torment on this flesh, as one
Who but in passing rudely rends my robe.
And thinkest thou that I, believing this,
Will shrink to do his will whom I adore?
Or thinkest thou this is a senseless charm,
Which soon will pass away?

Nero. High words, indeed, if resting on good proof!
A maniac's fancies may be grand and noble.

Cor. Ay, now thou listenest, as a man should listen,
With an inquiring mind. Let me produce
The proofs which have constrain'd me to believe,
From written law and well-attested facts;—
Let me produce my proofs, and it may be,
The Spirit of Truth may touch thy yielding heart,
And save thee from destruction.

Nero. Ha! dost thou think to make of me a convert?
Away, weak fool! and most audacious rebel!
Give proofs of thy obedience, not thy faith,
If thou wouldst earn thy pardon.

Cor. If thou condemn me in the flames to die
I will and must obey thee; if to live,
Disgraced by pardon won through treachery
To God, my King supreme, and his bless'd Christ,
I am, indeed, thy disobedient rebel.

Nero. And shall as such, most dearly pay the forfeit.
Out!—take him from my presence till the time
Of public execution.
Cordenius Maro, thou shalt fall this day
By no ignoble foe;—a noble lion,
Famish'd and fierce, shall be thy adversary.
And dost thou smile and raise thy head at this,
In stately confidence?

Cor. God will deliver me from every adversary.
And thou too smilest.—Yes; he will deliver
That which I call *myself*. For this poor form
Which vests me round, I give it to destruction
As gladly as the storm-beat traveller,
Who, having reach'd his destined place of shelter,
Drops at the door his mantle's cumbrous weight.

Nero. (*going.*) Then to thy visionary hopes I leave thee,
Incorrigible man! Here, in this chamber
Keep him secure till the appointed hour.
(*To the* Officers, *&c.*)
Off, good Sulpicius! hang not on me thus!

Sul. O, mighty Cæsar! countermand your orders:
Delay it but a month, a week, a day.

[Exeunt Nero, Sulpicius, Senators, *&c.* Sulpicius *still keeping close to* Nero *in the act of supplication.*—Orceres, Cordenius, *and* Guards *remain, the* Guards *standing respectfully at a distance in the back-ground.*

Orc. Noble Cordenius! can thy martial spirit
Thus brook to be a public spectacle,
Fighting with savage beasts, the sport of fools,
Till thou shalt fall, deform'd and horrible,
Mangled and piece-meal torn? It must not be.

Cor. Be not so moved, Orceres; I can bear it
The God I worship, who hath made me humble,
Hath made me dauntless too. And for the shame
Which, as I guess, disturbs thee most, my Master,
The Lord and Leader I have sworn to follow,
Did as a malefactor end his days,
To save a lost, perverted race: shall I
Feel degradation, then, in following him?

Orc. In this, alas! thou'lt follow him too surely;
But whither, noble Maro?

Cor. E'en to my destined home, my Father's house.

Orc. And where is that? O, canst thou tell me where?
Beyond the ocean or beneath the earth?
Be there more worlds than this, beyond our ken
In regions vast, above the lofty stars?
Could we through the far stretch of space descry
E'en but the distant verge, though dimly mark'd,
Of any other world, I would believe
That virtuous men deceased have in good truth
A destined place of rest.

Cor. Believe it—O, believe it, brave Orceres!

Orc. I'll try to do it. I'll become a Christian,
Were it but only to defy this tyrant.

Cor. Thou must receive with a far different spirit
The faith of Jesus Christ. Perhaps thou wilt.
My heart leaps at the thought. When I am dead
Remain in Rome no longer. In the East
Search thou for Ethocles, whom I have rescued;
And if he shall convert thee, O, how richly
He will repay all I have done for him!
—But, I would now withdraw a little space,
To pour my thoughts in prayer and thankfulness
To Him, the great, the good, the wise, the just,
Who holds man's spirit in his own high keeping,
And now supports my soul, and will support it,
Till my appointed task is done. In secret
The hearts by Jesus taught, were bid to pray,
And, if it be permitted, so will I.
(*To the* Guards, *who advance as he speaks to them.*)
My guards and, some time past, my fellow soldiers,
Let me remain alone a little while,
And fear not my escape. If ye distrust me,
Watch well the door, and bind my hands with chains.

First Offi. Yes, brave Cordenius, to another chamber
Thou mayst retire, and we will watch without.
But be thy person free: we will not bind,
With felon cord or chain, those valiant hands
Which have so often for thy country fought,
Until we are commanded.

Cor. I thank ye all, my friends, and I believe
That I shall meet and thank ye too hereafter;
For there is something in you God must love,
And, loving, will not give to reprobation.
(*To* First Officer.)
Codrus, thou once didst put thy life in hazard,
And sufferedst much to save a helpless Greek

Who sought protection of thee.
(*Turning to the* Second Officer.)
Ay, and thou,
Young Lelius, once a rich and tempting ransom
Nobly remittedst to a wretched captive.
Ye are of those whom Jesus came to save:
Yes; we shall meet hereafter. (*To* Third Officer.)
And thou, my former enemy, weepest thou?
We're enemies no more; thou art my brother.
I will retire; my little term of life
Runs fleetly on; I must not spend it thus.
[Exeunt.

SCENE III.—A CROWDED AMPHITHEATRE: NERO AND THE SENATORS DISCOVERED IN THE BACKGROUND SITTING IN STATE, PORTIA BY THE SIDE OF NERO, IN THE ACT OF SUPPLICATION.

Enter SULPICIUS on the front, meeting with another noble ROMAN.

Sul. (*eagerly.*) Is he advancing?
Noble Rom. Yes, and close at hand,
Surrounded by a group of martial friends.
Oft have I seen him on a day of battle
March to the charge with noble, portly gait,
But now he treads the ground with buoyant steps
Which from its surface spring, as though he press'd
Substance of renovating power. His form
Seems stately and enlarged beyond its wont;
And in his countenance, oft turn'd to heaven,
There is a look as if some god dwelt in him.
Sul. How do the people greet him?
Noble Rom. Every face
Gazing upon him, turns, with transit quick,
Pity to admiration. Warlike veterans
Are shedding tears like infants. As he pass'd
The legion he commanded in Armenia,
They raised a shout as if a victor came,
Saluting him with long and loud applause
None daring to reprove them.
(*Noise without of shoutings.*)
Hark! he comes.

Enter CORDENIUS, followed by ORCHRES and SYLVIUS, and attended by other friends, with GUARDS, &c.

Sul. (*advancing eagerly to meet him.*) Cordenius,
O Cordenius! hear a friend,
A faithful, ancient friend; thy Portia's father!
At Nero's footstool she is pleading for thee,
And will not plead in vain, if thou wilt testify
A yielding mind, a willingness to live.
Cor. I am so pleased to die, and am so honour'd,
In dying for the pure and holy truth,
That nature's instinct seems in me extinguish'd.
But if the emperor freely pardon me,
I shall believe it is the will of God
That I should yet on earth promote his service,
And, so believing, am content to live;
Living or dying, to his will resign'd.

Enter PORTIA on the front, and catching hold of CORDENIUS with eagerness and great agitation.

Por. Cordenius, thou art pardoned. Nero spares thee,
If thou wilt only say thou art a Roman,
In heart and faith as all thy fathers were,
Or but forbear to say thou art a Christian.
Cor. Thanks, gentle Portia! life preserved by thee,
E'en to be spent in want and contumely,
Rather than grieve thy kind and tender heart,
My dearest, gentlest friend! I had accepted:
But to deny my God, and put dishonour
Upon the noblest, most exalted faith
That ever was to human thoughts reveal'd,
Is what I will not—yea, and though a Roman,
A noble Roman, and a soldier too,
I dare not do. Let Nero have this answer.
Por. No, not this answer, Maro; not this answer!
Cast not life from thee, dear, most dear Cordenius!
Life, too, which I should spend my life in cheering
Cast it not from thee like a worthless thing.
Cor. Because it is not worthless but most precious,
And now, when dear to thee, more precious far
Than I have e'er esteem'd it, 'tis an offering
More meet for God's acceptance;
Withheld from Him, not e'en thyself, sweet maid,
Couldst cheer its course, nor yet couldst thou be happy.
Por. Nay, but I could!—to see thee still alive,
And by my side, mine own redeemed friend,
Should I not then be happy?
Cor. I should be by thy side, dear love! but thou,
With all thy excellence, couldst have no happiness,
Mated with one, whose living form alone
Could move upon the earth, whilst far adrift
His mind would dwell, by ceaseless meditation,
In other worlds of blessedness or wo;
Lost to the one, and to the other link'd
By horrid sympathy, till his wrench'd nature
Should to a demon's fell and restless spirit
At last be changed.
Por. Alas, alas! and dost thou then believe
That naught remains for thee but death or misery?
Cor. No, gentle Portia! firmly I believe
That I shall live in endless happiness,
And with the blest hereafter shall behold
Thy blessed self, with ecstasy of love,
Exceeding every thought of earth-born passion,
As the fair morning star in lovely brightness
Excels a night-fly, twinkling through the gloom.
Live in this hope, dear Portia! hold it fast;
And may his blessing rest upon thy head,
Who loves the loving and the innocent!
Farewell, in love and hope! farewell, in peace!
Farewell, in quickening faith,—in holy joy!
Por. (*clasping his knees.*) Nay, let me yet conjure thee!
Make me not wretched, me who once was happy,
Ay, happiest of all in loving thee.
Cor. This is mine anguish and my suffering!
O, good Sulpicius! bear her to her home.
Sul. (*leading her gently away, while she still clings to him.*) Forbear, my child, thy tears are all in vain.

Enter a LICTOR.

Lic. Cæsar forbids all further interruption
To his imperial sentence. Let Cordenius
Forthwith prepare him for the fatal fight.
This is mine office, and I must perform it.
(*Begins to disrobe* Cordenius, *while* Portia *shrieks*

aloud, and is carried off in the arms of her father.)

Disrobe thee, Maro, of those martial weeds.

Cor. Gladly; for him I serve,—my glorious Master
Hath braced me with an armour that defies
All hostile things; in which I'll strive more proudly
Than I have ever fought in field or breach
With Rome's or Nero's foes.

Lic. Cæsar desires thee also to remember,
That no ignoble audience, e'en thy emperor,
And all the states of Rome, behold thy deeds.

Cor. Tell him my deeds shall witness'd be by those
Compared to whom the emperor of Rome,
With all her high estates, are but as insects
Hovering at midday o'er some tainted marsh.
I know full well that no ignoble audience
Are present, though from mortal eyes conceal'd.
Farewell, my friends! kind, noble friends, farewell!

Apart to Sylvius, *while* Orceres *goes off, reappearing in another part of the theatre.*)

Sylvius, farewell! If thou shouldst e'er be call'd
To die a holy martyr for the truth,
God give thee then the joy which now I feel.
But keep thy faith conceal'd, till useful service
Shall call thee to maintain it. God be with thee!

(*Looking round.*)

Where is Orceres gone? I thought him near me.

Syl. 'Tis but a moment since he left thy side
With eager haste.

Cor. He would not see my death. I'm glad he's gone.
Say I inquired for him, and say I bless'd him.
—Now I am ready. Earthly friends are gone.
Angels and blessed spirits, to your fellowship
A few short pangs will bring me.
—O, Thou, who on the cross for sinful men
A willing sufferer hung'st! receive my soul!
Almighty God and sire, supreme o'er all!
Pardon my sins and take me to thyself!
Accept the last words of my earthly lips:
High hallelujah to thy holy name!

(*A Lion now appears, issuing from a low door at the end of the Stage, and* Cordenius, *advancing to meet it, enters the Arena, when* Orceres *from a lofty stand amongst the spectators, sends an arrow from his bow, which pierces* Cordenius *through the heart. He then disappears, and re-entering below, catches hold of his hand as* Sylvius *supports him from falling to the ground.*)

Orc. (*to* Cordenius.) Have I done well, my friend?—this is a death
More worthy of a Roman.
I made a vow in secret to my heart,
That thou shouldst ne'er be made a mangled sight
For gazing crowds and Nero's ruthless eye.

Syl. That dying look, which almost smiles upon thee,
Says that thou hast done well; though words no more
May pass from these closed lips, whose last bless'd utterance
Was the soul's purest and sublimest impulse.

(*The curtain drops.*)

NOTE TO THE DRAMA.

For the better understanding of different allusions in the foregoing drama, I beg to transcribe a few passages from Fox's History of Martyrs, taken from book I., which contains an account of the ten persecutions of the primitive church.

He says, on the authority of Justin Martyr,—"And whether earthquake, pestilence, or whatever public calamity befell, it was attributed to the Christians;" (then is added) "over and besides all these, a great occasion that stirred up the emperors against the Christians came by one Publius Tarquinius, the chief prelate of the idolatrous sacrifices, and Mamertinus, the chief governor of the city, in the time of Trajanus, who, partly with money, partly with sinister, pestilent counsaile, partly with infamous accusations, (as witnesseth Nauclerus,) incensed the mind of the emperor so much against God's people."

In the account of the third persecution (an. 100,) Eustasius, a great and victorious captain, is mentioned as suffering martyrdom by order of the Emperor Adrian, who went to meet him on his return from conquest over the barbarians; but upon Eustasius's refusing on the way to do sacrifice to Apollo for his victory, brought him to Rome, and had him put to death.

In the fourth persecution, (an. 162,) it is mentioned that many Christian soldiers were found in the army of Marcus Aurelius.

"As these aforesaid were going to their execution, there was a certain soldier who in their defence took part against those who railed upon them, for the which cause the people crying out against him, he was apprehended, and being constant in his profession, was forthwith beheaded."

In the persecutions of Decius, several soldiers are mentioned as martyrs, some of whom had before concealed their faith; and in the tenth persecution Maurilius, the captain of the Theban band, with his soldiers, to the number of 6666, (a number probably greatly exaggerated,) are recorded as having been slain as martyrs by the order of Maximinian.

Tertullian, in his Apology for the Christians, mentions the slanderous accusations against them, of putting to death children and worshipping an ass's head. And when we consider how fond the ignorant are of excitement arising from cruel, absurd, and wonderful stories, and how easily a misapprehended and detached expression may be shaped by conjecture into a detailed transaction, such accusations were very probable and might be naturally expected; particularly when the unoffending meekness of their behaviour made supposed hidden atrocities more necessary for the justification of their persecutors.

CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS.

Is there a man, that from some lofty steep,
Views in his wide survey the boundless deep,
When its vast waters, lined with sun and shade,
Wave beyond wave, in seried distance, fade
To the pale sky;—or views it, dimly seen,
The shifting screens of drifted mist between
As the huge cloud dilates its sable form,
When grandly curtain'd by th' approaching storm,—
Who feels not his awed soul with wonder rise
To Him whose power created sea and skies,
Mountains and deserts, giving to the sight
The wonders of the day and of the night?
But let some fleet be seen in warlike pride,
Whose stately ships the restless billows ride,

While each, with lofty masts and brightening sheen
Of fair spread sails, moves like a vested queen;—
Or rather, be some distant bark, astray,
Seen like a pilgrim on his lonely way,
Holding its steady course from port and shore,
A form distinct, a speck, and seen no more,—
How doth the pride, the sympathy, the flame,
Of human feeling stir his thrilling frame!
"O Thou! whose mandate dust inert obey'd!
What is this creature man whom thou hast made!"

I.

On Palos' shore, whose crowded strand
Bore priests and nobles of the land,
And rustic hinds and townsmen trim,
And harness'd soldiers stern and grim,
And lowly maids and dames of pride,
And infants by their mother's side,—
The boldest seaman stood that e'er
Did bark or ship through tempest steer;
And wise as bold, and good as wise;
The magnet of a thousand eyes,
That on his form and features cast;
His noble mien and simple guise,
In wonder seem'd to look their last.
A form which conscious worth is gracing,
A face where hope, the lines effacing
Of thought and care, bestow'd, in truth,
To the quick eyes' imperfect tracing
The look and air of youth.

II.

Who, in his lofty gait, and high
Expression of th' enlighten'd eye,
Had recognised in that bright hour
The disappointed suppliant of dull power,
Who had in vain of states and kings desired
The pittance for his vast emprise required?—
The patient sage, who, by his lamp's faint light,
O'er chart and map spent the long silent night?—
The man who meekly fortune's buffets bore,
Trusting in One alone, whom heaven and earth
adore?

III.

Another world is in his mind,
Peopled with creatures of his kind,
With hearts to feel, with minds to soar,
Thoughts to consider and explore;
Souls, who might find, from trespass shriven,
Virtue on earth and joy in heaven.
"That power divine, whom storms obey,"
(Whisper'd his heart,) a leading star,
Will guide him on his blessed way;
Brothers to join by fate divided far.
Vain thoughts! which heaven doth but ordain
In part to be, the rest, alas! how vain!

IV.

But hath there lived of mortal mould,
Whose fortunes with his thoughts could hold
An even race? Earth's greatest son
That e'er earn'd fame, or empire won,
Hath but fulfill'd, within a narrow scope,
A stinted portion of his ample hope.
With heavy sigh and look depress'd,
The greatest men will sometimes hear
The story of their acts address'd
To the young stranger's wandering ear,
And check the half-swoln tear.
Is it or modesty or pride
Which may not open praise abide?
No; read his inward thoughts! they tell
His deeds of fame he prizes well.
But, ah! they in his fancy stand,
As relics of a blighted band,
Who, lost to man's approving sight,
Have perish'd in the gloom of night,
Ere yet the glorious light of day
Had glitter'd on their bright array.
His mightiest feat had once another,
Of high imagination born,—
A loftier and a nobler brother,
From dear existence torn;
And she for those, who are not, steeps
Her soul in wo,—like Rachel, weeps.

V.

The signal given, with hasty strides
The sailors climb'd their ships' dark sides;
Their anchors weigh'd; and from the shore
Each stately vessel slowly bore.
High o'er the deeply shadow'd flood,
Upon his deck their leader stood,
And turn'd him to the parted land;
And bow'd his head and waved his hand.
And then, along the crowded strand,
A sound of many sounds combined,
That wax'd and waned upon the wind,
Burst like heaven's thunder, deep and grand
A lengthen'd peal, which paused, and then
Renew'd, like that which loathly parts,
Oft on the ear return'd again,
The impulse of a thousand hearts.
But as the lengthen'd shouts subside,
Distincter accents strike the ear,
Wafting across the current wide,
Heart-utter'd words of parting cheer:
"O! shall we ever see again
Those gallant souls recross the main?
God keep the brave! God be their guide!
God bear them safe through storm and tide
Their sails with favouring breezes swell!
O brave Columbus! fare thee well!"

VI.

From shore and strait, and gulf and bay,
The vessels held their daring way,
Left far behind, in distance thrown
All land to Moor or Christian known,
Left far behind the misty isle,
Whose fitful shroud, withdrawn the while,
Shows wood and hill and headland bright
To later seamen's wondering sight,
And tide and sea left far behind
That e'er bore freight of human kind;
Where ship or bark to shifting gales,
E'er tack'd their course or spread their sails.
Around them lay a boundless main
In which to hold their silent reign;

But for the passing current's flow,
And cleft waves, brawling round the prow,
They might have thought some magic spell
Had bound them, weary fate! for ever there to dwell.

VII.

What did this trackless waste supply
To soothe the mind or please the eye?
The rising morn through dim mist breaking,
The flicker'd east with purple streaking;
The midday cloud through thin air flying,
With deeper blue the blue sea dying;
Long ridgy waves their white mains rearing,
And in the broad gleam disappearing;
The broaden'd, blazing sun declining,
And western waves like fire flood shining;
The sky's vast dome to darkness given,
And all the glorious host of heaven.

VIII.

Full oft upon the deck, while other's slept,
To mark the bearing of each well-known star
That shone aloft, or on th' horizon far,
The anxious Chief his lonely vigil kept;
The mournful wind, the hoarse wave breaking near,
The breathing groans of sleep, the plunging lead,
The steersman's call, and his own stilly tread,
Are all the sounds of night that reach his ear.
His darker form stalk'd through the sable gloom
With gestures discomposed and features keen,
That might not in the face of day be seen,
Like some unblessed spirit from the tomb.
Night after night, and day succeeding day,
So pass'd their dull, unvaried time away;
Till hope, the seaman's worshipp'd queen, had flown
From every valiant heart but his alone;
Where still, by day, enthroned, she held her state
With sunny look and brow elate.

IX.

But soon his dauntless soul, which naught could bend,
Nor hope delay'd, nor adverse fate subdue,
With more redoubled danger must contend
Than storm or wave—a fierce and angry crew.
"Dearly," say they, "may we those visions rue
Which lured us from our native land,
A wretched, lost, devoted band,
Led on by hope's delusive gleam,
The victims of a madman's dream!
Nor gold shall e'er be ours, nor fame;
Not e'en the remnant of a name,
On some rude-letter'd stone to tell
On what strange coast our wreck befell.
For us no requiem shall be sung,
Nor prayer be said, nor passing knell
In holy church be rung."

X.

To thoughts like these, all forms give way
Of duty to a leader's sway;
All habits of respect that bind
With easy tie the human mind.
E'en love and admiration throw
Their nobler bands aside, nor show
A gentler mien; relations, friends,
Glare on him now like angry fiends;
And, as he moves, ah, wretched cheer!
Their mutter'd curses reach his ear:
But all undaunted, firm and sage,
He scorns their threats, yet thus he soothes their rage:
"I brought you from your native shore
An unknown ocean to explore.
I brought you, partners, by my side,
Want, toil, and danger, to abide.
Yet weary stillness hath so soon subdued
The buoyant soul, the heart of pride,
Men who in battle's brunt full oft have firmly stood.
That to some nearing coast we bear,
How many cheering signs declare!
Wayfaring birds the blue air ranging,
Their shadowy line to blue air changing,
Pass o'er our heads in frequent flocks;
While seaweed from the parent rocks
With fibry roots, but newly torn
In tressy lengthen'd wreaths are on the clear wave borne.
Nay, has not e'en the drifting current brought
Things of rude art,—of human cunning wrought?
Be yet two days your patience tried,
And if no shore is then descried,
E'en turn your dastard prows again,
And cast your leader to the main."

XI.

And thus a while with steady hand
He kept in check a wayward band,
Who but with half-express'd disdain
Their rebel spirit could restrain.
The veteran, rough as war-worn steel,
Oft spurn'd the deck with grating heel;
The seaman, bending o'er the flood,
With stony gaze all listless stood;
The sturdy bandit, wildly rude,
Sung, as he strode, some garbled strain,
Expressive of each fitful mood,
Timed by his sabre's jangling chain
The proud Castilian, boasted name!
Child of an ancient race
Which proudly prized its spotless fame,
And deem'd all fear disgrace,
Felt quench'd within him honour's generous flame
And in his gather'd mantle wrapp'd his face.

XII.

So pass'd the day, the night, the second day
With its red setting sun's extinguish'd ray.
Dark, solemn midnight coped the ocean wide,
When from his watchful stand Columbus cried,
"A light, a light!"—blest sounds that rung
In every ear.—At once they sprung
With haste aloft, and, peering bright,
Descried afar the blessed sight.
"It moves, it slowly moves like ray
Of torch that guides some wanderer's way!
And other lights more distant, seeming
As if from town or hamlet streaming!
'Tis land, 'tis peopled land; man dwelleth there,
And thou, O God of heaven! hast heard thy servant's prayer!"

XIII.

Returning day gave to their view
The distant shore and headlands blue
Of long-sought land. Then rose on air
Loud shouts of joy, mix'd wildly strange
With voice of weeping and of prayer,
Expressive of their blessed change
From death to life, from fierce to kind,
From all that sinks, to all that elevates the mind.
Those who, by faithless fear insnared,
Had their brave chief so rudely dared,
Now, with keen self-upbraiding stung,
With every manly feeling wrung,
Repentant tears, looks that entreat,
Are kneeling at his worshipp'd feet.
"O pardon blinded, stubborn guilt!
O henceforth make us what thou wilt!
Our hands, our hearts, our lives, are thine,
Thou wondrous man! led on by power divine!"

XIV.

Ah! would some magic could arrest
The generous feelings of the breast,
Which thwart the common baser mass
Of sordid thoughts, so fleetly pass,—
A sun glimpse through the storm!
The rent cloud closes, tempests swell,
And its late path we cannot tell;
Lost is its trace and form.
No; not on earth such fugitives are bound;
In some veil'd future state will the bless'd charm
be found.

XV.

Columbus led them to the shore,
Which ship had never touch'd before;
And there he knelt upon the strand
To thank the God of sea and land;
And there, with mien and look elate,
Gave welcome to each toil-worn mate.
And lured with courteous signs of cheer,
The dusky natives gathering near;
Who on them gazed with wandering eyes,
As mission'd spirits from the skies.
And there did he possession claim,
In Isabella's royal name.

XVI.

It was a land, unmarr'd by art,
To please the eye and cheer the heart;
The natives' simple huts were seen
Peeping their palmy groves between,—
Groves, where each dome of sweepy leaves
In air of morning gently heaves,
And, as the deep vans fall and rise,
Changes its richly verdant dyes;
A land whose simple sons till now
Had scarcely seen a careful brow;
They spent at will each passing day
In lightsome toil or active play.
Some their light canoes were guiding,
Along the shore's sweet margin gliding.
Some in the sunny sea were swimming,
The bright waves o'er their dark forms gleaming;
Some on the beach for shell-fish stooping,
Or on the smooth sand gayly trooping;
Or in link'd circles featly dancing
With golden braid and bracelet glancing.
By shelter'd door were infants creeping,
Or on the shaded herbage sleeping;
Gay feather'd birds the air were winging,
And parrots on their high perch swinging,
While humming-birds, like sparks of light,
Twinkled and vanish'd from the sight.

XVII.

They eyed the wondrous strangers o'er and o'er,—
Those beings of the ocean and the air,
With humble, timid reverence; all their store
Of gather'd wealth inviting them to share;
To share whate'er their lowly cabins hold;
Their feather'd crowns, their fruits, their arms, their gold.
Their gold, that fatal gift!—O foul disgrace!
Repaid with cruel wreck of all their harmless race

XVIII.

There some short, pleasing days with them he dwelt,
And all their simple kindness dearly felt.
But they of other countries told,
Not distant, where the sun declines,
Where reign Caziques o'er warriors bold,
Rich with the gold of countless mines.
And he to other islands sail'd,
And was by other natives hail'd.
Then on Hispaniola's shore,
Where bays and harbours to explore
Much time he spent; a simple tower
Of wood he built, the seat to be,
And shelter of Spain's infant power;
Hoping the nurseling fair to see,
Amidst those harmless people shoot
Its stately stem from slender root.
There nine and thirty chosen men he placed,
Gave parting words of counsel and of cheer;
One after one his nobler friends embraced,
And to the Indian chieftain, standing near,
"Befriend my friends, and give them aid,
When I am gone," he kindly said,
Blest them, and left them there his homeward course to steer.

XIX.

His prayer to Heaven for them preferr'd
Was not, alas! with favour heard.
Oft, as his ship the land forsook,
He landward turn'd his farewell look,
And cheer'd his Spaniards cross the wave,
Who distant answer faintly gave;
Distant but cheerful. On the strand
He saw their clothed figures stand
With naked forms link'd hand in hand!
Saw thus caress'd, assured, and bold,
Those he should never more behold.
Some simple Indians, gently won,
To visit land, where sets the sun
In clouds of amber, and behold,
The wonders oft by Spaniards told;

Stood silent by themselves apart,
With nature's yearnings at their heart,
And saw the coast of fading blue
Wear soft and sadly from their view.
But soon by their new comrades cheer'd,
As o'er the waves the ship career'd,
Their wandering eyes aloft were cast
On white swoln sails and stately mast,
And checkering shrouds, depicted fair,
On azure sea and azure air;
And felt, as feels the truant boy,
Who, having climb'd some crumbling mound
On ruin'd tower, looks wildly round
A thrilling, fearful joy.

XX.

Then with his two small barks again
The dauntless chief traversed the main;
But not with fair and favouring gales
That erst had fill'd his western sails:
Fierce winds with adverse winds contended;
Rose the dark deep,—dark heaven descended;
And threaten'd, in the furious strife,
The ships to sink with all their freight of precious life.

XXI.

In this dread case, well may be guess'd
What dismal thoughts his soul depress'd:
"And must I in th' o'erwhelming deep,
Our bold achievement all unknown,
With these my brave adventurers sleep,—
What we have done to dark oblivion thrown?
Sink, body! to thy watery grave,
If so God will; but let me save
This noble fruitage of my mind,
And leave my name and deeds behind!"

XXII.

Upon a scroll, with hasty pen,
His wondrous tale he traced,
View'd it with tearful eyes, and then
Within a casket placed.
"Perhaps," said he, "by vessel bound
On western cruise, thou wilt be found;
Or make, sped by the current swift,
To Christian shore they happy drift.
Thy story may by friendly eyes be read;
O'er our untimely fate warm tears be shed;
Our deeds rehearsed by many an eager tongue,
And requiems for our parted souls be sung."
This casket to the sea he gave;
Quick sunk and rose the freightage light,—
Appear'd on many a booming wave,
Then floated far away from his still gazing sight.
Yet, after many a peril braved,—
Of many an adverse wind the sport,
He, by his great Preserver saved,
Anchor'd again in Palos' port.

XXIII.

O, who can tell the acclamation loud
That, bursting, rose from the assembled crowd
To hail the hero and his gallant train,
From such adventure bold return'd again!—
The warm embrace, the oft-repeated cheer,
And many a wistful smile and many a tear!—
How, pressing close, they stood;
Look'd on Columbus with amaze,—
"Is he," so spake their wondering gaze,
"A man of flesh and blood?"
While cannon far along the shore
His welcome gave with deafening roar.

XXIV.

And then with measured steps, sedate and slow
They to the Christian's sacred temple go.
Soon as the chief within the house of God
Upon the hallow'd pavement trod,
He bowed with holy fear:—
"The God of wisdom, mercy, might,
Creator of the day and night,
This sea-girt globe, and every star of light,
Is worshipp'd here."
Then on the altar's steps he knelt,
And what his inward spirit felt,
Was said unheard within that cell
Where saintly thoughts and feelings dwell;
But as the choral chanters raise
Through dome and aisle the hymn of praise
To heaven his glistening eyes were turn'd,
With sacred love his bosom burn'd.
On all the motley crowd
The generous impulse seized; high dons of pride
Wept like the meekest beedsman by their side,
And women sobb'd aloud.

XXV.

Nor statesmen met in high debate
Deciding on a country's fate,
Nor saintly chiefs with fearless zeal
Contending for their churches' weal,
Nor warriors, midst the battle's roar,
Who fiercely guard their native shore;—
No power by earthly coil possest
To agitate the human breast,
Shows, from its native source diverted,
Man's nature noble, though perverted,
So strongly as the transient power
Of link'd devotion's sympathetic hour.
It clothes with soft unwonted grace
The traits of many a rugged face,
As bend the knees unused to kneel,
And glow the hearts unused to feel;
While every soul, with holy passion moved,
Claims one Almighty Sire, fear'd, and adored, and loved.

XXVI.

With western treasures, borne in fair display,
To Barcelona's walls, in grand array,
Columbus slowly held his inland way.
And still where'er he pass'd along,
In eager crowds the people throng.
The wildest way o'er desert drear
Did like a city's mart appear.
The shepherd swain forsook his sheep
The goatherd from his craggy steep
Shot like an arrow to the plain;
Mechanics, housewives, left amain
Their broken tasks, and press'd beside
The truant youth they meant to chide:
The dull hidalgo left his tower,
The donna fair her latticed bower;

Together press'd, fair and uncouth,
All motley forms of age and youth.
And, still along the dark-ranged pile
Of clustering life, was heard the while
Mix'd brawling joy, and shouts that rung
From many a loud and deafening tongue.
Ah! little thought the gazing throng,
As pass'd that pageant show along,
How Spain should rue, in future times,
With desert plains and fields untill'd,
And towns with listless loiterers fill'd,
The withering spoil received from foreign climes!
Columbus gave thee, thankless Spain!
A new-found world o'er which to reign;
But could not with the gift impart
A portion of his liberal heart
And manly mind, to bid thee soar
Above a robber's lust of ore,
Which hath a curse entail'd on all thy countless store.

XXVII.

To Barcelona come, with honours meet
Such glorious deeds to grace, his sovereigns greet
Their mariner's return. Or hall,
Or room of state was deem'd too small
For such reception. Pageant rare!
Beneath heaven's dome, in open square,
Their gorgeous thrones were placed;
And near them on an humbler seat,
While on each hand the titled great,
Standing in dizen'd rows, were seen,
Priests, guards, and crowds, a living screen,—
Columbus sat, with noble mien,
With princely honours graced.
There to the royal pair his tale he told:
A wondrous tale, that did not want
Or studied words or braggart's vaunt;
When at their royal feet were laid
Gems, pearls, and plumes of many a shade,
And stores of virgin gold,
Whilst, in their feathered guise arrayed,
The Indians low obeisance paid.
And at that wondrous story's close
The royal pair with reverence rose,
And kneeling on the ground, aloud
Gave thanks to Heaven. Then all the crowd,
Joining, from impulse of the heart,
The banded priest's ecstatic art,
With mingled voice Te Deum sang;
With the grand choral burst, walls, towers, and welkin rang.

XXVIII.

This was his brightest hour, too bright
For human weal;—a glaring light,
Like sunbeam through the rent cloud pouring
On the broad lake, when storms are roaring;
Bright centre of a wild and sombre scene;
More keenly bright than summer's settled sheen.

XXIX.

With kingly favour brighten'd, all
His favour court, obey his call.
At princely boards, above the rest,
He took his place, admired, caress'd:
Proud was the don of high degree,
Whose honour'd guest he deign'd to be.
Whate'er his purposed service wanted,
With ready courtesy was granted:
No envious foe durst cross his will.
While eager shipwrights ply their skill,
To busy dockyard, quay, or port,
Priests, lords, and citizens resort:
Their wains the heavy planks are bringing,
And hammers on the anvil ringing;
The far-toss'd boards on boards are falling,
And brawny mate to work-mate calling:
The cable strong on windlass winding;
On wheel of stone the edge tool grinding;
Red fire beneath the caldron gleaming,
And pitchy fumes from caldron steaming.
To sea and land's men too, I ween,
It was a gay, attractive scene;
Beheld, enjoyed, day after day,
Till all his ships, in fair array,
Were bounden for their course at last,
And amply stored and bravely mann'd,
Bore far from blue, receding land.
Thus soon again, th' Atlantic vast
With gallant fleet he past.

XXX.

By peaceful natives hail'd with kindly smiles,
He shortly touch'd at various pleasant isles;
And when at length her well-known shore appear'd,
And he to fair Hispaniola near'd,
Upon the deck, with eager eyes
Some friendly signal to descry,
He stood; then fired his signal shot,
But answering fire received not.
"What may this dismal silence mean?
No floating flag in air is seen,
Nor e'en the Tower itself, though well
Its lofty site those landmarks tell.
Ha! have they so regardless proved
Of my command?—their station moved!"
As closer to the shore they drew,
To hail them came no light canoe;
The beach was silent and forsaken:
Nor clothed nor naked forms appear'd,
Nor sound of human voice was heard;
Naught but the sea birds from the rock,
With busy stir that fluttering broke;
Sad signs, which in his mind portentous fears awaken.

XXXI.

Then eagerly on shore he went,
His scouts abroad for tidings sent;
But to his own loud echo'd cry
An Indian came with fearful eye,
Who guess'd his questions' hurried sound,
And pointed to a little mound,
Not distant far. With eager haste
The loosen'd mould aside was cast.
Bodies, alas! within that grave were found,
Which had not long been laid to rest,
Though so by changeful death defaced,
Nor form nor visage could be traced.—
In Spanish garments dress'd.
Back from each living Spaniard's cheek the blood
Ran chill, as round their noble chief they stood,

Who sternly spoke to check the rising tear.
"Eight of my valiant men are buried here;
Where are the rest?" the timid Indian shook
An every limb, and slow and faintly spoke.
"Some are dead, some sick, some flown;
The rest are up the country gone,
Far, far away." A heavy groan
Utters the chief; his blanch'd lips quiver;
He knows that they are gone for ever.

XXXII.

But here 'twere tedious and unmeet
A dismal story to repeat,
Which was from mild Cazique received,
Their former friend, and half believed.
Him, in his cabin far apart,
Wounded they found, by Carib dart;
Received, said he, from savage foe
Spaniards defending. Then with accents low
He spoke, and ruefully began to tell,
What to those hapless mariners befell.
How that from lust of pleasure and of gold,
And mutual strife and war on Caribs made,
Their strength divided was, and burnt their hold,
And their unhappy heads beneath the still earth laid.

XXXIII.

Yet, spite of adverse fate, he in those climes
Spain's infant power establish'd; after-times
Have seen it flourish, and her sway maintain
In either world, o'er many a fair domain.
But wayward was his irksome lot the while,
Striving with malice, mutiny, and guile;
Yet vainly striving: that which most
His generous bosom sought to shun,
Each wise and liberal purpose crost,
Must now at Mammon's ruthless call be done.
Upon their native soil,
They who were wont in harmless play
To frolic out the passing day,
Must pine with hateful toil.

XXXIV.

Yea; this he did against his better will;
For who may stern ambition serve, and still
His nobler nature trust?
May on unshaken strength rely,
Cast fortune as she will her dye,
And say "I will be just?"

XXXV.

Envy mean, that in the dark
Strikes surely at its noble mark,
Against him rose with hatred fell,
Which he could brave, but could not quell.
Then he to Spain indignant went,
And to his sovereigns made complaint,
With manly freedom, of their trust,
Put, to his cost, in men unjust,
And turbulent. They graciously
His plaint and plea received; and hoisting high
His famed and gallant flag upon the main,
He to his western world return'd again.
Where he, the sea's unwearied, dauntless rover,
Through many a gulf and strait, did first discover
That continent, whose mighty reach
From th' utmost frozen north doth stretch
E'en to the frozen south; a land
Of surface fair and structure grand.

XXXVI.

There, through vast regions rivers pour,
Whose midway skiff scarce sees the shore;
Which, rolling on in lordly pride,
Give to the main their ample tide;
And dauntless then, with current strong,
Impetuous, roaring, bear along,
And still their separate honours keep,
In bold contention with the mighty deep.

XXXVII.

There broad-based mountains from the sight
Conceal in clouds their vasty height,
Whose frozen peaks, a vision rare,
Above the girdling clouds rear'd far in upper air
At times appear, and soothly seem
To the far distant, up-cast eye,
Like snowy watch-towers of the sky,—
Like passing visions of a dream.

XXXVIII.

There forests grand of olden birth,
O'er-canopy the darken'd earth,
Whose trees, growth of unreckon'd time,
Rear o'er whole regions far and wide
A checker'd dome of lofty pride
Silent, solemn, and sublime.—
A pillar'd labyrinth, in whose trackless gloom,
Unguided feet might stray till close of mortal doom.

XXXIX.

There grassy plains of verdant green
Spread far beyond man's ken are seen,
Whose darker bushy spots that lie
Strew'd o'er the level vast, descry
Admiring strangers, from the brow
Of hill or upland steep, and show,
Like a calm ocean's peaceful isles,
When morning light through rising vapours smiles

XL.

O'er this, his last—his proudest fame,
He did assert his mission'd claim.
Yet dark, ambitious envy, more
Incensed and violent than before,
With crafty machinations gain'd
His royal master's ear, who stain'd
His princely faith, and gave it power
To triumph, in a shameful hour.
A mission'd gownsman o'er the sea
Was sent his rights to supersede,
And all his noble schemes impede,—
His tyrant, spy, and judge to be.
With parchment scrolls and deeds he came
To kindle fierce and wasteful flame.
Columbus' firm and dauntless soul
Submitted not to base control.
For who that hath high deeds achieved,
Whose mind hath mighty plans conceived,
Can of learn'd ignorance and pride
The petty vexing rule abide?

The lion trampled by an ass!—
No; this all-school'd forbearance would surpass.
Insulted with a felon's chain,
This noble man must cross the main,
And answer his foul charge to cold, ungrateful Spain.

XLI.

By India's gentle race alone
Was pity to his suffering shown.
They on his parting wait,
And looks of kindness on him cast,
Or touch'd his mantle as he past,
And mourn'd his alter'd state.
"May the Great Spirit smooth the tide
With gentle gales, and be thy guide!"
And when his vessel wore from land,
With meaning nods and gestures kind
He saw them still upon the strand
Tossing their dark arms on the wind.
He saw them like a helpless flock
Who soon must bear the cruel shock
Of savage wolves, yet reckless still,
Feel but the pain of present ill.
He saw the fate he could not now control,
And groan'd in bitter agony of soul.

XLII.

He trode the narrow deck with pain,
And oft survey'd his rankling chain.
The ship's brave captain grieved to see
Base irons his noble prisoner gall,
And kindly sued to set him free;
But proudly spoke the lofty thrall,
"Until the king whom I have served,
Who thinks this recompense deserved,
Himself command th' unclasping stroke,
These gyved limbs will wear their yoke.
Yea, when my head lies in the dust,
These chains shall in my coffin rust.
Better than lesson'd saw, though rude,
As token, long preserved of black ingratitude!"

XLIII.

Thus pent, his manly fortitude gave way
To brooding passion's dark tumultuous sway.
Dark was the gloom within, and darker grew
Th' impending gloom without, as onward drew
Th' embattled storm that, deepening on its way,
With all its marshall'd host obscured the day.
Volume o'er volume, roll'd the heavy clouds,
And oft in dark, dim masses, sinking slow,
Hung in the nether air, like misty shrouds,
Veiling the sombre, silent deep below.
Like eddying snow-flakes from a lowering sky,
Athwart the dismal gloom the frighten'd sea-fowl fly.
Then from the solemn stillness round,
Utters the storm its awful sound.
It groans upon the distant waves;
O'er the mid-ocean wildly raves;
Recedes afar with dying strain,
That sadly through the troubled air
Comes like the wailings of despair,
And with redoubled strength returns again:
Through shrouds and rigging, boards and mast,
Whistles, and howls, and roars th' outrageous blast.

XLIV.

From its vast bed profound with heaving throws
The mighty waste of weltering waters rose.
O'er countless waves, now mounting, now deprest
The ridgy surges swell with foaming crest,
Like Alpine barriers of some distant shore,
Now seen, now lost amidst the deafening roar;
While, higher still, on broad and sweepy base,
Their growing bulk the mountain billows raise,
Each far aloft in lordly grandeur rides,
With many a vassal wave roughening his furrow'd sides.
Heaved to its height, the dizzy skiff
Shoots like an eagle from his cliff
Down to the fearful gulf, and then
On the swoln waters mounts again,—
A fearful way! a fearful state
For vessel charged with living freight!

XLV.

Within, without, the tossing tempest's rage:
This was, of all his earthly pilgrimage,
The injured hero's fellest, darkest hour.
Yet swiftly pass'd its gloomy power;
For as the wild winds louder blew,
His troubled breast the calmer grew;
And, long before the mighty hand,
That rules the ocean and the land,
Had calm'd the sea, with pious reverence fill'd
The warring passions of his soul were still'd.
Through softly parting clouds the blue sky peer'd,
And heavenward turn'd his eye with better feelings cheer'd.
Meek are the wise, the great, the good;—
He sigh'd, and thought of Him, who died on holy rood.

XLVI.

No more the angry tempest's sport,
The vessel reach'd its destined port.
A town of Christendom he greets,
And treads again its well-known streets;
A sight of wonder, grief, and shame
To those who on his landing came.
And on his state in silence gazed,
"This is the man whose dauntless soul"—
So spoke their looks—"Spain's power hath raised
To hold o'er worlds her proud control!
His honour'd brows with laurel crown'd,
His hands with felon fetters bound!"

XLVII.

And he before his sovereign dame
And her stern lord, indignant came;
And bold in conscious honour, broke
The silence of his smother'd flame,
In words that all his inward anguish spoke.
The gentle queen's more noble breast
Its generous sympathy exprest;
And as his varied story show'd
What wrongs from guileful malice flow'd,
Th' indignant eye and flushing cheek
Did oft her mind's emotion speak.
The sordid king, with brow severe,
Could, all unmoved, his pleadings hear;

Save, that, in spite of royal pride,
Which self reproach can ill abide,
His crimson'd face did meanly show
Of conscious shame th' unworthy glow.
Baffled, disgraced, his enemies remain'd,
And base ambition for a time restrain'd.

XLVIII.

With four small vessels, small supply
I trow! yet granted tardily,
For such high service, he once more
The western ocean to explore
Directs his course. On many an isle
He touch'd, where cheerly, for a while,
His mariners their cares beguile
Upon the busy shore.
And there what wiles of barter keen
Spaniard and native pass between;
As feather'd crowns, whose colours change
To every hue, with vizards strange,
And gold and pearls are given away,
For bead or bell, or bauble gay!
Full oft the muttering Indian eyes
With conscious smile his wondrous prize,
Beneath the shady plantain seated,
And thinks he hath the stranger cheated;
Or foots the ground like vaunting child,
Snapping his thumbs with antics wild.

XLIX.

But if, at length, tired of their guests,
Consuming like those hateful pests,
Locusts or ants, provisions stored
For many days, they will afford
No more, withholding fresh supplies,
And strife and threatening clamours rise,—
Columbus' gentle craft pursues,
And soon their noisy wrath subdues
Thus speaks the chief,—"Refuse us aid
From stores which Heaven for all hath made!
The moon, your mistress, will this night
From you withhold her blessed light,
Her ire to show; take ye the risk."
Then, as half frighten'd, half in jest,
They turn'd their faces to the east,
From ocean rose her broaden'd disk;
But when the deep eclipse came on,
By science sure to him foreknown,
How cower'd each savage at his feet,
Like spaniel couching to his lord,
Awed by the whip or angry word,
His pardon to entreat!
"Take all we have, thou heavenly man!
And let our mistress smile again!"

L.

Or, should the ship, above, below,
Be fill'd with crowds, who will not go;
Again to spare more hurtful force,
To harmless guile he has recourse.
'Ho! gunner! let these scramblers know
The power we do not use:" when, lo!
From cannon's mouth the silvery cloud
Breaks forth, soft curling on the air,
Through which appears the lightning's glare,
And bellowing roars the thunder loud.
Quickly from bowsprit, shroud, or mast,
Or vessel's side the Indians cast
Their naked forms, the water dashing
O'er their dark heads, as stoutly lashing
The briny waves with arms out-spread,
They gain the shore with terror's speed.

LI.

Thus checker'd still with shade and sheen
Pass'd in the west his latter scene,
As through the oak's toss'd branches pass
Soft moonbeams, flickering on the grass;
As on the lake's dark surface pour
Broad flashing drops of summer shower:—
As the rude cavern's sparry sides
When past the miner's taper glides.
So roam'd the Chief, and many a sea
Fathom'd and search'd unwearidly,
Hoping a western way to gain
To eastern climes,—an effort vain;
For mighty thoughts, with error uncombined,
Were never yet the meed of mortal mind.

LII.

At length, by wayward fortune cross'd,
And oft-renew'd and irksome strife
Of sordid men,—by tempests tost,
And tired with turmoil of a wanderer's life,
He sail'd again for Europe's ancient shore,
So will'd high Heaven! to cross the seas no more
His anchor fix'd, his sails for ever furl'd,
A toil-worn pilgrim in a weary world.

LIII.

And thus the Hero's sun went down,
Closing his day of bright renown.
Eight times through breeze and storm he past
O'er surge and wave th' Atlantic vast;
And left on many an island fair
Foundations which the after care
Of meaner chieftains shortly rear'd
To seats of power, serv'd, envied, fear'd.
No kingly conqueror, since time began
The long career of ages, hath to man
A scope so ample given for trade's bold range,
Or caused on earth's wide stage such rapid, mighty change.

LIV.

He, on the bed of sickness laid,
Saw, unappall'd, death's closing shade;
And there, in charity and love
To man on earth and God above,
Meekly to heaven his soul resign'd,
His body to the earth consign'd.
'Twas in Valladolid he breathed his last,
And to a better, heavenly city pass'd;
But St. Dominga, in her sacred fane
Doth his blest spot of rest and sculptured tomb contain.

LV.

There burghers, knights, adventurers brave,
Stood round in funeral weeds bedight;
And bow'd them to the closing grave,
And wish'd his soul good night.

LVI.

Now all the bold companions of his toil,
Tenants of many a clime, who wont to come,
(So fancy trows,) when vex'd with worldly coil,
And linger sadly by his narrow home;—
Repentant enemies, and friends that grieve
In self-upbraiding tenderness, and say,
"Cold was the love he did from us receive,"—
The fleeting, restless spirits of a day,
All to their dread account are pass'd away.

LVII.

Silence, solemn, awful, deep,
Doth in that hall of death her empire keep;
Save when at times the hollow pavement smote
By solitary wanderer's foot, amain
From lofty dome, and arch, and aisle remote
A circling loud response receives again.
The stranger starts to hear the growing sounds,
And sees the blazon'd trophies waving near;—
"Ha! tread my feet so near that sacred ground!"
He stops and bows his head:—"Columbus resteth here!"

LVIII.

Some ardent youth, perhaps, ere from his home
He launch his venturous bark, will hither come,
Read fondly o'er and o'er his graven name
With feelings keenly touch'd,—with heart of flame;
Till wrapp'd in fancy's wild, delusive dream,
Times past and long forgotten, present seem.
To his charm'd ear, the east wind rising shrill,
Seems through the Hero's shroud to whistle still.
The clock's deep pendulum swinging, through the blast
Sounds like the rocking of his lofty mast;
While fitful gusts rave like his clamorous band,
Mix'd with the accents of his high command.
Slowly the stripling quits the pensive scene,
And burns, and sighs, and weeps to be what he has been.

LIX.

O! who shall lightly say that fame
Is nothing but an empty name!
Whilst in that sound there is a charm
The nerve to brace, the heart to warm,
As, thinking of the mighty dead,
The young, from slothful couch will start,
And vow with lifted hands outspread,
Like them to act a noble part?

LX.

O! who shall lightly say that fame
Is nothing but an empty name!
When, but for those, our mighty dead,
All ages past, a blank would be,
Sunk in oblivion's murky bed,—
A desert bare, a shipless sea?
They are the distant objects seen,—
The lofty marks of what hath been.

LXI.

O! who shall lightly say that fame
Is nothing but an empty name!
Then memory of the mighty dead
To earth-worn pilgrim's wistful eye
The brightest rays of cheering shed,
That point to immortality?

LXII.

A twinkling speck, but fix'd and bright,
To guide us through the dreary night,
Each hero shines, and lures the soul
To gain the distant happy goal.
For is there one who, musing o'er the grave
Where lies interr'd the good, the wise, the brave,
Can poorly think, beneath the mouldering heap,
That noble being shall for ever sleep?
No; saith the generous heart, and proudly swells,—
"Though his cered corse lies here, with God his spirit dwells."

LADY GRISELD BAILLIE.

When, sapient, dauntless, strong, heroic man!
Our busy thoughts thy noble nature scan,
Whose active mind, its hidden cell within,
Frames that from which the mightiest works begin;
Whose secret thoughts are light to ages lending,
Whose potent arm is right and life defending,
For helpless thousands, all on one high soul depending:—
We pause, delighted with the fair survey,
And haply in our wistful musings say,
What mate, to match this noble work of heaven,
Hath the all-wise and mighty master given?
One gifted like himself, whose head devises
High things, whose soul at sound of battle rises,
Who with glaved hand will through arm'd squadrons ride,
And, death confronting, combat by his side;
Will share with equal wisdom grave debate,
And all the cares of chieftain, kingly state?
Ay, such, I trow, in female form hath been
Of olden times, and may again be seen,
When cares of empire or strong impulse swell
The generous breast, and to high deeds impel;
For who can these as meaner times upbraid,
Who think of Saragossa's valiant maid?
But she of gentler nature, softer, dearer,
Of daily life, the active, kindly cheerer;
With generous bosom, age, or childhood shielding,
And in the storms of life, though moved, unyielding;
Strength in her gentleness, hope in her sorrow,
Whose darkest hours some ray of brightness borrow
From better days to come, whose meek devotion
Calms every wayward passion's wild commotion;
In want and suffering, soothing, useful, sprightly,
Bearing the press of evil hap so lightly,
Till evil's self seems its strong hold betraying
To the sweet witchery of such winsome playing;
Bold from affection, if by nature fearful,
With varying brow, sad, tender, anxious, cheerful,—
This is meet partner for the loftiest mind,
With crown or helmet graced,—yea, this is womankind!
Come ye, whose grateful memory retains
Dear recollection of *her* tender pains
To whom your oft-conn'd lesson, daily said,
With kiss and cheering praises was repaid;

To gain whose smile, to shun whose mild rebuke,
Your irksome task was learnt in silent nook,
Though truant thoughts the while, your lot exchanging
With freer elves, were wood and meadow ranging;—
And ye, who best the faithful virtues know
Of a link'd partner, tried in weal and wo,
Like the slight willow, now aloft, now bending,
But, still unbroken, with the blast contending,
Whose very look call'd virtuous vigour forth,
Compelling you to match her noble worth;
And ye, who in a sister's modest praise
Feel manly pride, and think of other days,
Pleased that the playmate of your native home
Hath in her prime an honour'd name become;—
And ye, who in a duteous child have known
A daughter, helpmate, sister, blent in one,
From whose dear hand which, to no hireling leaves
Its task of love, your age sweet aid receives,
Who reckless marks youth's waning faded hue,
And thinks her bloom well spent, when spent foryou;
Come all, whose thoughts such dear remembrance bear,
And to my short and faithful lay give ear.

I.

Within a prison's hateful cell,
Where, from the lofty window fell,
Through grated bars, the sloping beam,
Defined, but faint, on couch of stone,
There sat a prisoner sad and lone,
Like the dim tenant of a dismal dream.
Deep in the shade, by low-arch'd door,
With iron nails thick studded o'er,
Whose threshold black is cross'd by those
Who here their earthly being close,
Or issue to the light again
A scaffold with their blood to stain,—
Moved something softly. Wistful ears
Are quick of sense, and from his book
The prisoner raised his eyes with eager look,
"Is it a real form that through the gloom appears?"

II.

It was indeed of flesh and blood,
The form that quickly by him stood;
Of stature low, of figure light,
In motion like some happy sprite;
Yet meaning eyes and varying cheek,
Now red, now pale, seem'd to bespeak
Of riper years the cares and feeling
Which with a gentle heart were dealing.
Such sense in eyes so simply mild!
Is it a woman or a child?
"Who art thou, damsel sweet? are not mine eyes beguiled?"

III.

"No; from the Redbraes' tower I come;
My father is Sir Patrick Hume;
And he has sent me for thy good,
His dearly honour'd Jerviswood.
Long have I round these walls been straying
As if with other children playing;
Long near the gate have kept my watch
The sentry's changing time to catch.
With stealthy steps I gain'd the shade
By the close-winding staircase made,
And when the surly turnkey enter'd,
But little dreaming in his mind
Who follow'd him so close behind,
Into this darken'd cell, with beating heart, I ventured."

IV.

Then from the simple vest that braced
Her gentle breast, a letter traced
With well-known characters, she took,
And with an eager, joyful look
Her eyes up to his visage cast,
His changing countenance to scan,
As o'er the lines his keen glance pass'd.
She saw a faint glow tinge the sickly wan;
She saw his eyes through teardrops raise
To heaven their look of silent praise,
And hopes fresh touch undoing lines of care
Which stress of evil times had deeply graven there.
Mean while, the joy of sympathy to trace
Upon her innocent and lovely face
Had to the sternest, darkest skeptic given
Some love of human kind, some faith in righteous Heaven.

V.

What blessings on her youthful head
Were by the grateful patriot shed,
(For such he was, good and devoted,
And had at risk of life promoted
His country's freedom and her faith,
Nor reckoning made of worldly skathe,)
How warm, confiding, and sincere,
He gave to her attentive ear
The answer which her cautious sire
Did to his secret note require:—
How after this with 'quiries kind,
He ask'd for all she left behind
In Redbraes' tower, her native dwelling,
And set her artless tongue a-telling,
Which urchin dear had tallest grown,
And which the greatest learning shown,
Of lesson, sermon, psalm, and note,
And Sabbath questions learnt by rote,
And merry tricks and gambols play'd
By evening fire, and forfeits paid,—
I will not here rehearse, nor will I say,
How, on that bless'd and long-remember'd day,
The prisoner's son, deserving such a sire,
First saw the tiny maid, and did admire,
That one so young, and wise, and good, and fair,
Should be an earthly thing that breathed this nether air.

VI.

E'en let my reader courteously suppose,
That from this visit happier days arose;
Suppose the prisoner from his thraldom freed.
And with our lay proceed.

VII.

The damsel, glad her mission'd task was done
Back to her home long since had blithely gone;
And there remain'd, a meek and duteous child
Where useful toil, with play between,
And pastime on the sunny green,
The weeks and months of passing years beguiled.

VIII.

Scotland the while convulsive lay
Beneath a hateful tyrant's sway;
For James's bigot mind th' ascendant gain'd,
And fiercely raged blind ruthless power;
While men, who true to conscience' voice remain'd,
Were forced in caves and dens to cower;
Bereft of home, or hold, or worldly wealth,
Upon the bleak and blasted heath,
They sang their glorious Maker's praise by stealth,
Th' inclement sky beneath.
And some were forced to flee their native land,
Or in the grated prison's gloom,
Dealt to them by corruption's hateful hand,
Abide their fatal doom.

IX.

And there our former thrall, the good,
The firm, the gentle Jerviswood
Again was pent with sickness worn,
Watching each pulse's feebler beat
Which promised, ere the fated morn,
The scaffold of its prey to cheat.

X.

And now that patriot's ancient, faithful friend,
Our maiden's sire, must to the tempest bend.
He too must quit his social hearth,
The place where cheerful friends resort,
And travellers rest and children sport,
To lay him on the mouldering earth;
Through days of lonely gloom to rest his head
With them, who, in those times unblest,
Alone had sure and fearless rest,
The still, the envied dead.

XI.

Sad was his hiding place, I ween,
A fearful place, where sights had been,
Full oft, by the benighted rustic seen;
Ay, elrich forms in sheeted white,
Which, in the waning moonlight blast,
Pass by, nor shadow onward cast,
Like any earthly wight;
A place, where midnight lights had shone
Through charnel windows, and the glancing
Of wandering flame, on church-path lone,
Betray'd the hour when fiends and hags were dancing,
Or to their vigil foul with trooping haste advancing.
A place, whose gate with weeds o'ergrown,
Hemlock and dock of deep dull green,
That climbing rank the lintels screen,
What time the moon is riding high
The very hounds went cowering by,
Or watch'd afar with bowling moan;
For brutes, 'tis said, will see what meets no human eye.

XII.

You well may guess his faithful wife
A heart of heavy cheer had then,
Listening her household's hum of life,
And thinking of his silent den.
"O! who will to that vault of death,
At night's still watch repair,
The dark and chilly sky beneath,
And needful succour bear?
Many his wants, who bideth lonely there!"

XIII.

Pleased had you been to have beheld,
Like fire-sparks from the stricken stone,
Like sunbeams on the raindrop thrown,
The kindling eye of sweet Griseld,
When thus her mother spoke, for known
Was his retreat to her alone.
The wary dame to none beside
The dangerous secret might confide.
"O fear not, mother! I will go,
Betide me good or ill:
Nor quick nor dead shall daunt me; no;
Nor witch-fires, dancing in the dark,
Nor owlet's shriek, nor watch-dog's bark,
For I will think, the while, I do God's blessed will
I'll be his active Brownie sprite,
To bring him needful food, and share his lonely night."

XIV

And she, ere stroke of midnight bell,
Did bound her for that dismal cell;
And took that haunted, fearful way
Which, till that hour, in twilight gray
She never by herself had past,
Or e'en athwart its copse-wood cast
A hasty glance, for dread of seeing
The form of some unearthly being.
But now, far other forms of fear
To her sacred sight appear,
And, like a sudden fit of ague, move her;
The stump of some old, blasted tree,
Or upright stone, or colt broke free
To range at will the dewy lea,
Seem lurking spy or rustic lover,
Who may, e'en through the dark, her secret drift discover.

XV.

She pauses oft.—"What whispers near?
The babbling burn sounds in my ear.
Some hasty form the pathway crosses:—
'Tis but a branch the light wind tosses.
What thing is that by churchyard gate,
That seems like spearman tall to wait?
'Tis but the martyr's slender stone
Which stands so stately and alone:
Why should I shrink? why should I fear?
The vault's black door is near."
And she with icy fingers knock'd,
And heard with joy the door unlock'd,
And felt the yawning fence give way,
As deep and harsh the sounding hinges bray.

XVI.

But to describe their tender meeting,
Tears shed unseen, affection utter'd
In broken words, and blessings mutter'd,
With many a kiss and kindly greeting,
I know not; would my feeble skill
Were meeter yokemate to my will!

XVII.

Then from the struck flint flew the spark,
And lighted taper, faint and small,
Gave out its dun rays through the dark,
On vaulted roof and crusted wall:

On stones reversed in crumbling mould,
And blacken'd poles of bier decay'd
That lumbering on the ground were laid;
On sculptured wrecks, defaced and old,
And shreds of painted 'scutcheons torn
Which once, in pointed lozenge spread,
The pillar'd church aloft had worn;
While new-swept nook and lowly bed,
Strange sight in such a place!
Betray'd a piteous case,—
Man from man's converse torn, the living with the dead.

XVIII.

The basket's store of viands and bread,
Produced with looks of kind inviting,
Her hands with busy kindness spread;
And he her kindly care requiting,
Fell to with thanks and relish keen,
Nodded and quaff'd her health between,
While she his glee return'd, her smiles with tears uniting.
No lordling at his banquet rare
E'er tasted such delicious fare;
No beauty on her silken seat,
With lover kneeling at her feet,
E'er wept and smiled by turns with smiles so fondly sweet.

XIX.

But soon youth's buoyant, gladsome nature,
Spreads joy unmix'd o'er every feature,
As she her tale is archly telling
Of feuds within their busy dwelling,
While, round the savoury table sitting,
She gleans his meal, the rest unwitting,
How she, their open eyes deceiving,
So dexterous has become in thieving.
She tells, how of some trifle prating,
She stirs them all to keen debating,
While into napkin'd lap she's sliding
Her portion, oft renew'd, and hiding,
Beneath the board, her store; amazing
Her jealous Frere, oft on her gazing.
Then with his voice and eager eye,
She speaks in harmless mimickry.
"Mother! was e'er the like beheld?
Some wolf possesses our Griseld;
She clears her dish, as I'm a sinner!
Like ploughman at his new-year's dinner.

XX.

And wnat each urchin, one by one,
Had best in sport or lesson done,
She fail'd not to repeat;
Though sorry tales they might appear
To a fastidious critic's ear,
They were to him most sweet.

XXI.

But they must part till o'er the sky
Night cast again her sable dye;
For ah! her term is almost over!
How fleetly hath it flown!
As fleetly as with tristed lover
The stealthy hour is gone.
And could there be in lovers meeting
More powerful chords to move the mind,
Fond heart to heart responsive beating,
Than in that tender hour, pure, pious love entwines.

XXII.

Thus, night succeeding night, her love
Did its unwearied nature prove,
Tender and fearless; till, obscured by crimes,
Again so darkly lower'd the changeful times,
That her good sire, though shut from light of day,
Might in that lowly den no longer stay.

XXIII.

From Edinbrough town a courier came,
And round him flock'd the castle's dame,
Children and servants, young and old.
"What news? what news? thy visage sad
Betrays too plainly tidings bad."
And so it did; alas! sad was the tale he told.
"From the oppressor's deadly hate
Good Jerviswood has met his fate
Upon the lofty scaffold, where
He bore himself with dauntless air;
Albeit, with mortal sickness spent,
Upon a woman's arm he leant.
From earth to heaven at yestere'en he went."

XXIV.

In silence deep the listeners stood,
An instant horror chill'd their blood.
The lady groan'd, and turn'd aside
Her fears and troubled thoughts to hide.
The children wept, then went to play;
The servants cried "Awaladay!"
But O! what inward sights, which borrow
The forms that are not, changing still,
Like shadows on a broken rill,
Were blended with our damsel's sorrow!
Those lips, those eyes so sweetly mild,
That bless'd her as a humble child;
The block in sable, deadly trim,
The kneeling form, the headsman grim,
The sever'd head with life-blood streaming,
Were ever 'thwart her fancy gleaming.
Her father, too, in perilous state,
He may be seized, and like his friend
Upon the fatal scaffold bend.
May Heaven preserve him still from such a dreadful end!
And then she thought, if this must be,
Who, honour'd sire, will wait on thee,
And serve thy wants with decent pride,
Like Baillie's kinswoman, subduing fear
With fearless love, thy last sad scene to cheer,
E'en on the scaffold standing by thy side?
A friend like his, dear father, thou shalt have,
To serve thee to the last, and linger round thy grave

XXV.

Her father then, who narrowly
With life escaped, was forced to fly
His dangerous home, a home no more,
And cross the sea. A friendly shore
Received the fugitive, and there,
Like prey broke from the spoiler's snare,

To join her hapless lord, the dame
With all her numerous family came;
And found asylum, where th' opprest
Of Scotland's patriot sons had rest,
Like sea fowl clustering in the rock
To shun some rising tempest's shock.

XXVI.

But said I all the family? no:
Word incorrect! it was not so:
For one, the youngest child, confined
With fell disease, was left behind;
While certain things, as thus by stealth
They fled, regarding worldly wealth
Of much import, were left undone;
And who will now that peril run,
Again to visit Scotland's shore,
From whence they did in fear depart,
And to each parent's yearning heart
The darling child restore?

XXVII.

And who did for affection's sake
This task of peril undertake?
O! who but she, whose bosom swell'd
With feelings high, whose self-devotion
Follow'd each generous, strong emotion,
The young, the sweet, the good, the brave Griseld.

XXVIII.

Yes; she again cross'd o'er the main,
And things of moment left undone,
Though o'er her head had scarcely run
Her nineteenth year, no whit deluded
By wily fraud, she there concluded,
And bore the youngling to its home again.

XXIX.

But when she reach'd the Belgian strand,
Hard was her lot. Fast fell the rain,
And there lay many miles of land,
A stranger's land, ere she might gain
The nearest town. With hardship crost,
The wayward child its shoes had lost;
Their coin was spent, their garments light,
And dark and dreary was the night.
Then like some gipsy girl on desert moor,
Her helpless charge upon her back she bore.
Who then had guess'd that figure slight,
So bending in such humble plight,
Was one of proud and gentle race,
Possessing all that well became
Th' accomplish'd maid or high-born dame,
Befitting princely hall or monarch's court to grace?

XXX.

Their minds from many racking cares relieved,
The gladsome parents to their arms received
Her and the infant dear, caressing
The twain by turns; while many a blessing,
Which sweetly all her toil repaid,
Was shed upon their generous maid:
And though the inmates of a humble home,
To which they had as wretched outlaws come,
Though hard their alter'd lot might be,
In crowded city pent,
They lived with mind and body free
In grateful, quiet content.

XXXI.

And well, with ready hand and heart,
Each task of toilsome duty taking,
Did one dear inmate play her part,
The last asleep, the earliest waking.
Her hands each nightly couch prepared,
And frugal meal on which they fared:
Unfolding spread the servet white,
And deck'd the board with tankard bright.
Through fretted hose and garment rent,
Her tiny needle deftly went,
Till hateful penury, so graced,
Was scarcely in their dwelling traced.
With reverence to the old she clung,
With sweet affection to the young.
To her was crabbed lesson said,
To her the sly petition made,
To her was told each petty care;
By her was lisp'd the tardy prayer,
What time the urchin, half undrest
And half asleep, was put to rest.

XXXII.

There is a sight all hearts beguiling.—
A youthful mother to her infant smiling,
Who, with spread arms and dancing feet,
And cooing voice, returns its answer sweet.
Who does not love to see the grandame mild,
Lesson with yearning looks the listening child?
But 'tis a thing of saintlier nature,
Amidst her friends of pigmy stature,
To see the maid in youth's fair bloom,
A guardian sister's charge assume,
And, like a touch of angel's bliss,
Receive from each its grateful kiss.
To see them, when their hour of love is past,
Aside their grave demeanour cast.
With her in mimic war they wrestle;
Beneath her twisted robe they nestle;
Upon her glowing cheek they revel,
Low bended to their tiny level;
While oft, her lovely neck bestriding
Crows some arch imp, like huntsman riding.
This is a sight the coldest heart may feel;—
To make down rugged cheeks the kindly tear to steal.

XXXIII.

But when the toilsome sun was set,
And evening groups together met,
(For other strangers shelter'd there
Would seek with them to lighten care,)
Her feet still in the dance moved lightest,
Her eye with merry glance beam'd brightest,
Her braided locks were coil'd the neatest,
Her carol song was thrill'd the sweetest;
And round the fire, in winter cold,
No archer tale than hers was told.

XXXIV.

O! spirits gay, and kindly heart!
Precious the blessings ye impart!
Though all unwittingly the while,
Ye make the pining exile smile,
And transient gladness charm his pain,
Who ne'er shall see his home again.
Ye make the stern misanthrope's brow
With tint of passing kindness glow,

And age spring from his elbow-chair
The sport of lightsome glee to share.
Thus did our joyous maid bestow
Her beamy soul on want and wo;
While proud, poor men, in threadbare suit,
Frisk'd on the floor with lightsome foot,
And from her magic circle chase
The fiends that vex the human race.

XXXV.

And do not, gentle reader, chide,
If I record her harmless pride,
Who sacrificed the hours of sleep,
Some show of better times to keep;
That, though as humble soldier dight,
A stripling brother might more trimly stand
With pointed cuff and collar white,
Like one of gentler race mix'd with a homelier band.
And in that band of low degree
Another youth of gentle blood
Was found, who late had cross'd the sea,
The son of virtuous Jerviswood,
Who did as common sentry wait
Before a foreign prince's gate.
And if his eye, oft on the watch,
One look of sweet Griseld might catch,
It was to him no dull nor irksome state.

XXXVI.

And thus some happy years stole by;
Adversity with virtue mated,
Her state of low obscurity,
Set forth but as deep shadows, fated
By Heaven's high will to make the light
Of future skies appear more bright.
And thus, at lowest ebb, man's thoughts are oft elated.
He deems not that the very struggle
Of active virtue, and the war
She bravely holds with present ill,
Sustain'd by hope, does by the skill
Of some conceal'd and happy juggle,
Become itself the good which yet seems distant far.
So, when their lamp of fortune burn'd
With brightest ray, our worthies turn'd,
A recollection, fondly bent,
On these, their happiest years, in humble dwelling spent.

XXXVII.

At length the sky, so long with clouds o'ercast,
Unveil'd its cope of azure hue,
And gave its fair expanse to view;—
The pelting storm of tyranny was past.

XXXVIII.

For he, the prince of glorious memory,
The prince, who shall, as passing ages fly,
Be blest; whose wise, enlighten'd, manly mind,
E'en when but with a stripling's years combined,
Had with unyielding courage oft contended
For Europe's freedom,—for religion, blended
With just, forbearing charity, and all
To man most dear;—now, at the honour'd call
Of Britain's patriot sons, the ocean plough'd
With gallant fleet, encompass'd by a crowd
Of soldiers, statesmen, souls of proof, who vow'd
Firm by his side to stand, let good or ill befall.
And with those worthies, 'twas a happy doom
Right fairly earn'd, embark'd, Sir Patrick Hume.
Their fleet, though long at sea, and tempest-tost,
In happy hour at last arrived on England's coast.

XXXIX.

Meantime his dame and our fair maid
Still on the coast of Holland stay'd,
With anxious and misgiving minds,
Listening the sound of warring winds:
The ocean rose with deafening roar,
And beat upon the trembling shore,
Whilst breakers dash'd their whitening spray
O'er mound and dyke with angry bray,
As if it would ingulf again
The land once rescued from its wild domain.

XL.

Oft on the beach our damsel stood
Midst groups of many a fearful wight,
Who view'd, like her, the billowy flood,
Silent and sad, with visage shrunk and white,
While bloated corse and splinter'd mast,
And bale and cask on shore were cast,—
A sad and rueful sight!
But when, at the Almighty will,
The tempest ceased, and sea was still,
From Britain's isle glad tidings came,
Received with loud and long acclaim.

XLI.

But joy appears with shrouded head
To those who sorrow o'er the dead;
For, struck with sore disease, while there
They tarried pent in noisome air,
The sister of her heart, whom she
Had watch'd and tended lovingly,
Like blighted branch whose blossoms fade,
That day was in her coffin laid.
She heard the chimed bells loudly ringing,
She heard the caroll'd triumph singing,
And clamorous throng, and shouting boys,
And thought how vain are human joys!

XLII.

Howbeit, her grief at length gives way
To happier thoughts, as dawns the day
When her kind parent and herself depart,
In royal Mary's gentle train,
To join, ere long, the dearest to her heart,
In their own native land again.
They soon their own fair island hail'd,
As on the rippling sea they sail'd.
Ye well may guess their joyful cry,
With upraised hands and glistening eye,
When, rising from the ocean blue,
Her chalky cliffs first met their view,
Whose white verge on th' horizon rear'd,
Like wall of noonday clouds appear'd.

XLIII

These ye may guess, for well the show
And outward signs of joy we know.
But cease we on this theme to dwell,
For pen or pencil cannot tell
The thrill of keen delight from which they flow
Such moments of ecstatic pleasure
Are fancy's fairest, brightest treasure,

Gilding the scope of duller days
With oft-recurring retrospect,
With which right happily she plays.
E'en as a moving mirror will reflect
Its glancing rays on shady side
Of home or glen, when school-boys guide
With skilful hands their mimic sun
To heaven's bright sun opposed; we see
Its borrow'd sheen on fallow dun,
On meadow green, on rock and tree,
On broomy steep, on rippling spring,
On cottage thatch, and every thing.

XLIV.

And Britain's virtuous queen admired
Our gentle maid, and in her train
Of ladies will'd her to remain:
What more could young ambition have desired?
But, like the blossom to the bough,
Or wall-flower to the ruin's brow,
Or tendril to the fostering stock,
Or seaweed on the briny rock,
Or mistletoe to sacred tree,
Or daisy to the swarded lea,
So truly to her own she clung;—
Nor cared for honours vain, from courtly favour sprung.

XLV.

Nor would she in her native north,
When woo'd by one of wealth and worth,
The neighbour of her happy home,
Though by her gentle parents press'd
And flattered, courted and caress'd,
A splendid bride become.
"I may not," said her gentle heart
"The very thought endure,
That those so kind should feel the smart
A daughter's wants might oft impart,
For Jerviswood is poor.
But yet, though poor, why should I smother
This dear regard? he'll be my brother,
And thus through life we'll love each other.
What though, as changing years flit by,
Gray grow my head, and dim his eye!
We'll meekly bear our wayward fate,
And scorn their petty spite who rate,
With senseless gibes, the single state,
Till we are join'd, at last, in heavenly bliss on high."

XLVI.

But Heaven for them decreed a happier lot:
The father of the virtuous youth,
Who died devoted for the truth,
Was not, when better times return'd, forgot:
To the right heir was given his father's land,
And with his lady's love, he won her hand.

XLVII.

Their long tried faith in honour plighted,
They were a pair by Heaven united,
Whose wedded love, through lengthen'd years,
The trace of early fondness wears.
Her heart first guess'd his doubtful choice,
Her ear first caught his distant voice,
And from afar, her wistful eye
Would first his graceful form descry.
E'en when he hied him forth to meet
The open air in lawn or street,
She to her casement went,
And after him, with smile so sweet,
Her look of blessing sent.
The heart's affection,—secret thing!
Is like the cleft rock's ceaseless spring,
Which free and independent flows
Of summer rains or winter snows.
The foxglove from its side may fall
The heathbloom fade or moss-flower white,
But still its runlet, bright though small,
Will issue sweetly to the light.

XLVIII.

How long an honour'd and a happy pair,
They held their seemly state in mansion fair,
I will not here in chiming verses say,
To tire my reader with a lengthen'd lay;
For tranquil bliss is as a summer day
O'er broad Savana shining; fair it lies,
And rich the trackless scene, but soon our eyes,
In search of meaner things, turn heavily away.

XLIX.

But no new ties of wedded life,
That bind the mother and the wife,
Her tender, filial heart could change,
Or from its earliest friends estrange.
The child, by strong affection led,
Who braved her terror of the dead
To save an outlaw'd parent, still
In age was subject to his will.
She then was seen with matron air,
A dame of years, with countenance fair,
Though faded, sitting by his easy chair.
A sight that might the heart's best feelings move.
Behold her seated at her task of love!
Books, papers, pencil, pen, and slate,
And column'd scrolls of ancient date,
Before her lie, on which she looks
With searching glance, and gladly brooks
An irksome task, that else might vex
His temper, or his brain perplex;
While, haply, on the matted floor,
Close nestling at her kirtled feet,
Its lap enrich'd with childish store,
Sits, hush'd and still, a grandchild sweet,
Who looks at times with eye intent,
Full on its grandame's parent bent,
Viewing his deeply-furrow'd brow,
And sunken lip and locks of snow,
In serious wonderment.
Well said that graceful sire, I ween!
Still through life's many a varied scene,
Griseld our dear and helpful child hath been.

L.

Though ever cheerfully possessing
In its full zest the present blessing,
Her grateful heart remembrance cherish'd
Of all to former happiness allied,

Nor in her fostering fancy perish'd
E'en things inanimate that had supplied
Means of enjoyment once. Maternal love,
Active and warm, which nothing might restrain,
Led her once more, in years advanced, to rove
To distant southern climes, and once again
Her footsteps press'd the Belgian shore,
The town, the very street that was her home of yore.

LI.

Fondly that homely house she eyed,
The door, the windows, every thing
Which to her back-cast thoughts could bring
The scenes of other days.—Then she applied
To knocker bright her thrilling hand,
And begg'd, as strangers in the land,
Admittance from the household dame,
And thus preferred her gentle claim:
"This house was once my happy home,
Its rooms, its stair, I fain would see;
Its meanest nook is dear to me,
Let me and mine within its threshold come."
But no; this might not be!
Their feet might soil her polish'd floor,
The dame held fast the hostile door,
A Belgian housewife she.
"Fear not such harm! we'll doff our shoes:
Do not our earnest suit refuse!
We'll give thee thanks, we'll give thee gold;
Do not kind courtesy withhold!"
But still it might not be;
The dull, unpliant dame refused her gentle plea.

LII.

With her and her good lord, who still
Sweet union held of mated will,
Years pass'd away with lightsome speed;
But ah! their bands of bliss at length were riven;
And she was clothed in widow's sable weed,
Submitting to the will of Heaven.
And then a prosperous race of children good
And tender, round their noble mother stood.
And she the while, cheer'd with their pious love,
Waited her welcome summons from above.

LIII.

But whatsoe'er the weal or wo
That Heaven across her lot might throw,
Full well her Christian spirit knew
Its path of virtue, straight and true.
When came the shock of evil times, menacing
The peaceful land—when blood and lineage tracing
As the sole claim to Britain's throne, in spite
Of Britain's weal or will, chiefs of the north,
In warlike muster, led their clansmen forth,
Brave, faithful, strong and toughly nerved,
Would they a better cause had served!
For Stuart's dynasty to fight,
Distress to many a family came,
Who dreaded more the approaching shame
Of penury's ill-favour'd mien,
Than e'en the pang of hunger keen.
How softly then her pity flow'd!
How freely then her hand bestow'd!
She did not question their opinion
Of party, kingship, or dominion:
She would not e'en their folly chide,
But like the sun and showers of heaven,
Which to the false and true are given,
Want and distress relieved on either side.

LIV.

But soon, from fear of future change,
The evil took a wider range.
The northern farmers, spoil'd and bare,
No more could rent or produce spare
To the soil's lords. All were distress'd,
And on our noble dame this evil sorely press'd.
Her household numerous, her means withheld
Shall she her helpless servants now dismiss
To rob or starve, in such a time as this,
Or wrong to others do? but nothing quell'd
Her calm and upright mind.—"Go, summon here
Those who have served me many a year."
The summons went; each lowly name
Full swiftly to her presence came,
And thus she spoke: "Ye've served me long,
Pure, as I think, from fraud or wrong,
And now, my friendly neighbours, true
And simply I will deal with you.
The times are shrewd, my treasures spent,
My farms have ceased to yield me rent;
And it may chance that rent or grain
I never shall receive again.
The dainties which my table fed,
Will now be changed for daily bread,
Dealt sparely, and for this I must
Be debtor to your patient trust,
If ye consent."—Swift through the hall,
With eager haste, spoke one and all.
"No, noble dame! this must not be!
With heart as warm and hand as free,
Still thee and thine we'll serve with pride,
As when fair fortune graced your side.
The best of all our stores afford
Shall daily smoke upon thy board;
And, shouldst thou never clear the score,
Heaven for thy sake will bless our store."
She bent her head with courtesy,
The big tear swelling in her eye,
And thank'd them all. Yet plain and spare,
She order'd still her household fare,
Till fortune's better die was cast,
And adverse times were past.

LV.

Good, tender, generous, firm and sage,
Through grief and gladness, shade and sheen,
As fortune changed life's motley scene,
Thus pass'd she on to reverend age.
And when the heavenly summons came,
Her spirit from its mortal frame
And weight of mortal cares to free,
It was a blessed sight to see,
The parting saint her state of honour keeping
In gifted, dauntless faith, whilst round her, weeping,
Her children's children mourn'd on bended knee.

LVI.

In London's fair imperial town
She laid her earthly burden down.
In Mellerstain, her northern home,

Was raised for her a graven tomb
Which gives to other days her modest, just renown.

And now, ye polish'd fair of modern times,
If such indeed will listen to my rhymes,
What think ye of her simple, modest worth,
Whom I have faintly tried to shadow forth?
How vain the thought! as if ye stood in need
For pattern ladies in dull books to read.
Will she such antiquated virtues prize,
Who with superb signoras proudly vies,
Trilling before the dear admiring crowd
With outstretch'd, straining throat, bravuras loud,
Her high-heaved breast press'd hard, as if to boast
The inward pain such mighty efforts cost:
Or on the white-chalk'd floor, at midnight hour,
Her head with many a flaunting, full-blown flower,
And bartisan of braided locks enlarged,
Her flimsy gown with twenty flounces charged,
Wheels gayly round the room on pointed toe,
Softly supported by some *dandy* beau:—
Will she, forsooth! or any belle of spirit,
Regard such old, forgotten, homely merit?
Or she, whose cultured, high-strain'd talents soar
Through all th' ambitious range of letter'd lore
With soul enthusiastic, fondly smitten
With all that e'er in classic page was written,
And whilst her wit in critic task engages,
The technic praise of all praised things outrages;
Whose finger, white and small, with ink-stain tipt,
Still scorns with vulgar thimble to be clipt;
Who doth with proud pretence her claims advance
To philosophic, honour'd ignorance
Of all, that, in divided occupation,
Gives the base stamp of female degradation;
Protests she knows not colour, stripe nor shade,
Nor of what stuff her flowing robe is made,
But wears, from petty, frivolous fancies free,
Whatever careful Betty may decree;
As certes, well she may, for Betty's skill
Leaves her in purfle, furbelow, or frill,
No whit behind the very costliest fair
That wooes with daily pains the public stare:
Who seems almost ashamed to be a woman,
And yet the palm of parts will yield to no man
But holds on battle-ground eternal wrangling,
The plainest case in mazy words entangling:—
Will she, I trow, or any kirtled sage,
Admire the subject of my artless page?
And yet there be of British fair, I know,
Who to this legend will some favour show
From kindred sympathy; whose life proceeds
In one unwearied course of gentle deeds,
And pass untainted through the earthly throng,
Like souls that to some better world belong.
Nor will I think, as sullen cynics do,
Still libelling present times, their number few.
Yea, leagued for good they act, a virtuous band,
The young, the rich, the loveliest of the land,
Who clothe the naked, and, each passing week,
The wretched poor in their sad dwelling seek,
Who, cheer'd and grateful, feebly press and bless
The hands which princes might be proud to kiss:—
Such will regard my tale, and give to fame
A generous, helpful maid,—a good and noble dame.

LORD JOHN OF THE EAST.

THE fire blazed bright till deep midnight,
And the guests sat in the hall,
And the lord of the feast, Lord John of the East,
Was the merriest of them all.

His dark gray eye, that wont so sly
Beneath his helm to scowl,
Flash'd keenly bright, like a new-waked sprite
As pass'd the circling bowl.

In laughter light, or jocund lay,
That voice was heard, whose sound,
Stern, loud, and deep, in battle-fray
Did foemen fierce astound;

And stretch'd so balm, like lady's palm,
To every jester near,
That hand which through a prostrate foe
Oft thrust the ruthless spear.

The gallants sang, and the goblets rang,
And they revell'd in careless state,
Till a thundering sound, that shook the ground,
Was heard at the castle gate.

"Who knocks without, so loud and stout?
Some wandering knight, I ween,
Who from afar, like a guiding star,
Our blazing hall hath seen.

"If a stranger it be of high degree,
(No churl durst make such din,)
Step forth amain, my pages twain,
And soothly ask him in.

"Tell him our cheer is the forest deer,
Our bowl is mantling high,
And the lord of the feast is John of the East,
Who welcomes him courteously."

The pages twain return'd again,
And a wild, scared look had they;
"Why look ye so?—is it friend or foe?"
Did the angry baron say.

"A stately knight without doth wait,
But further he will not hie,
Till the baron himself shall come to the gate,
And ask him courteously."—

"By my mother's shroud, he is full proud!
What earthly man is he?"
"I know not, in truth," quoth the trembling youth,
"If earthly man it be.

"In Raveller's plight, he is bedight,
With a vest of the crim'sy meet;
But his mantle behind, that streams on the wind,
Is a corse's bloody sheet."

"Out, paltry child! thy wits are wild,
Thy comrade will tell me true:
Say plainly, then, what hast thou seen?
Or dearly shalt thou rue."

Faint spoke the second page with fear,
And bent him on his knee,
"Were I on your father's sword to swear,
The same it appear'd to me."

Then dark, dark lower'd the baron's eye,
And his red cheek changed to wan;
For again at the gate more furiously,
The thundering din began.

"And is there ne'er of my vassals here,
Of high or low degree,
That will unto this stranger go,—
Will go for the love of me?"

Then spoke and said, fierce Donald the Red,—
(A fearless man was he,)
"Yes; I will straight to the castle gate,
Lord John, for the love of thee."

With heart full stout, he hied him out,
Whilst silent all remain;
Nor moved a tongue those gallants among,
Till Donald return'd again.

"O speak," said his lord, "by thy hopes of grace,
What stranger must we hail?"
But the haggard look of Donald's face
Made his faltering words to fail.

"It is a knight in some foreign guise,
His like did I never behold;
For the stony look of his beamless eyes
Made my very life-blood cold.

"I did him greet in fashion meet,
And bade him your feast partake,
But the voice that spoke, when he silence broke,
Made the earth beneath me quake.

"O such a tone did tongue ne'er own
That dwelt in mortal head;—
It is like a sound from the hollow ground,—
Like the voice of the coffin'd dead.

"I bade him to your social board.
But in he will not hie,
Until at the gate this castle's lord
Shall entreat him courteously.

"And he stretch'd him the while with a ghastly smile,
And sternly bade me say,
'Twas no depute's task your guest to ask
To the feast of the woody bay."

Pale grew the baron, and faintly said,
As he heaved his breath with pain,
"From such a feast as there was spread,
Do any return again?

"I bade my guest to a bloody feast,
Where the death's wound was his fare,
And the isle's bright maid, who my love betray'd,
She tore her raven hair.

The seafowl screams, and the watch-tower gleams,
And the deafening billows roar,
Where he unblest was put to rest,
On a wild and distant shore.

"Do the hollow grave and the whelming wave
Give up their dead again?
Doth the surgy waste waft o'er its breast
The spirits of the slain?"

But his loosen'd limbs shook fast, and pour'd
The big drops from his brow,
As louder still the third time roar'd
The thundering gate below.

"O rouse thee, baron, for manhood's worth!
Let good or ill befall,
Thou must to the stranger knight go forth,
And ask him to your hall."

"Rouse thy bold breast," said each eager guest,
"What boots it shrinking so?
Be it fiend, or sprite, or murder'd knight,
In God's name thou must go.

"Why shouldst thou fear? dost thou not wear
A gift from the great Glendower,
Sandals blest by a holy priest,
O'er which naught ill hath power?"

All ghastly pale did the baron quail,
As he turn'd him to the door,
And his sandals blest, by a holy priest,
Sound feebly on the floor.

Then back to the hall and his merry mates all,
He cast his parting eye,
"God send thee amain, safe back again!"
He heaved a heavy sigh.

Then listen'd they, on the lengthen'd way,
To his faint and lessening tread,
And, when that was past, to the wailing blast,
That wail'd as for the dead.

But wilder it grew, and stronger it blew,
And it rose with an elrich sound,
Till the lofty keep on its rocky steep,
Fell hurling to the ground.

Each fearful eye then glanced on high,
To the lofty-window'd wall,
When a fiery trace of the baron's face
Through the casements shone on all.

But the vision'd glare pass'd through the air,
And the raging tempest ceased,
And never more on sea or shore,
Was seen Lord John of the East.

The sandals, blest by a holy priest,
Lay unscath'd on the swarded green,
But never again on land or main,
Lord John of the East was seen.

MALCOM'S HEIR.

O go not by Duntorloch's walls
When the moon is in the wane,
And cross not o'er Duntorloch's bridge,
The farther bank to gain.

For there the Lady of the Stream
In dripping robes you'll spy,
A-singing to her pale, wan babe,
An elrich lullaby.

And stop not at the house of Merne,
On the eve of good Saint John,
For then the Swathed Knight walks his rounds
With many a heavy moan.

All swathed is he in coffin weeds,
And a wound is in his breast,
And he points still to the gloomy vault,
Where they say his corse doth rest.

But pass not near Glencromar's tower,
Though the sun shine e'er so bright;
More dreaded is that in the noon of day,
Than these in the noon of night.

The nightshade rank grows in the court,
And snakes coil in the wall,
And bats lodge in the rifted spire,
And owls in the murky hall.

On it there shines no cheerful light,
But the deep-red setting sun
Gleams bloody red on its battlements
When day's fair course is run.

And fearfully in night's pale beams,
When the moon peers o'er the wood,
Its shadow grim stretch'd o'er the ground
Lies blackening many a rood.

No sweet bird's chirping there is heard,
No herd-boy's horn doth blow;
But the owlet hoots, and the pent blast sobs,
And loud croaks the carrion crow.

No marvel! for within its walls
Was done the deed unblest,
And in its noisome vaults the bones
Of a father's murderer rest.

He laid his father in the tomb
With deep and solemn wo,
As rumour tells, but righteous Heaven
Would not be mocked so.

There rest his bones in the mouldering earth,
By lord and by carle forgot;
But the foul, fell spirit that in them dwelt,
Rest hath it none, I wot!

'Another night," quoth Malcom's heir,
As he turn'd him fiercely round,
And closely clench'd his ireful hand,
And stamp'd upon the ground:

"Another night within your walls
I will not lay my head,
Though the clouds of heaven my roof should be,
And the cold, dank earth my bed.

"Your younger son has now your love,
And my step-dame false your ear;
And his are your hawks, and his are your hounds,
And his your dark-brown deer.

"To him you have given your noble steed,
As fleet as the passing wind;
But me have you shamed before my friends,
Like the son of a base-born hind."

Then answered him the white-hair'd chief,
Dim was his tearful eye,
"Proud son, thy anger is all too keen,
Thy spirit is all too high.

"Yet rest this night beneath my roof,
The wind blows cold and shrill,
With to-morrow's dawn, if it so must be,
E'en follow thy wayward will."

But nothing moved was Malcom's heir,
And never a word did he say,
But cursed his father in his heart,
And sternly strode away.

And his coal-black steed he mounted straight,
As twilight gather'd round,
And at his feet with eager speed
Ran Swain, his faithful hound.

Loud rose the blast, yet ne'ertheless
With furious speed rode he,
Till night, like the gloom of a cavern'd mine,
Had closed o'er tower and tree.

Loud rose the blast, thick fell the rain,
Keen flash'd the lightning red,
And loud the awful thunder roar'd
O'er his unshelter'd head.

At length full close before him shot
A flash of sheeted light,
And the high-arch'd gate of Glencromar's tower,
Glared on his dazzled sight.

His steed stood still, nor step would move,
Up look'd his wistful Swain,
And wagg'd his tail, and feebly whined;
He lighted down amain.

Through porch and court he pass'd, and still
His listening ear he bow'd,
Till beneath the hoofs of his trampling steed
The paved hall echoed loud.

And other echoes answer gave
From arches far and grand;
Close to his horse and his faithful dog
He took his fearful stand.

The night-birds shriek'd from the creviced roof,
And the fitful blast sung shrill;
But ere the midwatch of the night,
Were all things hush'd and still.

But in the midwatch of the night,
When hush'd was every sound,
Faint, doleful music struck his ear,
As if waked from the hollow ground.

And loud and louder still it grew,
And upward still it wore,
Till it seem'd at the end of the farthest aisle
To enter the eastern door.

O! never did music of mortal make
Such dismal sounds contain;
A horrid elrich dirge it seem'd,—
A wild, unearthly strain.

The yell of pain, and the wail of wo,
And the short, shrill shriek of fear,
Through the winnowing sound of a furnace flame
Confusedly struck his ear.

And the serpent's hiss, and the tiger's growl,
And the famish'd vulture's cry,
Were mix'd at times, as with measured skill
In this horrid harmony.

Up brizzled the locks of Malcom's heir,
And his heart it quickly beat,
And his trembling steed shook under his hand,
And Swain cower'd close to his feet.

When, lo! a faint light through the porch
Still strong and stronger grew,
And shed o'er the walls and the lofty roof
Its wan and dismal hue.

And slowly entering then appear'd,
Approaching with soundless tread,
A funeral band in dark array,
As in honour of the dead.

The first that walk'd were torchmen ten
To lighten their gloomy road,
And each wore the face of an angry fiend,
And on cloven goats' feet trod.

And the next that walk'd as mourners meet,
Were murderers twain and twain,
With bloody hands and surtout red,
Befoul'd with many a stain.

Each with a cut-cord round his neck,
And red-strain'd, starting eyen,
Show'd that upon the gibbet tree
His earthly end had been.

And after these, in solemn state,
There came an open bier,
Borne on black, shapeless, rampant forms,
That did but half appear.

And on that bier a corse was laid,
As corse could never lie,
That did by decent hands composed
In nature's struggles die.

Nor stretch'd, nor swathed, but every limb
In strong distortion lay,
As in the throes of a violent death
Is fix'd the lifeless clay.

And in its breast was a broken knife,
With the black blood bolter'd round;
And its face was the face of an aged man,
With the filleted locks unbound.

Its features were fix'd in horrid strength,
And the glaze of its half-closed eye
A last dread parting look express'd,
Of wo and agony.

But, oh! the horrid form to trace,
That follow'd it close behind,
In fashion of the chief mourner,
What words shall minstrel find?

In his lifted hand, with straining grasp,
A broken knife he press'd,
The other half of the cursed blade
Was that in the corse's breast.

And in his blasted, horrid face,
Full strongly mark'd, I ween,
The features of the aged corse
In life's full prime were seen.

Thou gnash thy teeth and tear thy hair,
And roll thine eyeballs wild,
Thou horrible, accursed son,
With a father's blood defiled!

Back from the bier with strong recoil,
Still onward as they go,
Doth he in vain his harrow'd head,
And writhing body throw.

For, closing round, a band of fiends
Full fiercely with him deal,
And force him o'er the bier to bend,
With their fangs of red-hot steel.

Still on they moved, and stopp'd at length,
In the midst of the trembling hall,
When the dismal dirge, from its loudest pitch,
Sunk to a dying fall.

But what of horror next ensued,
No mortal tongue can tell,
For the thrill'd life paused in Malcom's heir,
In a death-like trance he fell.

The morning rose with cheerful light,
On the country far and near,
But neither in country, tower, nor town,
Could they find Sir Malcom's heir.

They sought him east, they sought him west,
O'er hill and vale they ran,
And met him at last on the blasted heath,
A crazed and wretched man.

He will to no one utter his tale,
But the priest of St. Cuthbert's cell,
And aye, when the midnight warning sounds
He hastens his beads to tell.

THE ELDEN TREE.

A FEAST was spread in the baron's hall
And loud was the merry sound,
As minstrels play'd at lady's call,
And the cup went sparkling round.

For gentle dames sat there, I trow,
By men of mickle might,
And many a chief with dark-red brow
And many a burly knight.

Each had fought in war's grim rank
And some on the surgy sea,
And some on Jordan's sacred banks,
For the cause of Christentie.

But who thinks now of blood or strife,
Or Moorish or Paynim foe?
Their eyes beam bright with social life,
And their hearts with kindness glow.

"Gramercie, chieftain, on thy tale!
It smacks of thy merry mood."—
"Ay, monks are sly, and women frail,
Since rock and mountain stood."

"Fy, fy! sir knight, thy tongue is keen
'Tis sharper than thy steel."—
"So, gentle lady, are thine eyen,
As we poor lovers feel.

"Come, pledge me well, my lady gay,
Come, pledge me, noble frere;
Each cheerful mate on such a day,
Is friend or mistress dear."

And louder still comes jeer and boast,
As the flagons faster pour,
Till song, and tale, and laugh are lost
In a wildly mingled roar.

Ay, certes, 'tis an hour of glee,
For the baron himself doth smile,
And nods his head right cheerily,
And quaffs his cup the while.

What recks he now of midnight fear,
Or the night wind's dismal moan?
As it tosses the boughs of that Elden Tree,
Which he thinketh so oft upon?

Long years have past since a deed was done,
By its doer only seen,
And there lives not a man beneath the sun,
Who wotteth that deed hath been.

So gay was he, so gay were all,
They mark'd not the growing gloom;
Nor wist they how the darkening hall
Lower'd like the close of doom.

Dull grew the goblet's sheen, and grim
The features of every guest,
And colourless banners aloft hung dim,
Like the clouds of the drizzly west.

Hath time pass'd then so swift of pace?
Is this the twilight gray?
A flash of light pass'd through the place,
Like the glaring noon of day.

Fierce glanced the momentary blaze
O'er all the gallant train,
And each visage pale, with dazzled gaze,
Was seen and lost again.

And the thunder's rolling peal, from far,
Then on and onward drew,
And varied its sound like the broil of war,
And loud and louder grew.

Still glares the lightning blue and pale,
And roars th' astounding din;
And rattle the windows with bickering hail,
And the rafters ring within.

And cowering hounds the board beneath
Are howling with piteous moan,
While lords and dames sit still as death,
And words are utter'd none.

At length in the waning tempest's fall,
As light from the welkin broke,
A frighten'd man rush'd through the hall,
And words to the baron spoke.

"The thunder hath stricken your tree so fair,
Its roots on green-sward lie."—
"What tree?"—"The Elden planted there
Some thirty years gone by."

"And wherefore starest thou on me so,
With a face so ghastly wild?"
"White bones are found in the mould below,
Like the bones of a stripling child."

Pale he became as the shrouded dead,
And his eyeballs fix'd as stone;
And down on his bosom dropp'd his head,
And he utter'd a stifled groan.

Then from the board, each guest amazed,
Sprang up, and curiously
Upon his sudden misery gazed,
And wonder'd what might be.

Out spoke the ancient seneschal,
"I pray ye stand apart,
Both gentle dames and nobles all,
This grief is at his heart.

"Go, call St. Cuthbert's monk with speed,
And let him be quickly shriven,
And fetch ye a leech for his body's need,
To dight him for earth or heaven."

"No, fetch me a priest," the baron said,
In a voice that seem'd utter'd with pain;
And he shudder'd and shrunk, as he faintly bade
His noble guests remain.

"Heaven's eye each secret deed doth scan
Heaven's justice all should fear:
What I confess to the holy man,
Both heaven and you shall hear."

And soon St. Cuthbert's monk stood by
With visage sad, but sweet,
And cast on the baron a piteous eye,
And the baron knelt low at his feet.

"O, father! I have done a deed
Which God alone did know;
A brother's blood these hands have shed,
With many a fiend-like blow:

"For fiends lent strength like a powerful charm,
And my youthful breast impell'd,
And I laugh'd to see beneath my arm
The sickly stripling quell'd.

"A mattock from its pit I took,
Dug deep for the Elden Tree,
And I tempted the youth therein to look
Some curious sight to see.

"The woodmen to their meal were gone,
And ere they return'd again,
I had planted that tree with my strength alone,
O'er the body of the slain.

"Ah! gladly smiled my father then,
And seldom he smiled on me,
When he heard that my skill, like the skill of men,
Had planted the Elden Tree.

"But where was his eldest son so dear,
Who nearest his heart had been?
They sought him far, they sought him near,
But the boy no more was seen.

"And thus his life and lands he lost,
And his father's love beside:
The thought that ever rankled most
In this heart of secret pride.

"Ah! could the partial parent wot
The cruel pang he gives,
To the child neglected and forgot,
Who under his cold eye lives!

"His elder rights did my envy move,
These lands and their princely hall;
But it was our father's partial love
I envied him most of all.

"Now thirty years have o'er me pass'd,
And, to the eye of man,
My lot was with the happy cast,
My heart it could not scan.

"O! I have heard in the dead of night,
My murder'd brother's groan,
And shudder'd, as the pale moonlight
On the mangled body shone.

"My very miners, pent in gloom,
Whose toil my coffers stored,
And cursed belike their cheerless doom,
Were happier than their lord.

"O, holy man! my tale is told
With pain, with tears, with shame;
May penance hard, may alms of gold,
Some ghostly favour claim?

"The knotted scourge shall drink my blood,
The earth my bed shall be,
And bitter tears my daily food,
To earn Heaven's grace for me."

Now, where that rueful deed was done,
Endow'd with rights and lands,
Its sharp spires brightening in the sun,
A stately abbey stands.

And the meek'st monk, whose life is there
Still spent on bended knee,
Is he who built that abbey fair,
And planted the Elden Tree.

THE GHOST OF FADON.

Or Gark's deserted ancient hall
Was twilight closing fast,
And, in its dismal shadows, all
Seem'd lofty, void, and vast.

All sounds of life, now reft and bare,
From its walls had pass'd away,
But the stir of small birds shelter'd there,
Dull owl, or clattering jay.

Loop-hole and window, dimly seen,
With faint light passing through,
Grew dimmer still and the dreary scene
Was fading from the view:

When the trampling sound of banded men,
Came from the court without;
Words of debate and call, and then
A loud and angry shout.

But mingled echoes from within
A mimic mockery made,
And the bursting door, with furious din,
On jarring hinges bray'd.

An eager band, press'd rear on van,
Rush'd in with clamorous sound,
And their chief, the goodliest, bravest man
That e'er trode Scotish ground.

Then spoke forthwith that leader bold,
"We war with wayward fate:
These walls are bare, the hearth is cold,
And all is desolate.

"With fast unbroke and thirst unslaked,
Must we on the hard ground sleep?
Or, like ghosts from vaulted charnel waked,
Our cheerless vigil keep?"

"Hard hap this day in bloody field,
Ye bravely have sustain'd,
And for your pains this dismal bield,
And empty board have gain'd.

"Hie, Malcom, to that varlet's steed,
And search if yet remain
Some homely store, but good at need,
Spent nature to sustain.

"Cheer up, my friends! still heart in hand,
Though few and spent we be,
We are the pith of our native land,
And we shall still be free.

"Cheer up! though scant and coarse our meal,
In this our sad retreat,
We'll fill our horn to Scotland's weal,
And that will make it sweet."

Then all, full cheerly, as they could,
Their willing service lent,
Some broke the boughs, some heap'd the wood,
Some struck the sparkling flint.

And a fire they kindled speedily,
Where the hall's last fire had been,
And pavement, walls, and rafters high,
In the rising blaze were seen.

Red gleam on each tall buttress pour'd
The lengthen'd hall along,
And tall and black behind them lower'd
Their shadows deep and strong.

The ceiling, ribb'd with massy oak,
From bickering flames below,
As light and shadow o'er it broke,
Seem'd wavering to and fro.

Their scanty meal was on the ground,
Spread by the friendly light,
And they made the brown horn circle round,
As cheerly as they might.

Some talk of horses, weapons, mail,
Some of their late defeat,
By treachery caused, and many a tale
Of Southron spy's retreat.

"Ay, well," says one, "my sinking heart
Did some disaster bode,
When faithless Fadon's wily art
Beguiled us from the road."

"But well repaid by Providence
Are such false deeds we see;
He's had his rightful recompense,
And cursed let him be."

"O! curse him not! I needs must rue
That stroke so rashly given:
If he to us were false or true,
Is known to righteous Heaven."

So spoke their chief, then silent all
Remain'd in sombre mood,
Till they heard a bugle's larum call
Sound distant through the wood.

'Rouse ye, my friends!" the chieftain said,
"That blast, from friend or foe,
Comes from the west; through forest shade
With wary caution go,

"And bring me tidings. Speed ye well!"
Forth three bold warriors pass'd,
Then from the east with fuller swell
Was heard the bugle blast.

Out pass'd three warriors more; then shrill
The horn blew from the north,
And other eager warriors still,
As banded scouts, went forth.

Till from their chief each war-mate good
Had to the forest gone,
And he, who fear'd not flesh and blood,
Stood by the fire alone.

He stood, wrapp'd in a musing dream,
Nor raised his drooping head,
Till a sudden, alter'd, paly gleam
On all around was spread.

Such dull, diminish'd, sombre sheen
From moon eclipsed, by swain
Belated, or lone herd is seen
O'er-mantling hill and plain.

Then to the fitful fire he turn'd,
Which higher and brighter grew,
Till the flame like a baleful meteor burn'd
Of clear sulphureous blue.

Then wist the chief, some soul unblest,
Of spirit of power was near;
And his eyes adown the hall he cast,
Yet naught did there appear.

But he felt a strange, unearthly breath
Upon the chill air borne,
And he heard at the gate, like a blast of wrath,
The sound of Fadon's horn.

Owls, bats, and swallows, fluttering, out
From hole and crevice flew,
Circling the lofty roof about,
As loud and long it blew.

His noble hound sprang from his lair,
The midnight rouse to greet,
Then, like a timid trembling hare
Couch'd at his master's feet.

Between his legs his drooping tail,
Like dog of vulgar race,
He hid, and with strange piteous wail
Look'd in his master's face.

The porch seem'd void, but vapour dim
Soon fill'd the lowering room,
Then was he aware of a figure grim,
Approaching through the gloom.

And striding as it onward came,
The vapour wore away,
Till it stood distinctly by the flame,
Like a form in the noon of day.

Well Wallace knew that form, that head,
That throat unbraced and bare,
Mark'd deep with streaming circlet red,
And he uttered a rapid prayer.

But when the spectre raised its arm,
And brandish'd its glittering blade,
That moment broke fear's chilly charm
On noble Wallace laid.

The threaten'd combat was to him
Relief; with weapon bare,
He rush'd upon the warrior grim,
But his sword shore empty air.

Then the spectre smiled with a ghastly grin,
And its warrior-semblance fled,
And its features grew stony, fix'd, and thin,
Like the face of the stiffen'd dead.

The head a further moment crown'd,
The body's stately wreck
Shook hideously, and to the ground
Dropt from the bolter'd neck.

Back shrunk the noble chief aghast,
And longer tarried not,
But quickly to the portal pass'd,
To shun the horrid spot.

But in the portal, stiff and tall,
The apparition stood,
And Wallace turn'd and cross'd the hall,
Where entrance to the wood.

By other door he hoped to snatch,
Whose pent arch darkly lower'd,
But there, like sentry on his watch,
The dreadful phantom tower'd.

Then up the ruin'd stairs so steep,
He ran with panting breath,
And from a window—desperate leap!
Sprang to the court beneath.

O'er wall and ditch he quickly got,
Through brake and bushy stream,
When suddenly through darkness shot
A red and lurid gleam.

He look'd behind, and that lurid light
Forth from the castle came;
Within its circuit through the night
Appear'd an elrich flame.

Red glow'd each window, slit, and door
Like mouths of furnace hot,
And tint of deepest blackness wore
The walls and steepy moat.

But soon it rose with brightening power,
Till bush and ivy green,
And wall-flower, fringing breach and tower,
Distinctly might be seen.

Then a spreading blaze with eddying sweep,
Its spiral surges rear'd,
And then aloft on the stately keep,
Fadon's Ghost appear'd.

A burning rafter, blazing bright,
It wielded in its hand;
And its warrior form, of human height,
Dilated grew, and grand.

Coped by a curling tawny cloud,
With tints sulphureous blent,
It rose with burst of thunder loud,
And up the welkin went.

High, high it rose with widening glare,
Sent far o'er land and main,
And shut into the lofty air,
And all was dark again.

A spell of horror lapt him round,
Chill'd, motionless, amazed,
His very pulse of life was bound
As on black night he gazed.

Till harness'd warriors' heavy tread,
From echoing dell arose;
"Thank God!" with utter'd voice, he said,
"For here come living foes."

With kindling soul that brand he drew
Which boldest Southron fears,
But soon the friendly call he knew,
Of his gallant, brave compeers.

With haste each wondrous tale was told,
How still, in vain pursuit,
They follow'd the horn through wood and wold,
And Wallace alone was mute.

Day rose; but silent, sad and pale,
Stood the bravest of Scottish race;
And each warrior's heart began to quail,
When he look'd in his leader's face.

A NOVEMBER NIGHT'S TRAVELLER.

He, who with journey well begun,
Beneath the beam of morning's sun,
Stretching his view o'er hill and dale,
And distant city, (through its veil
Of smoke, dark spires and chimneys showing,)
O'er harvest lands with plenty flowing,
What time the roused and busy, meeting
On king's highway, exchange their greeting,
Feels his cheer'd heart with pleasure beat,
As on his way he holds. And great
Delight hath he, who travels late,
What time the moon doth hold her state
In the clear sky, while down and dale
Repose in light so pure and pale!—
While lake, and pool, and stream are seen
Weaving their maze of silvery sheen,—
While cot and mansion, rock and glade,
And tower and street, in light and shade
Strongly contrasted, are, I trow!
Grander than aught of noonday show,
Soothing the pensive mind.
And yet,
When moon is dark, and sun is set,
Not reft of pleasure is the wight,
Who, in snug chaise, at close of night
Begins his journey in the dark,
With crack of whip and ban-dog's bark,
And jarring wheels, and children bawling,
And voice of surly ostler, calling
To postboy, through the mingled din,
Some message to a neighbouring inn,
Which sound confusedly in his ear;
The lonely way's commencing cheer.
With dull November's starless sky
O'er head, his fancy soars not high.
The carriage lamps a white light throw
Along the road, and strangely show
Familiar things which cheat the eyes,
Like friends in motley masker's guise.
"What's that? or dame, or mantled maid,
Or herdboy gather'd in his plaid,
Which leans against yon wall his back?
No; 'tis in sooth a tiny stack
Of turf or peat, or rooty wood,
For cottage fire the winter's food."—
"Ha! yonder shady nook discovers
A gentle pair of rustic lovers.
Out on't! a pair of harmless calves,
Through straggling bushes seen by halves."
"What thing of strange unshapely height
Approaches slowly on the light,
That like a hunchback'd giant seems,
And now is whitening in its beams?
'Tis but a hind, whose burly back
Is bearing home a loaded sack."—
"What's that, like spots of flecker'd snow
Which on the road's wide margin show?
'Tis linen left to bleach by night."—
"Gra'mercy on us! see I right?
Some witch is casting cantraips there;
The linen hovers in the air!—
Pooh! soon or late all wonders cease,
We have but scared a flock of geese."—
Thus oft through life we do misdeem
Of things that are not what they seem.
Ah! could we there with as slight scathe
Divest us of our cheated faith!
And then belike, when chiming bells
The near approach of wagon tells,
He wistful looks to see it come,
Its bulk emerging from the gloom,
With dun tarpauling o'er it thrown,
Like a huge mammoth, moving on.
But yet more pleased, through murky air
He spies the distant bonfire's glare;
And, nearer to the spot advancing,
Black imps and goblins round it dancing;
And, nearer still, distinctly traces
The featured disks of happy faces,
Grinning and roaring in their glory,
Like Bacchants wild of ancient story,
And making murgeons to the flame,
As if were playmate of their game.
Full well, I trow, could modern stage
Such acting for the nonce engage,
A crowded audience every night
Would press to see the jovial sight;
And this, from cost and squeezing free,
November's nightly travellers see.
Through village, lane, or hamlet going,
The light from cottage window showing
Its inmates at their evening fare,
By rousing fire, and earthenware—
And pewter trenches on the shelf,—
Harmless display of worldly pelf!—
Is transient vision to the eye
Of hasty traveller passing by;
Yet much of pleasing import tells,
And cherish'd in the fancy dwells,
Where simple innocence and mirth
Encircle still the cottage hearth.

Across the road a fiery glare
Doth blacksmith's open forge declare,
Where furnace blast, and measured din
Of hammers twain, and all within,—
The brawny mates their labour plying,
From heated bar the red sparks flying,
And idle neighbours standing by
With open mouth and dazzled eye,
The rough and sooty walls with store
Of chains and horseshoes studded o'er,—
An armory of sullied sheen,—
All momently are heard and seen.
Nor does he often fail to meet,
In market town's dark narrow street
(E'en when the night on pitchy wings
The sober hour of bed-time brings,)
Amusement. From the alehouse door,
Having full bravely paid his score,
Issues the tipsy artizan,
With tipsier brother of the can,
And oft to wile him homeward tries
With coaxing words, so wondrous wise!
The dame demure, from visit late,
Her lantern borne before in state
By sloven footboy, paces slow,
With patten'd feet and hooded brow.
Where the seam'd window-board betrays
Interior light, full closely lays
The eavesdropper his curious ear,
Some neighbour's fireside talk to hear;
While, from an upper casement bending
A household maid, belike, is sending
From jug or ewer a slopy shower,
That makes him homeward fleetly scour.
From lower rooms few gleams are sent,
From blazing hearth, through chink or rent;
But from the loftier chambers peer,
(Where damsels doff their gentle geer,
For rest preparing,) tapers bright,
Which give a momentary sight,
Of some fair form with visage glowing,
With loosen'd braids and tresses flowing,
Who, busied, by the mirror stands,
With bending head and upraised hands,
Whose moving shadow strangely falls
With size enlarged on roof and walls.
Ah! lovely are the things, I ween,
By arrowy speed's light glam'rie seen!
Fancy, so touch'd, will long retain
That quickly seen, nor seen again.

But now he spies the flaring door
Of bridled Swan or gilded Boar,
At which the bowing waiter stands
To know th' alighting guest's commands.
A place of bustle, dirt, and din,
Cursing without, scolding within;
Of narrow means and ample boast,
The traveller's stated halting post,
Where trunks are missing or deranged,
And parcels lost and horses changed.

Yet this short scene of noisy coil
But serves our traveller as a foil,
Enhancing what succeeds, and lending
A charm to pensive quiet, sending
To home and friends, left far behind,
The kindliest musings of his mind;
Or, should they stray to thoughts of pain,
A dimness o'er the haggard train,
A mood and hour like this will throw,
As vex'd and burden'd spirits know.

Night, loneliness, and motion are
Agents of power to distance care;
To distance, not discard; for then,
Withdrawn from busy haunts of men,
Necessity to act suspended,
The present, past, and future blended,
Like figures of a mazy dance,
Weave round the soul a dreamy trance,
Till jolting stone, or turnpike gate
Arouse him from the soothing state.

And when the midnight hour is past,
If through the night his journey last,
When still and lonely is the road,
Nor living creature moves abroad,
Then most of all, like fabled wizard,
Night slily dons her cloak and vizard,
His eyes at every corner greeting,
With some new slight of dexterous cheating,
And cunningly his sight betrays,
E'en with his own lamps' partial rays.

The road, that in fair simple day
Through pasture land or corn-fields lay,
A broken hedge-row's ragged screen
Skirting its weedy margin green,—
With boughs projecting, interlaced
With thorn and brier, distinctly traced
On the deep shadows at their back,
That deeper sink to pitchy black,
Appearing oft to fancy's eye,
Like woven boughs of tapestrie,—
Seems now to wind through tangled wood,
Or forest wild, where Robin Hood,
With all his outlaws, stout and bold,
In olden days his reign might hold,
Where vagrant school-boy fears to roam,
The gipsy's haunt, the woodman's home.
Yea, roofless barn, and ruin'd wall,
As passing lights upon them fall,
When favour'd by surrounding gloom,
The castle's ruin'd state assume.

The steamy vapour that proceeds
From moisten'd hide of weary steeds,
And high on either hand doth rise,
Like clouds, storm-drifted, past him flies;
While liquid mire, by their hoof'd feet
Cast up, adds magic to the cheat,
Glancing presumptuously before him,
Like yellow diamonds of Cairngorum.

How many are the subtle ways,
By which sly night the eye betrays,
When in her wild fantastic mood,
By lone and wakeful traveller wooed!
Shall I proceed? O no! for now
Upon the black horizon's brow
Appears a line of tawny light;
Thy reign is ended, witching night!
And soon thy place a wizard elf,
(But only second to thyself
In glam'rie's art) will quickly take,
Spreading o'er meadow, vale, and brake,
Her misty shroud of pearly white:—
A modest, though deceitful wigh

Who in a softer, gentler way,
Will with the wakeful fancy play,
When knolls of woods, their bases losing,
Are islands on a lake reposing,
And streeted town, of high pretence,
As rolls away the vapour dense,
With all its wavy, curling billows,
Is but a row of pollard willows.—
O no! my traveller, still and lone,
A far, fatiguing way hath gone;
His eyes are dim, he stoops his crest,
And folds his arms, and goes to rest.

SIR MAURICE.

A BALLAD.

Sir Maurice was a wealthy lord,
He lived in the north countrie,
Well would he cope with foeman's sword
Or the glance of a lady's eye.

Now all his armed vassals wait,
A stanch and burly band,
Before his stately castle's gate,
Bound for the Holy Land.

Above the spearmen's lengthen'd file,
Are figured ensigns flying;
Stroked by their keeper's hand the while,
Are harness'd chargers neighing.

And looks of wo, and looks of cheer,
And looks the two between,
On many a warlike face appear,
Where tears have lately been.

For all they love is left behind;
Hope beckons them before:
Their parting sails spread to the wind,
Blown from their native shore.

Then through the crowded portal pass'd
Six goodly knights and tall;
Sir Maurice himself, who came the last,
Was goodliest of them all.

And proudly roved with hasty eye
O'er all the warlike train;—
"Save ye, brave comrades! prosperously,
Heaven send us o'er the main!

"But see I right? an armed band
From Moorham's lordless hall;
And he who bears the high command,
Its ancient seneschal!

"Return; your stately keep defend;
Defend your lady's bower,
Lest rude and lawless hands should rend
That lone and lovely flower."—

"God will defend our lady dear,
And we will cross the sea,
From slavery's chain, his lot severe,
Our noble lord to free."—

"Nay, nay! some wandering minstrel's tongue,
Hath framed a story vain;
Thy lord, his liegemen brave among,
Near Acre's wall was slain."—

"Nay, good my lord! for had his life
Been lost on battle-ground,
When ceased that fell and fatal strife,
His body had been found.

"No faith to such delusions give;
His mortal term is past."—
"Not so! not so! he is alive,
And will be found at last!"

These latter words right eagerly
From a slender stripling broke,
Who stood the ancient warrior by,
And trembled as he spoke.

Sir Maurice started at the sound,
And all from top to toe
The stripling scann'd, who to the ground
His blushing face bent low.

"Is this thy kinsman, seneschal?
Thine own or thy sister's son?
A gentler page, in tent or hall,
Mine eyes ne'er look'd upon.—

"To thine own home return, fair youth,
To thine own home return;
Give ear to likely, sober truth,
Nor prudent counsel spurn.

"War suits thee not, if boy thou art;
And if a sweeter name
Befit thee, do not lightly part
With maiden's honour'd fame."

He turn'd him from his liegemen all,
Who round their chieftain press'd;
His very shadow on the wall
His troubled mind express'd.

As sometimes slow and sometimes fast
He paced to and fro,
His plumy crest now upward cast
In air, now drooping low.

Sometimes like one in frantic mood,
Short words of sound he utter'd,
And sometimes, stopping short, he stood
As to himself he mutter'd.

"A daughter's love, a maiden's pride!
And may they not agree?
Could man desire a lovelier bride,
A truer friend than she?

"Down, cursed thought! a boy's garb
Betrays not wanton will,
Yet, sharper than an arrow's barb,
That fear might haunt me still."

He mutter'd long, then to the gate,
Return'd and look'd around,
But the seneschal and his stripling mate
Were nowhere to be found.

With outward cheer and inward smart,
In warlike fair array,
Did Maurice with his bands depart,
And shoreward bent his way.

Their stately ship rode near the port,
The warriors to receive;
And there, with blessings kind, but short,
Did friends of friends take leave.

And soon they saw the crowded strand
Wear dimly from their view;
And soon they saw the distant land,
A line of hazy blue.

The white-sail'd ship with favouring breeze,
In all her gallant pride,
Moved like the mistress of the seas,
That rippled far and wide.

Sometimes with steady course she went,
O'er wave and surge careering;
Sometimes with sidelong mast she bent,
Her wings the sea-foam sheering.

Sometimes, with poles and rigging bare,
She scudded before the blast;
But safely by the Syrian shore,
Her anchor dropt at last.

What martial honours Maurice won,
Join'd with the brave and great,
From the fierce, faithless Saracen,
I may not here relate.

With boldest band on bridge or moat,
With champion on the plain,
I' th' breach with clustering foes he fought,
Choked up with grisly slain.

Most valiant by the valiant styled,
Their praise his deeds proclaim'd,
And oft his liegemen proudly smiled
To hear their leader named.

But fate will quell the hero's strength,
And dim the loftiest brow;
And this, our noble chief, at length
Was in the dust laid low.

He lay the heaps of dead beneath,
As sunk life's flickering flame,
And thought it was the trace of death,
That o'er his senses came.

And when again day's blessed light
Did on his vision fall,
There stood by his side,—a wondrous sight!
The ancient seneschal.

He strove, but could not utter word,
His misty senses fled;
Again he woke, and Moorham's lord
Was bending o'er his bed.

A third time sank he, as if dead,
And then, his eyelids raising,
He saw a chief with turban'd head,
Intently on him gazing.

"The prophet's zealous servant I;
His battles I've fought and won;
Christians I scorn, their creeds deny,
But honour Mary's Son.

"And I have wedded an English dame,
And set her parent free;
And none, who wears an English name,
Shall e'er be thrall'd by me.

"For her dear sake I can endure
All wrong, all hatred smother;
Whate'er I feel, thou art secure,
As though thou wert my brother."—

"And thou hast wedded an English dame!"
Sir Maurice said no more,
For o'er his heart soft weakness came,
He sigh'd and wept full sore.

And many a dreary day and night
With the Moslem chief stay'd he,
But ne'er could catch, to bless his sight
One glimpse of the fair lady.

Oft gazed he on her lattice high
As he paced the court below,
And turn'd his listening ear to try
If word or accent low

Might haply reach him there; and oft
Traversed the garden green,
Wotting her footsteps small and soft
Might on the turf be seen.

And oft to Moorham's lord he gave
His listening ear, who told,
How he became a wretched slave
Within that Syrian hold;

What time from liegemen parted far,
Upon the battle field,
By stern and adverse fate of war
He was obliged to yield:

And how his daughter did by stealth
So boldly cross the sea
With secret store of gather'd wealth,
To set her father free:

And how into the foeman's hands
She and her people fell;
And how (herself in captive bands)
She sought him in his cell;

And but a captive boy appear'd,
Till grief her sex betray'd,
And the fierce Saracen, so fear'd!
Spoke gently to the maid:

How for her plighted hand sued he,
And solemn promise gave,
Her noble father should be free
With every Christian slave;

(For many there, in bondage kept,
Felt the stern rule of vice;)
How, long she ponder'd, sorely wept,
Then paid the fearful price.—

A tale which made his bosom thrill,
His faded eyes to weep;
He, waking, thought upon it still,
And saw it in his sleep.

But harness rings, and the trumpet's bray
Again to battle calls;
And Christian powers, in grand array,
Are near those Moslem walls.

Sir Maurice heard; untoward fate!
Sad to be thought upon:
But the castle's lord unlock'd its gate,
And bade his guest be gone.

"Fight thou for faith by thee adored
By thee so well maintain'd!
But never may this trusty sword
With blood of thine be stain'd!"—

Sir Maurice took him by the hand,
"God bless thee, too,"—he cried;
Then to the nearest Christian band
With mingled feelings hied.

The battle join'd, with dauntless pride
'Gainst foemen, foemen stood;
And soon the fatal field was dyed
With many a brave man's blood.

At length gave way the Moslem force;
Their valiant chief was slain;
Maurice protected his lifeless corse,
And bore it from the plain.

There's mourning in the Moslem halls,
A dull and dismal sound:
The lady left its 'leaguer'd walls,
And safe protection found.

When months were past, the widow'd dame
Look'd calm and cheerfully;
Then Maurice to her presence came,
And bent him on his knee.

What words of penitence or suit
He utter'd, pass we by;
The lady wept, awhile was mute,
Then gave this firm reply:

"That thou didst doubt my maiden pride
(A thought that rose and vanish'd
So fleetingly) I will not chide;
'Tis from remembrance banish'd.

"But thy fair fame, earn'd by thy sword,
Still spotless shall it be:
I was the bride of a Moslem lord,
And will never be bride to thee."

So firm, though gentle, was her look,
Hope i' the instant fled:
A solemn, dear farewell he took,
And from her presence sped.

And she a plighted nun became,
God serving day and night;
And he of blest Jerusalem
A brave and zealous knight.

But that their lot was one of wo,
Wot ye, because of this
Their seperate single state? if so,
In sooth ye judge amiss.

She tends the helpless stranger's bed,
For alms her wealth is stored;
On her meek worth God's grace is shed,
Man's grateful blessings pour'd.

He still in warlike mail doth stalk,
In arms his prowess prove;
And oft of siege or battle talk,
And sometimes of his love.

She was the fairest of the fair,
The gentlest of the kind;
Search ye the wide world everywhere,
Her like ye shall not find.

She *was* the fairest, *is* the best,
Too good for a monarch's bride;
I would not give her in her nun's coif dress'd
For all her sex beside.

ADDRESS TO A STEAM-VESSEL.

Freighted with passengers of every sort,
A motley throng, thou leavest the busy port.
Thy long and ample deck, where scatter'd lie
Baskets, and cloaks, and shawls of scarlet dye;
Where dogs and children through the crowd are straying,
And, on his bench apart, the fiddler playing,
While matron dames to tressell'd seats repair,—
Seems, on the gleamy waves a floating fair
Its dark form on the sky's pale azure cast,
Towers from this clustering group thy pillar'd mast,
The dense smoke issuing from its narrow vent
Is to the air in curly volumes sent,
Which, coiling and uncoiling on the wind,
Trails like a writhing serpent far behind.
Beneath, as each merged wheel its motion plies,
On either side the white-churn'd waters rise,
And, newly parted from the noisy fray,
Track with light ridgy foam thy recent way,
Then far diverged, in many a welted line
Of lustre, on the distant surface shine.
Thou hold'st thy course in independent pride.
No leave ask'st thou of either wind or tide.
To whate'er point the breeze, inconstant, veer,
Still doth thy careless helmsman onward steer;
As if the stroke of some magician's wand
Had lent thee power the ocean to command.
What is this power which thus within thee lurks,
And, all unseen, like a mask'd giant works?
E'en that which gentle dames, at morning's tea,
From silver urn ascending, daily see
With tressy wreathings playing in the air,
Like the loosed ringlets of a lady's hair;
Or rising from th' enamell'd cup beneath,
With the soft fragrance of an infant's breath:
That which within the peasant's humble cot
Comes from th' uncover'd mouth of savoury pot,
As his kind mate prepares his noonday fare,
Which cur, and cat, and rosy urchins share:
That which, all silver'd with the moon's pale beam,
Precedes the mighty Geyser's upcast stream,
What time, with bellowing din exploded forth,
It decks the midnight of the frozen north,
Whilst travellers from their skin-spread couches rise
To gaze upon the sight with wondering eyes.
Thou hast to those "in populous city pent,"
Glimpses of wild and beauteous nature lent;
A bright remembrance ne'er to be destroy'd,
Which proves to them a treasure, long enjoy'd,
And for this scope to beings erst confined,
I fain would hail thee with a grateful mind.
They who had naught of verdant freshness seen
But suburb orchards choked with colworts green
Now, seated at their ease may glide along,
Lochlomond's fair and fairy isles among;
Where bushy promontories fondly peep
At their own beauty in the nether deep,
O'er drooping birch and berried row'n that lave
Their vagrant branches in the glassy wave;
They, who on higher objects scarce have counted
Than church's spire with gilded vane surmounted,
May view, within their near, distinctive ken,
The rocky summits of the lofty Ben;

Or see his purpled shoulders darkly lower
Through the din drapery of a summer shower.
Where, spread in broad and fair expanse, the Clyde
Mingles his waters with the briny tide,
Along the lesser Cumra's rocky shore,
With moss and crusted lichens flecker'd o'er,
E'en he, who hath but warr'd with thieving cat,
Or from his cupboard chased a hungry rat,
The city cobbler,—scares the wild seamew
In its mid-flight with loud and shrill halloo;
Or valiantly with fearful threatening shakes
His lank and greasy head at Kittywakes,*
The eyes that hath no fairer outline seen
Than chimney'd walls with slated roofs between,
Which hard and harshly edge the smoky sky,
May Aron's softly-vision'd peaks descry,
Cooping with graceful state her steepy sides,
O'er which the cloud's broad shadow swiftly glides,
And interlacing slopes that gently merge
Into the pearly mist of ocean's verge.
Eyes which admired that work of sordid skill,
The storied structure of a cotton mill,
May, wondering, now behold the unnumber'd host
Of marshall'd pillars on fair Ireland's coast,
Phalanx on phalanx ranged with sidelong bend,
Or broken ranks that to the main descend,
Like Pharaoh's army, on the Red Sea shore,
Which deep and deeper went to rise no more.
Yet ne'ertheless, whate'er we owe to thee,
Rover at will on river, lake, and sea,
As profit's bait or pleasure's lure engage,
Thou offspring of that philosophic sage,
Watt, who in heraldry of science ranks,
With those to whom men owe high meed of thanks,
And shall not be forgotten, e'en when fame
Graves on her annals Davy's splendid name!—
Dearer to fancy, to the eye more fair,
Are the light skiffs, that to the breezy air
Unfurl their swelling sails of snowy hue
Upon the moving lap of ocean blue:
As the proud swan on summer lake displays,
With plumage brightening in the morning rays,
Her fair pavilion of erected wings,—
They change, and veer, and turn like living things.
So fairly rigg'd, with shrouding, sails and mast,
To brave with manly skill the winter blast
Of every clime,—in vessels rigg'd like these
Did great Columbus cross the western seas,
And to the stinted thoughts of man reveal'd
What yet the course of ages had conceal'd.
In such as these, on high adventure bent
Round the vast world Magellan's comrades went.
To such as these are hardy seamen found
As with the ties of kindred feeling bound,
Boasting, as cans of cheering grog they sip,
The varied fortunes of "our gallant ship."
The offspring these of bold sagacious man
Ere yet the reign of letter'd lore began.
In very truth, compared to these thou art
A daily labourer, a mechanic swart,
In working weeds array'd of homely gray,
Opposed to gentle nymph or lady gay,
To whose free robes the graceful right is given
To play and dally with the winds of heaven.
Beholding thee, the great of other days
And modern men with all their alter'd ways,
Across my mind with hasty transit gleam,
Like fleeting shadows of a feverish dream:
Fitful I gaze with adverse humours teased,
Half sad, half proud, half angry, and half pleased.

* The common or vulgar name of a water-bird frequenting that coast.

TO MRS. SIDDONS.

Gifted of Heaven! who hast, in days gone by,
Moved every heart, delighted every eye,
While age and youth, of high and low degree,
In sympathy were join'd, beholding thee,
As in the drama's ever changing scene
Thou heldst thy splendid state, our tragic queen!
No barriers there thy fair domain confined,
Thy sovereign sway was o'er the human mind;
And, in the triumph of that witching hour,
Thy lofty bearing well became thy power.
Th' impassion'd changes of thy beauteous face,
Thy stately form and high imperial grace;
Thine arms impetuous tost, thy robe's wide flow,
And the dark tempest gather'd on thy brow,
What time thy flashing eye and lip of scorn
Down to the dust thy mimic foes have borne;
Remorseful musings, sunk to deep dejection,
The fix'd and yearning looks of strong affection;
The action'd turmoil of a bosom rending,
When pity, love, and honour are contending;—
Who have beheld all this, right well I ween!
A lovely, grand, and wondrous sight have seen.
Thy varied accents, rapid, fitful, slow,
Loud rage, and fear's snatch'd whisper, quick and low,
The burst of stifled love, the wail of grief,
And tones of high command, full, solemn, brief;
The change of voice and emphasis that threw
Light on obscurity, and brought to view
Distinctions nice, when grave or comic mood,
Or mingled humours, terse and new, elude
Common perception, as earth's smallest things
To size and form the vesting hoarfrost brings,
Which seem'd as if some secret voice, to clear
The ravell'd meaning, whisper'd in thine ear,
And thou had'st even with him communion kept,
Who hath so long in Stratford's chancel slept,
Whose lines, where Nature's brightest traces shine
Alone were worthy deem'd of powers like thine;
They, who have heard all this, have proved full well
Of soul-exciting sound the mightiest spell.
But though time's lengthen'd shadows o'er thee glide,
And pomp of regal state is cast aside,
Think not the glory of thy course is spent;
There's moonlight radiance to thy evening lent,
Which from the mental world can never fade,
Till all who've seen thee in the grave are laid.
Thy graceful form still moves in nightly dreams,
And what thou wert to the wrapt sleeper seems:
While feverish fancy oft doth fondly trace
Within her curtain'd couch thy wondrous face.

Yea; and to many a wight, bereft and lone,
In musing hours, though all to thee unknown,
Soothing his earthly course of good and ill,
With all thy potent charm thou actest still.
And now in crowded room or rich saloon,
Thy stately presence recognised, how soon
The glance of many an eye is on thee cast,
In grateful memory of pleasures past!
Pleased to behold thee with becoming grace
Take, as befits thee well, an honour'd place
(Where, blest by many a heart, long mayst thou stand)
Amongst the virtuous matrons of the land.

A VOLUNTEER SONG.

Ye, who Britain's soldiers be,
Freemen, children of the free,
Who freely come at danger's call
From shop and palace, cot and hall,
And brace ye bravely up in warlike geer
For all that ye hold dear!

Blest in your hands be sword and spear!
There is no banded Briton here
On whom some fond mate hath not smiled,
Or hung in love some lisping child;
Or aged parent, grasping his last stay
With locks of honour'd gray.

Such men behold with steady pride
The threaten'd tempest gathering wide,
And list, with onward forms inclined,
To sound of foemen on the wind,
And bravely act, mid the wild battle's roar,
In scenes untried before.

Let veterans boast, as well they may,
Nerves steel'd in many a bloody day;
The generous heart, who takes his stand
Upon his free and native land,
Doth with the first sound of the hostile drum
A fearless man become.

Come then, ye hosts that madly pour
From wave-toss'd floats upon our shore!
If fell or gentle, false or true,
Let those inquire who wish to sue:
Nor fiend nor hero from a foreign strand
Shall lord it in our land.

Come then, ye hosts that madly pour
From wave-toss'd floats upon our shore!
An adverse wind or breezeless main,
Lock'd in their ports our tars detain,
To waste their wistful spirits, vainly keen,
Else here ye had not been.

Yet, ne'ertheless, in strong array,
Prepare ye for a well-fought day.
Let banners wave, and trumpets sound,
And closing cohorts darken round,
And the fierce onset raise its mingled roar
New sound on England's shore!

Freemen, children of the free,
Are brave alike on land or sea;*
And every rood of British ground,
On which a hostile glave is found,
Proves under their firm tread and vigorous strokes
A deck of royal oak.

TO A CHILD.

Whose imp art thou, with dimpled cheek,
And curly pate and merry eye,
And arm and shoulders round and sleek,
And soft and fair? thou urchin sly!

What boots it who, with sweet caresses,
First call'd thee his, or squire or hind?—
For thou in every wight that passes,
Dost now a friendly playmate find.

Thy downcast glances, grave, but cunning,
As fringed eyelids rise and fall,
Thy shyness, swiftly from me running,—
'Tis infantine coquetry all!

But far afield thou hast not flown,
With mocks and threats half lisp'd, half spoken
I feel thee pulling at my gown,
Of right goodwill thy simple token.

And thou must laugh and wrestle too,
A mimic warfare with me waging,
To make, as wily lovers do,
Thy after kindness more engaging.

The wilding rose, sweet as thyself,
And new-cropt daisies are thy treasure:
I'd gladly part with worldly pelf,
To taste again thy youthful pleasure.

But yet for all thy merry look,
Thy frisks and wiles, the time is coming,
When thou shalt sit in cheerless nook,
The weary spell or horn-book thumbing.

Well; let it be! through weal and wo,
Thou know'st not now thy future range;
Life is a motley, shifting show,
And thou a thing of hope and change.

* It was then frequently said, that our seamen excelled our soldiers.

ROBERT BLOOMFIELD.

ROBERT BLOOMFIELD, the son of a tailor at Honington, in Suffolk, was born on the 3d of December, 1766. His mother, who was the village school-mistress, gave him the only education he ever received, and placed him first, with a farmer of Sapiston, as his assistant, and afterward with George, the brother of our poet, who was a shoemaker in London. His principal occupation was to wait upon the journeymen, in fetching their dinners, &c.; and, in his intervals of leisure, he read the newspaper, and, with the help of a dictionary, was soon able to comprehend and admire the speeches of Burke, Fox, and other statesmen of the day. His next step toward improvement was in his attendance at a dissenting meeting-house, where, he says, he soon learned to accent "hard words," besides which, he also visited a debating society, went sometimes to the theatre, and read the History of England, the British Traveller, and a book of geography. A perusal of some poetry in the London Magazine, led to his earliest attempts in verse, which he sent to a newspaper, under the title of the Milk-maid, or the First of May, and the Sailor's Return. Indeed, says his biographer, in the Annual Obituary, he had so generally and diligently improved himself, that, although only sixteen or seventeen years of age, his brother George and his fellow workmen began to be instructed by his conversation.

In 1784, anxious to avoid a part in some disputes which had arisen between the journeymen and master shoemakers, by whom himself and his brother were employed, Robert returned to his relation at Sapiston, and, for two months, worked at farming. At the expiration of that time he was put apprentice to Mr. Dudbridge, a ladies' shoemaker, and soon became expert at his trade. In 1790, he married the daughter of a boat-builder, and after some years of conjugal poverty, hired a room up one pair of stairs, at No. 14 Bell Alley, Coleman Street. The master of the house, it is said, giving him leave to work in the light garret, two pair of stairs higher, he not only there carried on his occupation, but, in the midst of six or seven other workmen, actually completed his Farmer's Boy: the parts of Autumn and Winter having been composed in his head before a line of them was committed to paper. When the manuscript was fit for publication, he offered it, but in vain, to various booksellers, and to the editor of the Monthly Magazine, who, in his number for September, 1823, gives the following interesting account of the affair:—"He brought his poem to our office; and, though his unpolished appearance, his coarse handwriting, and wretched orthography, afforded no prospect that his production could be printed, yet he found attention by his repeated calls, and by the humility of his expectations, which were limited to half-a-dozen copies of the magazine. At length, on his name being announced when a literary gentleman, particularly conversant in rural economy, happened to be present, the poem was finally re-examined, and its general aspect excited the risibility of that gentleman in so pointed a manner, that Bloomfield was called into the room, and exhorted not to waste his time, and neglect his employment, in making vain attempts, and particularly in treading on the ground which Thomson had sanctified. His earnestness and confidence, however, led the editor to advise him to consult his countryman, Mr. Capel Lofft, of Trooton, to whom he gave him a letter of introduction. On his departure, the gentleman present warmly complimented the editor on the sound advice which he had given 'the poor fellow;' and it was mutually conceived that an industrious man was thereby likely to be saved from a ruinous infatuation."

The poem at length reached the hands of Mr. Capel Lofft, who sent it, with the strongest recommendations, to Mr. Hill, the proprietor of the Monthly Mirror, who negotiated the sale of the poem with the publishers, Messrs. Vernor and Hood. These gentlemen acted with great liberality towards Bloomfield, by voluntarily giving him £200 in addition to the £50 originally stipulated for, and by securing to him a moiety of the copyright of his poem, which, on its appearance, was received with a burst of wonder and applause from all quarters. The most eminent critics and literati of the day were profuse in their praise of both the author and his poem; and the most polished circles of society were smitten with the charms of rural life, as depicted by the Farmer's Boy. He also received some substantial proofs of the estimation in which he was held, by presents from the Duke of York and other persons of distinction; and the Duke of Grafton, after having had him down to Whittlebury Forest, of which his grace was ranger, settled upon him a gratuity of a shilling a-day, and subsequently appointed him under-sealer in the Seal office. Subscriptions were also entered into for his benefit at various places; in addition to which, he derived considerable emolument from the sale of his work, of which, in a short space of time, near forty thousand copies were sold.

His good fortune, which, he said, appeared to him as a dream, enabled him to remove to a comfortable and commodious habitation in the City Road, where, having given up his situation at the Seal office, in consequence of ill health, he worked at

his trade as a shoemaker, and also sold Æolian harps of his own construction. He continued to employ his poetical powers, and, besides contributing several pieces to the Monthly Mirror, published three volumes of poems, in 1802, 1804, and 1806, successively. In 1811, appeared his Banks of the Wye, the result of a tour made by him into New South Wales, the mountain scenery of which country made a novel and pleasing impression upon his mind. Not long afterward, owing, as some say, to his engaging in the book trade, he became a bankrupt; and about the same time, suffering much from the dropsy, he left London, and took up his abode at Shefford, in Bucks, for the benefit of his health. It seems, that the decreasing sale of his works, and an indiscriminate liberality toward his friends and relations, who were poor and numerous, had materially diminished his finances; and this, together with the illness before mentioned, preying upon his mind, threw him into a state which threatened to terminate in mental aberration. This event was, however, prevented by his death, which took place at Shefford, on the 19th of August, 1823, in the fifty-seventh year of his age. He left a widow and four children; and had published, shortly before his death, May Day with the Muses, and Hazlewood Hall, a Village Drama, in three acts.

The characteristics of the poem of the Farmer's Boy are too well known to need a repetition of them here; it is sufficient to say, that the popularity of the work is justified by the unqualified eulogy of Parr, Southey, Aikin, Watson, (Bishop of Llandaff,) and all the most eminent critics and poets of a later date. Dr. Drake, in his Literary Hours, has taken a very masterly view of the merits of this poem, which he considers not inferior to the Seasons of Thomson, from which Bloomfield probably took the idea of the Farmer's Boy; though there is no other affinity between the two, than, as Mr. Lofft observes, "flowing numbers, feeling piety, poetic imagery and animation, a taste for the picturesque, force of thought, and a true sense of the natural and pathetic." The great difference between the composition of Thomson and Bloomfield consists in that of the latter being exclusively pastoral throughout; and, indeed, says Dr. Drake, "such are its merits, that in true pastoral imagery and simplicity, I do not think any production can be put in competition with it since the days of Theocratus." A Latin version of the Farmer's Boy, by Mr. Clubbe, was published in 1805, and it has been translated, by M. Etienne Allard, into French, under the title of le Valet du Fermier. We conclude our memoir of Bloomfield, who appears to have blended with great genius, an innate modesty and amiableness of character, with the following verse, from a very eloquent tribute to his memory, by Bernard Barton:

It is not quaint and local terms
Besprinkled o'er thy rustic lay,
Though well such dialect confirms
Its power unletter'd minds to sway;
But 'tis not these that most display
Thy sweetest charms, thy gentlest thrall —
Words, phrases, fashions, pass away,
But Truth and Nature live through all.

THE FARMER'S BOY.

SPRING.

ARGUMENT.

Invocation, &c. Seed-time. Harrowing. Morning walks. Milking. The dairy. Suffolk cheese. Spring coming forth. Sheep fond of changing. Lambs at play. The butcher, &c.

O COME, blest spirit! whatsoe'er thou art,
Thou kindling warmth that hoverest round my heart,
Sweet inmate, hail! thou source of sterling joy,
That poverty itself cannot destroy,
Be thou my muse; and faithful still to me,
Retrace the paths of wild obscurity.
No deeds of arms my humble lines rehearse;
No Alpine wonders thunder through my verse,
The roaring cataract, the snow-topt hill,
Inspiring awe, till breath itself stands still;
Nature's sublimer scenes ne'er charm'd mine eyes,
Nor science led me through the boundless skies;
From meaner objects far my raptures flow:
O point these raptures! bid my bosom glow!
And lead my soul to ecstasies of praise
For all the blessings of my infant days!
Bear me through regions where gay fancy dwells:
But mould to truth's fair form what memory tells.

Live trifling incidents, and grace my song,
That to the humblest menial belong:
To him whose drudgery unheeded goes,
His joys unreckon'd, as his cares or woes,
Though joys and cares in every path are sown,
And youthful minds have feelings of their own,
Quick springing sorrows, transient as the dew,
Delights from trifles, trifles ever new.
'Twas thus with Giles: meek, fatherless and poor;
Labour his portion, but he felt no more;
No stripes, no tyranny his steps pursued;
His life was constant, cheerful servitude;
Strange to the world, he wore a bashful look,
The fields his study, nature was his book!
And as revolving seasons changed the scene
From heat to cold, tempestuous to serene,
Though every change still varied his employ,
Yet each new duty brought its share of joy.

Where noble Grafton spreads his rich domains
Round Euston's water'd vale, and sloping plains,
Where woods and groves in solemn grandeur rise,
Where the kite brooding unmolested flies;
The woodcock and the painted pheasant race,
And skulking foxes, destined for the chase;
There Giles, untaught and unrepining, stray'd
Through every copse, and grove, and winding glade;
There his first thoughts to nature's charms inclined,
That stamps devotion on th' inquiring mind.

A little farm his generous master till'd,
Who with peculiar grace his station fill'd;
By deeds of hospitality endear'd,
Served from affection, for his worth revered;
A happy offspring blest his plenteous board,
His fields were fruitful, and his barns well stored,
And fourscore ewes he fed, a sturdy team,
And lowing kine that grazed beside the stream.
Unceasing industry he kept in view;
And never lack'd a job for Giles to do.
Fled now the sullen murmurs of the north,
The splendid raiment of the Spring peeps forth;
Her universal green, and the clear sky,
Delight still more and more the gazing eye.
Wide o'er the fields, in rising moisture strong,
Shoots up the simple flower or creeps along
The mellow'd soil; imbibing fairer hues,
Or sweets from frequent showers and evening dews;
That summon from their sheds the slumbering ploughs,
While health impregnates every breeze that blows.
No wheels support the diving, pointed share;
No groaning ox is doom'd to labour there;
No helpmates teach the docile steed his road;
(Alike unknown the ploughboy and the goad;)
But, unassisted through each toilsome day,
With smiling brow the ploughman cleaves his way,
Draws his fresh parallels, and widening still,
Treads slow the heavy dale, or climbs the hill:
Strong on the wing his busy followers play, [day;
Where writhing earth worms meet th' unwelcome
Till all is changed, and hill and level down
Assume a livery of sober brown:
Again disturb'd, when Giles with wearying strides
From ridge to ridge the ponderous harrow guides;
His heels deep sinking every step he goes,
Till dirt adhesive loads his clouted shoes.
Welcome, green headland! firm beneath his feet;
Welcome the friendly bank's refreshing seat;
There, warm with toil, his panting horses browse
Their sheltering canopy of pendent boughs;
Till rest, delicious, chase each transient pain,
And new-born vigour dwell in every vein.
Hour after hour, and day to day succeeds;
Till every clod and deep-drawn furrow spreads
To crumbling mould; a level surface clear,
And strew'd with corn to crown the rising year;
And o'er the whole Giles once transverse again,
In earth's moist bosom buries up the grain.
The work is done; no more to man is given;
The grateful farmer trusts the rest to Heaven.
Yet oft with anxious heart he looks around,
And marks the first green blade that breaks the ground:
In fancy sees his trembling oats uprun,
His tufted barley yellow with the sun;
Sees clouds propitious shed their timely store,
And all his harvest gather'd round his door;
But still unsafe the big swoln grain below,
A favourite morsel with the rook and crow;
From field to field the flock increasing goes
To level crops most formidable foes;
Their danger well the wary plunderers know,
And place a watch on some conspicuous bough;
Yet oft the skulking gunner by surprise
Will scatter death amongst them as they rise.
These, hung in triumph round the spacious field,
At best will but a shortlived terror yield:
Nor guards of property; (not penal law,
But harmless riflemen of rags and straw;)
Familiarized to these, they boldly rove,
Nor heed such sentinels that never move.
Let then your birds lie prostrate on the earth
In dying posture, and with wings stretch'd forth
Shift them at eve or morn from place to place,
And death shall terrify the pilfering race;
In the mid air, while circling round and round,
They call their lifeless comrades from the ground;
With quickening wing, and note of loud alarm,
Warn the whole flock to shun th' impending harm.
This task had Giles, in fields remote from home
Oft has he wish'd the rosy morn to come:
Yet never famed was he nor foremost found
To break the seal of sleep; his sleep was sound;
But when at daybreak summon'd from his bed,
Light as the lark that caroll'd o'er his head.—
His sandy way, deep worn by hasty showers,
O'erarch'd with oaks that form'd fantastic bowers,
Waving aloft their towering branches proud,
In borrow'd tinges from the eastern cloud,
Gave inspiration, pure as ever flow'd,
And genuine transport in his bosom glow'd.
His own shrill matin join'd the various notes
Of nature's music, from a thousand throats:
The blackbird strove with emulation sweet,
And echo answer'd from her close retreat;
The sporting whitethroat on some twig's end borne,
Pour'd hymns to freedom and the rising morn;
Stopt in her song, perchance the starting thrush
Shook a white shower from the blackthorn bush,
Where dewdrops thick as early blossoms hung,
And trembled as the minstrel sweetly sung.
Across his path, in either grove to hide,
The timid rabbit scouted by his side;
Or pheasant boldly stalk'd along the road,
Whose gold and purple tints alternate glow'd.
But groves no farther fenced the devious way,
A wide-extended heath before him lay,
Where on the grass the stagnant shower had run,
And shone a mirror to the rising sun,
Thus doubly seen to light a distant wood,
To give new life to each expanding bud;
And chase away the dewy footmarks found,
Where prowling Reynard trod his nightly round;
To shun whose thefts was Giles's evening care,
His feather'd victims to suspend in air,
High on the bough that nodded o'er his head,
And thus each morn to strew the field with dead.
His simple errand done, he homeward hies;
Another instantly its place supplies.
The clattering dairy maid, immersed in steam,
Singing and scrubbing midst her milk and cream,
Bawls out "*Go fetch the cows!*"—he hears no more
For pigs, and ducks, and turkeys throng the door,
And sitting hens, for constant war prepared;
A concert strange to that which late he heard.
Straight to the meadow then he whistling goes;
With well known halloo calls his lazy cows;
Down the rich pasture heedlessly they graze,
Or hear the summons with an idle gaze;
For well they know the cowyard yields no more
Its tempting fragrance nor its wintry store,

Reluctance marks their steps, sedate and slow;
The right of conquest all the law they know:
The strong press on, the weak by turns succeed,
And one superior always takes the lead;
Is ever foremost, wheresoe'er they stray:
Allow'd precedence, undisputed sway:
With jealous pride her station is maintain'd,
For many a broil that post of honour gain'd.
At home, the yard affords a grateful scene;
For Spring makes e'en a miry cowyard clean.
Thence from its chalky bed behold convey'd
The rich manure that drenching Winter made,
Which piled near home, grows green with many a weed,
A promised nutriment for Autumn's seed.
Forth comes the maid, and like the morning smiles;
The mistress too, and follow'd close by Giles.
A friendly tripod forms their humble seat,
With pails bright scour'd, and delicately sweet.
Where shadowing elms obstruct the morning ray,
Begins the work, begins the simple lay;
The full charged udder yields its willing streams,
While Mary sings some lover's amorous dreams;
And crouching Giles, beneath a neighbouring tree,
Tugs o'er his pail, and chants with equal glee:
Whose hat with tatter'd brim, of nap so bare,
From the cow's side purloins a coat of hair,
A mottled ensign of his harmless trade,
An unambitious, peaceable cockade,
As unambitious too that cheerful aid
The mistress yields beside her rosy maid:
With joy she views her plenteous, reeking store,
And bears a brimmer to the dairy door;
Her cows dismiss'd the luscious mead to roam,
Till eve again recalls them loaded home.
And now the dairy claims her choicest care,
And half her household find employment there:
Slow rolls the churn, its load of clogging cream
At once foregoes its quality and name;
From knotty particles first floating wide
Congealing butter's dash'd from side to side;
Streams of new milk through flowing coolers stray,
And snow-white curd abounds, and wholesome whey.
Due north th' unglazed windows, cold and clear
For warming sunbeams are unwelcome here.
Brisk goes the work beneath each busy hand,
And Giles must trudge, whoever gives command;
A Gibeonite, that serves them all by turns:
He drains the pump, from him the fagot burns;
From him the noisy hogs demand their food;
While at his heels run many a chirping brood,
Or down his path in expectation stand,
With equal claims upon his strewing hand.
Thus wastes the morn, till each with pleasure sees
The bustle o'er, and press'd the new-made cheese.
Unrivall'd stands thy country cheese, O Giles!
Whose very name alone engenders smiles;
Whose fame abroad by every tongue is spoke,
The well-known butt of many a flinty joke,
That pass like current coin the nation through:
And, ah! experience proves the satire true.
Provision's grave, thou ever craving mart,
Dependant, huge metropolis! where art
Her poring thousands stows in breathless rooms,
Midst poisonous smokes and steams, and rattling looms;
Where grandeur revels in unbounded stores;
Restraint, a slighted stranger at their doors!
Thou, like a whirlpool, drain'st the country round,
Till London market, London price, resound
Through every town, round every passing load,
And dairy produce thronga the eastern road:
Delicious veal, and butter, every hour,
From Essex lowlands, and the banks of Stour:
And further far, where numerous herds repose,
From Orwell's brink, from Waveny, or Ouse.
Hence Suffolk dairy wives run mad for cream,
And leave their milk with nothing but its name:
Its name derision and reproach pursue,
And strangers tell of "three times skimm'd sky-blue."
To cheese converted, what can be its boast;
What, but the common virtues of a post!
If drought o'ertake it faster than the knife,
Most fair it bids for stubborn length of life,
And, like the oaken shelf whereon 'tis laid,
Mocks the weak efforts of the bending blade;
Or in the hog-trough rests in perfect spite,
Too big to swallow, and too hard to bite.
Inglorious victory! Ye Cheshire meads,
Or Severn's flowery dales, where plenty treads,
Was your rich milk to suffer wrongs like these,
Farewell your pride! farewell renowned cheese!
The skimmer dread, whose ravages alone,
Thus turn the mead's sweet nectar into stone.
Neglected now the early daisy lies:
Nor thou, pale primrose, bloom'st the only prize!
Advancing Spring profusely spreads abroad
Flowers of all hues, with sweetest fragrance stored;
Where'er she treads, Love gladdens every plain,
Delight on tiptoe bears her lucid train;
Sweet Hope with conscious brow before her flies,
Anticipating wealth from summer skies
All nature feels her renovating sway;
The sheep-fed pasture, and the meadow gay,
And trees, and shrubs, no longer budding seen,
Display the new-grown branch of lighter green;
On airy downs the idling shepherd lies,
And sees to-morrow in the marbled skies.
Here then, my soul, thy darling theme pursue,
For every day was Giles a shepherd too.
Small was his charge; no wilds had they to roam;
But bright enclosures circling round their home.
No yellow-blossom'd furze, nor stubborn thorn,
The heath's rough produce, had their fleeces torn;
Yet ever roving, ever seeking thee,
Enchanting spirit, dear Variety!
O happy tenants, prisoners of a day!
Released to ease, to pleasure, and to play;
Indulged through every field by turns to range,
And taste them all in one continual change.
For though luxuriant their grassy food,
Sheep long confined but loathe the present good;
Bleating around the homeward gate they meet,
And starve, and pine, with plenty at their feet.
Loosed from the winding lane, a joyful throng,
See, o'er yon pasture, how they pour along!
Giles round their boundaries takes his usual stroll;
Sees every pass secured, and fences whole;
High fences, proud to charm the gazing eye,
Where many a nestling first essays to fly;

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SUMMER.

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SUMMER.

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Where blows the woodbine, faintly streak'd with red,
And rests on every bough its tender head;
Round the young ash its twining branches meet,
Or crown the hawthorn with its odours sweet.
Say, ye that know, ye who have felt and seen
Spring's morning smiles, and soul-enlivening green:
Say, did you give the thrilling transport way?
Did your eye brighten, when young lambs at play
Leap'd o'er your path with animated pride,
Or gazed in merry clusters by your side?
Ye who can smile, to wisdom no disgrace,
At the arch meaning of a kitten's face:
If spotless innocence, and infant mirth,
Excites to praise, or gives reflection birth,
In shades like these pursue your favourite joy,
Midst nature's revels, sports that never cloy.
A few begin a short but vigorous race,
And indolence abash'd soon flies the place;
Thus challenged forth, see thither one by one,
From every side assembling playmates run;
A thousand wily antics mark their stay,
A starting crowd, impatient of delay.
Like the fond dove from fearful prison freed,
Each seems to say, "Come, let us try our speed;"
Away they scour, impetuous, ardent, strong,
The green turf trembling as they bound along;
Adown the slope, then up the hillock climb,
Where every molehill is a bed of thyme;
There panting stop; yet scarcely can refrain;
A bird, a leaf, will set them off again:
Or, if a gale with strength unusual blow,
Scattering the wild-briar roses into snow,
Their little limbs increasing efforts try,
Like the torn flower the fair assemblage fly.
Ah, fallen rose! sad emblem of their doom;
Frail as thyself, they perish while they bloom!
Though unoffending innocence may plead,
Though frantic ewes may mourn the savage deed,
Their shepherd comes, a messenger of blood,
And drives them bleating from their sports and food.
Care loads his brow, and pity wrings his heart,
For lo, the murdering butcher, with his cart,
Demands the firstlings of his flock to die,
And makes a sport of life and liberty!
His gay companions Giles beholds no more;
Closed are their eyes, their fleeces drench'd in gore.
Nor can compassion, with her softest notes,
Withhold the knife that plunges through their throats.
Down, indignation! hence, ideas foul!
Away the shocking image from my soul!
Let kindlier visitants attend my way,
Beneath approaching Summer's fervid ray;
Nor thankless glooms obtrude, nor cares annoy,
Whilst the sweet theme is universal joy.

SUMMER.

ARGUMENT.

Turnip sowing. Wheat ripening. Sparrows. Insects. The skylark. Reaping, &c. Harvest-field. Dairy-maid, &c. Labourers of the barn. The gander. Night: a thunder-storm. Harvest-home. Reflections, &c.

The farmer's life displays in every part
A moral lesson to the sensual heart.
Though in the lap of plenty, thoughtful still,
He looks beyond the present good or ill;
Nor estimates alone one blessing's worth,
From changeful seasons, or capricious earth;
But views the future with the present hours,
And looks for failures as he looks for showers;
For casual as for certain want prepares,
And round his yard the reeking haystack rears;
Or clover, blossom'd lovely to the sight,
His team's rich store through many a wintry night.
What though abundance round his dwelling spreads
Though ever moist his self-improving meads
Supply his dairy with a copious flood,
And seems to promise unexhausted food;
That promise fails, when buried deep in snow,
And vegetative juices cease to flow.
For this, his plough turns up the destined lands,
Whence stormy Winter draws its full demands;
For this, the seed minutely small, he sows,
Whence, sound and sweet, the hardy turnip grows,
But how unlike to April's closing days!
High climbs the sun, and darts his powerful rays;
Whitens the fresh-drawn mould, and pierces through
The cumbrous clods that tumble round the plough.
O'er heaven's bright azure, hence with joyful eyes,
The farmer sees dark clouds assembling rise;
Borne o'er his fields a heavy torrent falls,
And strikes the earth in hasty driving squalls.
"Right welcome down, ye precious drops," he cries;
But soon, too soon, the partial blessing flies.
"Boy, bring the harrows, try how deep the rain
Has forced its way." He comes, but comes in vain,
Dry dust beneath the bubbling surface lurks
And mocks his pains the more, the more he works
Still, midst huge clods, he plunges on forlorn,
That laugh his harrows and the shower to scorn.
E'en thus the living clod, the stubborn fool,
Resists the stormy lectures of the school,
Till tried with gentler means, the dunce to please,
His head imbibes right reason by degrees:
As when from eve till morning's wakeful hour,
Light, constant rain evinces secret power,
And, ere the day resumes its wonted smiles,
Presents a cheerful, easy task for Giles.
Down with a touch the mellow'd soil is laid,
And yon tall crop next claims his timely aid;
Thither well pleased he hies, assured to find
Wild, trackless haunts, and objects to his mind.
Shot up from broad rank blades that droop below,
The nodding wheat-ear forms a graceful bow,
With milky kernels starting full, weigh'd down,
Ere yet the sun hath tinged its head with brown;
There thousands in a flock, for ever gay,
Loud chirping sparrows welcome on the day,
And from the mazes of the leafy thorn
Drop one by one upon the bending corn.
Giles with a pole assails their close retreats
And round the grass-grown, dewy border beats
On either side completely overspread,
Here branches bend, there corn o'erstoops his head.
Green covert, hail! for through the varying year
No hours so sweet, no scene to him so dear.
Here wisdom's placid eye delighted sees
His frequent intervals of lonely ease,
And with one ray his infant soul inspires,
Just kindling there her never-dying fires,

Whence solitude derives peculiar charms,
And heaven directed thought his bosom warms.
Just where the parting boughs light shadows play,
Scarce in the shade, nor in the scorching day,
Stretch'd on the turf he lies, a peopled bed,
Where swarming insects creep around his head.
The small, dust-colour'd beetle climbs with pain
O'er the smooth plantain leaf, a spacious plain!
Thence higher still, by countless steps convey'd,
He gains the summit of a shivering blade,
And flirts his filmy wings, and looks around,
Exulting in his distance from the ground.
The tender speckled moth here dancing seen,
The vaulting grasshopper of glossy green,
And all prolific summer's sporting train,
Their little lives by various powers sustain.
But what can unassisted vision do?
What, but recoil where most it would pursue;
His patient gaze but finish with a sigh,
When music waking speaks the skylark nigh.
Just starting from the corn, he cheerly sings,
And trusts with conscious pride his downy wings;
Still louder breaths, and in the face of day
Mounts up, and calls on Giles to mark his way.
Close to his eyes his hat he instant bends,
And forms a friendly telescope, that lends
Just aid enough to dull the glaring light,
And place the wandering bird before his sight,
That oft beneath a light cloud sweeps along
Lost for a while, yet pours the varied song;
The eye still follows, and the cloud moves by,
Again he stretches up the clear blue sky;
His form, his motion, undistinguish'd quite,
Save when he wheels direct from shade to light:
E'en then the songster a mere speck became,
Gliding like fancy's bubbles in a dream,
The gazer sees; but yielding to repose,
Unwittingly his jaded eyelids close.
Delicious sleep! From sleep who could forbear,
With guilt no more than Giles, and no more care?
Peace o'er his slumbers waves her guardian wing,
Nor conscience once disturbs him with a sting;
He wakes refresh'd from every trivial pain,
And takes his pole, and brushes round again.

Its dark green hue, its sicklier tints all fail,
And ripening harvest rustles in the gale.
A glorious sight, if glory dwells below,
Where Heaven's munificence makes all the show
O'er every field and golden prospect found,
That glads the ploughman's Sunday morning's round,
When on some eminence he takes his stand,
To judge the smiling produce of the land.
Here vanity slinks back, her head to hide;
What is there here to flatter human pride?
The towering fabric, or the dome's loud roar,
And steadfast columns may astonish more,
Where the charm'd gazer long delighted stays,
Yet traced but to the architect the praise;
Whilst here, the veriest clown that treads the sod,
Without one scruple gives the praise to God;
And twofold joys possess his raptured mind,
From gratitude and admiration join'd.

Here, midst the boldest triumphs of her worth,
Nature herself invites the reapers forth;
Dares the keen sickle from its twelvemonth's rest,
And gives that ardour which in every breast
From infancy to age alike appears,
When the first sheaf its plumy top uprears.
No rake takes here what Heaven to all bestows—
Children of want, for you the bounty flows!
And every cottage from the plenteous store
Receives a burden nightly at its door.

Hark! where the sweeping scythe now slips along:
Each sturdy mower, emulous and strong,
Whose writhing form meridian heat defies,
Bends o'er his work, and every sinew tries;
Prostrates the waving treasure at his feet,
But spares the rising clover, short and sweet.
Come, health! come, jollity! light-footed, come;
Here hold your revels, and make this your home.
Each heart awaits and hails you as its own;
Each moisten'd brow, that scorns to wear a frown
The unpeopled dwelling mourns its tenants stray'd;
E'en the domestic, laughing dairy-maid
Hies to the field, the general toil to share.
Meanwhile the farmer quits his elbow chair,
His cool brick floor, his pitcher, and his ease,
And braves the sultry beams, and gladly sees
His gates thrown open, and his team abroad,
The ready group attendant on his word,
To turn the swarth, the quivering load to rear,
Or ply the busy rake, the land to clear.
Summer's light garb itself now cumbrous grown,
Each his thin doublet in the shade throws down;
Where oft the mastiff skulks with half shut eye,
And rouses at the stranger passing by;
While unrestrain'd the social converse flows,
And every breast love's powerful impulse knows.
And rival wits with more than rustic grace
Confess the presence of a pretty face.

For, lo! encircled there, the lovely maid,
In youth's own bloom and native smiles array'd;
Her hat awry, divested of her gown,
Her creaking stays of leather, stout and brown;
Invidious barrier; why art thou so high,
When the slight covering of her neck slips by,
There half revealing to the eager sight,
Her full, ripe bosom, exquisitely white?
In many a local tale of harmless mirth,
And many a joke of momentary birth,
She bears a part, and as she stops to speak,
Strokes back the ringlets from her glowing cheek

Now noon gone by, and four declining hours,
The weary limbs relax their boasted powers;
Thirst rages strong, the fainting spirits fail,
And ask the sovereign cordial, home-brew'd ale;
Beneath some sheltering heap of yellow corn
Rests the hoop'd keg, and friendly cooling horn,
That mocks alike the goblet's brittle frame,
Its costlier potions, and its nobler name.
To Mary first the brimming draught is given,
By toil made welcome as the dews of heaven,
And never lip that press'd its homely edge
Had kinder blessings, or a heartier pledge.

Of wholesome viands here a banquet smiles,
A common cheer for all;—e'en humble Giles,
Who joys his trivial services to yield
Amidst the fragrance of the open field;
Oft doom'd in suffocating heat to bear
The cobweb'd barn's impure and dusty air;

To ride in murky state the panting steed,
Destined aloft th' unloaded grain to tread,
Where, in his path as heaps on heaps are thrown,
He rears, and plunges the loose mountain down:
Laborious task! with what delight when done
Both horse and rider greet th' unclouded sun!
Yet by th' unclouded sun are hourly bred
The bold assailants that surround thine head,
Poor, patient Ball! and with insulting wing
Roar in thine ears, and dart the piercing sting.
In thy behalf the crest-waved boughs avail
More than thy short-clipt remnant of a tail,
A moving mockery, a useless name,
A living proof of cruelty and shame.
Shame to the man, whatever fame he bore,
Who took from thee what man can ne'er restore,
Thy weapon of defence, thy chiefest good,
When swarming flies contending suck thy blood.
Nor thine alone the suffering, thine the care,
The fretful ewe bemoans an equal share;
Tormented into sores, her head she hides,
Or angry sweeps them from her new-shorn sides.
Penn'd in the yard, e'en now at closing day,
Unruly cows with mark'd impatience stay,
And vainly striving to escape their foes,
The pail kick down; a piteous current flows.
Is't not enough that plagues like these molest?
Must still another foe annoy their rest?
He comes, the pest and terror of the yard,
His full-fledg'd progeny's imperious guard;
The gander:—spiteful, insolent, and bold,
At the colt's footlock takes his daring hold:
There, serpent-like, escapes a dreadful blow,
And straight attacks a poor defenceless cow:
Each booby goose th' unworthy strife enjoys,
And hails his prowess with redoubled noise.
Then back he stalks, of self-importance full,
Seizes the shaggy foretop of the bull,
Till whirl'd aloft he falls: a timely check,
Enough to dislocate his worthless neck:
For lo! of old, he boasts an honour'd wound;
Behold that broken wing that trails the ground!
Thus fools and bravoes kindred pranks pursue,
As savage quite, and oft as fatal too.
Happy the man that foils an envious elf,
Using the darts of spleen to serve himself.
As when by turns the strolling swine engage
The utmost efforts of the bully's rage,
Whose nibbling warfare on the grunter's side
Is welcome pleasure to his bristly hide;
Gently he stoops, or stretch'd at ease along,
Enjoys the insults of the gabbling throng,
That march exulting round his fallen head,
As human victors trample on their dead. [thou!
Still twilight, welcome! Rest, how sweet art
Now eve o'erhangs the western cloud's thick brow:
The far stretch'd curtain of retiring light,
With fiery treasures fraught; that on the sight
Flash from its bulging sides, where darkness lours,
In fancy's eye, a chain of mouldering towers;
Or craggy coasts just rising into view,
Midst javelins dire, and darts of streaming blue.
Anon tired labourers bless their sheltering home,
When midnight, and the frightful tempest come.
The farmer wakes, and sees with silent dread
The angry shafts of Heaven gleam round his bed;
The bursting cloud reiterated roars,
Shakes his straw roof, and jars his bolted doors:
The slow-wing'd storm along the troubled skies
Spreads its dark course; the wind begins to rise;
And full-leaf'd elms, his dwelling's shade by day,
With mimic thunder give its fury way:
Sounds in his chimney-top a doleful peal
Midst pouring rain, or gusts of rattling hail;
With tenfold danger low the tempest bends,
And quick and strong the sulphurous flame descends:
The frighten'd mastiff from his kennel flies,
And cringes at the door with piteous cries.—
Where now's the trifler? where the child of pride?
These are the moments when the heart is tried!
Nor lives the man, with conscience e'er so clear,
But feels a solemn, reverential fear;
Feels too a joy relieve his aching breast,
When the spent storm hath howl'd itself to rest.
Still, welcome beats the long-continued shower,
And sleep protracted, comes with double power;
Calm dreams of bliss bring on the morning sun,
For every barn is fill'd, and harvest done!
Now, ere sweet Summer bids its long adieu,
And winds blow keen where late the blossom grew,
The bustling day and jovial night must come,
The long accustomed feast of harvest-home.
No blood-stain'd victory, in story bright,
Can give the philosophic mind delight;
No triumph please, while rage and death destroy:
Reflection sickens at the monstrous joy.
And where the joy, if rightly understood,
Like cheerful praise for universal good?
The soul nor check nor doubtful anguish knows,
But pure and free the grateful current flows.
Behold the sound oak table's massy frame
Beside the kitchen floor! nor careful dame
And generous host invite their friends around,
For all that clear'd the crop, or till'd the ground
Are guests by right of custom:—old and young;
And many a neighbouring yeoman join the throng,
With artizans that lent their dexterous aid,
When o'er each field the flaming sunbeams play'd.
Yet plenty reigns, and from her boundless hoard
Though not one jelly trembles on the board,
Supplies the feast with all that sense can crave;
With all that made our great forefathers brave
Ere the cloy'd palate countless flavours tried,
And cooks had nature's judgment set aside.
With thanks to heaven, and tales of rustic lore
The mansion echoes when the banquet's o'er:
A wider circle spreads, and smiles abound,
As quick the frothing horn performs its round;
Care's mortal foe; that sprightly joys imparts
To cheer the frame and elevate their hearts.
Here, fresh and brown, the hazel's produce lies
In tempting heaps, and peals of laughter rise,
And crackling music, with the frequent song,
Unheeded bear the midnight hour along.
Here once a year distinction lowers its crest,
The master, servant, and the merry guest,
Are equal all; and round the happy ring
The reaper's eyes exulting glances fling,
And, warm'd with gratitude, he quits his place,
With sun-burnt hands and ale-enliven'd face,

Refills the jug, his honour'd host to tend,
To serve at once the master and the friend;
Proud thus to meet his smiles, to share his tale,
His nuts, his conversation, and his ale.
Such were the days,—of days long past I sing,
When pride gave place to mirth without a sting;
Ere tyrant customs strength sufficient bore
To violate the feelings of the poor:
To leave them distanced in the maddening race,
Where'er refinement shows its hated face:
Nor causeless hated;—'tis the peasant's curse,
That hourly makes his wretched station worse;
Destroys life's intercourse; the social plan
That rank to rank cements, as man to man:
Wealth flows around him, fashion lordly reigns;
Yet poverty is his, and mental pains.
Methinks I hear the mourner thus impart
The stifled murmurs of his wounded heart:
"Whence comes this change, ungracious, irksome, cold?
Whence the new grandeur that mine eyes behold?
The widening distance which I daily see,
Has wealth done this?—then wealth's a foe to me;
Foe to our rights; that leaves a powerful few
The paths of emulation to pursue:—
For emulation stoops to us no more:
The hope of humble industry is o'er:
The blameless hope, the cheering sweet presage
Of future comforts for declining age.
Can my sons share from this paternal hand
The profits with the labours of the land?
No; though indulgent Heaven its blessing deigns,
Where's the small farm to suit my scanty means?
Content, the poet sings, with us resides:
In lonely cots like mine, the damsel hides;
And will he then in raptured visions tell
That sweet content with want can ever dwell?
A barley loaf, 'tis true, my table crowns,
That, fast diminishing in lusty rounds,
Stops nature's cravings; yet her sighs will flow
From knowing this,—that once it was not so.
Our annual feast, when earth her plenty yields,
When crown'd with boughs the last load quits the fields,
The aspect still of ancient joy puts on;
The aspect only, with the substance gone:
The selfsame horn is still at our command,
But serves none now but the plebeian hand:
For home-brew'd ale, neglected and debased,
Is quite discarded from the realms of taste.
Where unaffected freedom charm'd the soul,
The separate table and the costly bowl,
Cool as the blast that checks the budding Spring,
A mockery of gladness round them fling.
For oft the farmer, ere his heart approves,
Yields up the custom which he dearly loves:
Refinement rushes on him like a tide;
Bold innovations down its current ride,
That bear no peace beneath their showy dress,
Nor add one tittle to his happiness.
His guests selected; rank's punctilios known;
What trouble waits upon a casual frown;
Restraint's foul manacles his pleasures maim;
Selected guests selected phrases claim;
Nor reigns that joy, when hand in hand they join,
That good old master felt in shaking mine.
Heaven bless his memory! bless his honour'd name.
(The poor will speak his lasting, worthy fame:)
To souls fair-purposed strength and guidance give;
In pity to us still let goodness live:
Let labour have its due! my cot shall be
From chilling want and guilty murmurs free:
Let labour have its due; then peace is mine,
And never, never shall my heart repine."

AUTUMN.

ARGUMENT.

Acorns. Hogs in the wood. Wheat-sowing. The church. Village girls. The mad girl. The bird-boy's hut. Disappointment; Reflections, &c. Euston-hall. Fox-hunting. Old Trouncer. Long nights. A welcome to Winter.

AGAIN, the year's decline, midst storms and floods,
The thundering chase, the yellow fading woods,
Invite my song; that fain would boldly tell
Of upland coverts and the echoing dell,
By turns resounding loud, at eve and morn,
The swineherd's halloo, or the huntsman's horn.
No more the fields with scatter'd grain supply
The restless, wandering tenants of the sty;
From oak to oak they run with eager haste,
And wrangling share the first delicious taste
Of fallen acorns; yet but thinly found
Till the strong gale has shook them to the ground.
It comes; and roaring woods obedient wave:
Their home well pleased the joint adventurers leave:
The trudging sow leads forth her numerous young,
Playful, and white, and clean, the briars among.
Till briers and thorns increasing, fence them round,
Where last year's mouldering leaves bestrew the ground,
And o'er their heads, loud lash'd by furious squalls,
Bright from their cups the rattling treasure falls;
Hot, thirsty food; whence doubly sweet and cool
The welcome margin of some rush-grown pool,
The wild duck's lonely haunt, whose jealous eye
Guards every point; who sits, prepared to fly,
On the calm bosom of her little lake,
Too closely screen'd for ruffian winds to shake;
And as the bold intruders press around,
At once she starts, and rises with a bound:
With bristles raised the sudden noise they hear,
And ludicrously wild, and wing'd with fear,
The herd decamp with more than swinish speed,
And snorting dash through sedge, and rush, and reed:
Through tangling thickets headlong on they go,
Then stop and listen for their fancied foe;
The hindmost still the growing panic spreads,
Repeated fright the first alarm succeeds,
Till folly's wages, wounds and thorns, they reap;
Yet glorying in their fortunate escape,
Their groundless terrors by degrees soon cease,
And night's dark reign restores their wonted peace
For now the gale subsides, and from each bough
The roosting pheasant's short but frequent crow
Invites to rest; and huddling side by side,
The herd in closest ambush seek to hide;

Seek some warm slope with shagged moss o'erspread,
Dried leaves their copious covering and their bed.
In vain may Giles, through gathering glooms that fall,
And solemn silence, urge his piercing call.
Whole days and nights they tarry midst their store,
Nor quit the woods till oaks can yield no more.
Beyond bleak Winter's rage, beyond the Spring,
That rolling earth's unvarying course will bring,
Who tills the ground looks on with mental eye,
And sees next Summer's sheaves and cloudless sky,
And even now, whilst nature's beauty dies,
Deposits seed, and bids new harvest rise;
Seed well prepared, and warm'd with glowing lime,
'Gainst earth-bred grubs, and cold, and lapse of time:
For searching frosts and various ills invade,
Whilst wintry months depress the springing blade.
The plough moves heavily, and strong the soil,
And clogging harrows with augmented toil
Dive deep: and clinging, mixes with the mould
A fattening treasure from the nightly fold,
And all the cowyard's highly valued store,
That late bestrew'd the blacken'd surface o'er.
No idling hours are here, when fancy trims
Her dancing taper over outstretch'd limbs,
And in her thousand thousand colours dress'd,
Plays round the grassy couch of noontide rest:
Here Giles for hours of indolence atones
With strong exertion, and with weary bones,
And knows no leisure, till the distant chime
Of Sabbath bell he hears at sermon time,
That down the brook sound sweetly in the gale,
Or strike the rising hill, or skim the dale.
Nor his alone the sweets of ease to taste:
Kind rest extends to all;—save one poor beast,
That true to time and pace, is doom'd to plod,
To bring the pastor to the House of God:
Mean structure; where no bones of heroes lie!
The rude inelegance of poverty
Reigns here alone; else why that roof of straw?
Those narrow windows with the frequent flaw?
O'er whose low cells the dock and mallow spread,
And rampant nettles lift the spiry head,
Whilst from the hollows of the tower on high
The gray-capp'd daws in saucy legions fly.
Round these lone walls assembling neighbours meet,
And tread departed friends beneath their feet;
And new-briar'd graves, that prompt the secret sigh,
Show each the spot where he himself must lie.
Midst timely greetings village news goes round,
Of crops late shorn, or crops that deck the ground;
Experienced ploughmen in the circle join;
While sturdy boys, in feats of strength to shine,
With pride elate, their young associates brave
To jump from hollow-sounding grave to grave;
Then close consulting, each his talent lends
To plan fresh sports when tedious service ends.
Hither at times, with cheerfulness of soul,
Sweet village maids from neighbouring hamlets stroll,
That like the light-heel'd does o'er lawns that rove,
Look shyly curious; ripening into love;
For love's their errand: hence the tints that glow
On either cheek, a heighten'd lustre know:
When, conscious of their charms, e'en age looks sly
And rapture beams from youth's observant eye.
The pride of such a party, nature's pride,
Was lovely Ann, who innocently tried,
With hat of airy shape and ribands gay,
Love to inspire, and stand in Hymen's way:
But, ere her twentieth summer could expand,
Or youth was render'd happy with her hand,
Her mind's serenity, her peace was gone,
Her eye grew languid, and she wept alone:
Yet causeless seem'd her grief; for quick restrain'd,
Mirth follow'd loud; or indignation reign'd;
Whims wild and simple led her from her home,
The heath, the common, or the fields to roam:
Terror and joy alternate ruled her hours;
Now blithe she sung, and gather'd useless flowers;
Now pluck'd a tender twig from every bough,
To whip the hovering demons from her brow.
I'll fated maid! thy guiding spark is fled,
And lasting wretchedness awaits thy bed—
Thy bed of straw! for mark, where even now
O'er their lost child afflicted parents bow;
Their wo she knows not, but perversely coy,
Inverted customs yield her sullen joy;
Her midnight meals in secrecy she takes,
Low muttering to the moon, that rising breaks
Through night's dark gloom: O how much more forlorn
Her night, that knows of no returning morn!—
Slow from the threshold, once her infant seat,
O'er the cold earth she crawls to her retreat;
Quitting the cot's warm walls, unhoused to lie,
Or share the swine's impure and narrow sty;
The damp night air her shivering limbs assails:
In dreams she moans, and fancied wrongs bewails.
When morning wakes, none earlier roused than she,
When pendant drops fall glittering from the tree;
But naught her rayless melancholy cheers,
Or soothes her breast, or stops her streaming tears.
Her matted locks unornamented flow;
Clasping her knees, and waving to and fro;—
Her head bow'd down, her faded cheek to hide;—
A piteous mourner by the pathway side.
Some tufted molehill through the livelong day
She calls her throne; there weeps her life away!
And oft the gayly-passing stranger stays
His well-timed step, and takes a silent gaze,
Till sympathetic drops unbidden start,
And pangs quick springing muster round his heart
And soft he treads with other gazers round,
And fain would catch her sorrow's plaintive sound:
One word alone is all that strikes the ear,
One short, pathetic, simple word,—"Oh dear!"
A thousand times repeated to the wind,
That wafts the sigh, but leaves the pang behind!
For ever of the proffer'd parley shy,
She hears th' unwelcome foot advancing nigh;
Nor quite unconscious of her wretched plight,
Gives one sad look, and hurries out of sight.—
Fair promised sunbeams of terrestrial bliss,
Health's gallant hopes,—and are ye sunk to this?
For in life's road, though thorns abundant grow,
There still are joys poor Ann can never know;
Joys which the gay companions of her prime
Sip, as they drift along the stream of time;

At eve to hear beside their tranquil home
The lifted latch, that speaks the lover come:
That love matured, next playful on the knee
To press the velvet lip of infancy;
To stay the tottering step, the features trace;—
Inestimable sweets of social peace!
O thou, who bidst the vernal juices rise!
Thou, on whose blasts autumnal foliage flies!
Let peace ne'er leave me, nor my heart grow cold,
Whilst life and sanity are mine to hold.
Shorn of their flowers that shed th' untreasured seed,
The withering pasture, and the fading mead,
Less tempting grown, diminish more and more,
The dairy's pride; sweet Summer's flowing store
New cares succeed, and gentle duties press,
Where the fireside, a school of tenderness,
Revives the languid chirp, and warms the blood
Of cold-nipt weaklings of the latter brood,
That from the shell just bursting into day,
Through yard or pond pursue their venturous way.
Far weightier cares and wider scenes expand;
What devastation marks the new-sown land!
"From hungry woodland foes go, Giles, and guard
The rising wheat; ensure its great reward:
A future sustenance, a Summer's pride,
Demand thy vigilance; then be it tried:
Exert thy voice, and wield thy shotless gun;
Go, tarry there from morn till setting sun."
Keen blows the blast, or ceaseless rain descends;
The half-stripp'd hedge a sorry shelter lends.
O for a hovel, e'er so small or low,
Whose roof, repelling winds or early snow,
Might bring home's comfort fresh before his eyes!
No sooner thought, than see the structure rise,
In some sequester'd nook, embank'd around,
Sods for its walls, and straw in burdens bound:
Dried fuel hoarded is his richest store,
And circling smoke obscures his little door;
Whence creeping forth, to duty's call he yields,
And strolls the Crusoe of the lonely fields.
On whitethorns towering, and the leafless rose,
A frost-nipt feast in bright vermilion glows:
Where clustering sloes in glossy order rise,
He crops the loaded branch; a cumbrous prize;
And o'er the flame the sputtering fruit he rests,
Placing green sods to seat his coming guests;
His guests by promise; playmates young and gay:—
But, ah! fresh pastimes lure their steps away!
He sweeps his hearth, and homeward looks in vain,
Till feeling disappointment's cruel pain,
His fairy revels are exchanged for rage,
His banquet marr'd, grown dull his hermitage.
The field becomes his prison, till on high
Benighted birds to shades and coverts fly.
Midst air, health, daylight, can he prisoner be?
If fields are prisons, where is liberty?
Here still she dwells, and here her votaries stroll;
But disappointed hope untunes the soul:
Restraints unfelt whilst hours of rapture flow,
When troubles press to chains and barriers grow.
Look then from trivial up to greater woes;
From the poor bird-boy with his roasted sloes,
To where the dungeon'd mourner heaves the sigh;
Where not one cheering sunbeam meets his eye.
Though ineffectual pity thine may be,
No wea.th, no power to set the captive free
Though only to thy ravish'd sight is given
The radiant path that Howard trod to heaven;
Thy slights can make the wretched more forlorn,
And deeper drive affliction's barbed thorn.
Say not, "I'll come and cheer thy gloomy cell
With news of dearest friends; how good, how well;
I'll be a joyful herald to thine heart:"
Then fail, and play the worthless trifler's part,
To sip flat pleasures from thy glass's brim,
And waste the precious hour that's due to him.
In mercy spare the base, unmanly blow:
Where can he turn, to whom complain of you?
Back to past joys in vain his thoughts may stray,
Trace and retrace the beaten, worn-out way,
The rankling injury will pierce his breast,
And curses on thee break his midnight rest.
Bereft of song, and ever-cheering green,
The soft endearments of the Summer scene,
New harmony pervades the solemn wood,
Dear to the soul, and healthful to the blood:
For bold exertion follows on the sound
Of distant sportsmen, and the chiding hound;
First heard from kennel bursting, mad with joy,
Where smiling Euston boasts her good Fitzroy,
Lord of pure alms, and gifts that wide extend;
The farmer's patron and the poor man's friend.
Whose mansion glitters with the eastern ray,
Whose elevated temple points the way,
O'er slopes and lawns, the park's extensive pride,
To where the victims of the chase reside,
Ingulf'd in earth, in conscious safety warm,
Till lo! a plot portends their coming harm.
In earliest hours of dark and hooded morn,
Ere yet one rosy cloud bespeaks the dawn,
Whilst far abroad the fox pursues his prey,
He's doom'd to risk the perils of the day,
From his strong hold block'd out; perhaps to bleed
Or owe his life to fortune or to speed.
For now the pack, impatient running on,
Range through the darkest coverts one by one;
Trace every spot; whilst down each noble glade
That guides the eye beneath a changeful shade,
The loitering sportsman feels th' instinctive flame
And checks his steed to mark the springing game.
Midst intersecting cuts and winding ways
The huntsman cheers his dogs, and anxious strays
Where every narrow riding, even shorn,
Gives back the echo of his mellow horn;
Till fresh and lightsome, every power untried,
The starting fugitive leaps by his side,
His lifted finger to his ear he plies,
And the view halloo bids a chorus rise
Of dogs quick-mouth'd, and shouts that mingle loud,
As bursting thunder rolls from cloud to cloud
With ears erect, and chest of vigorous mould,
O'er ditch, o'er fence, unconquerably bold,
The shining courser lengthens every bound,
And his strong footlocks suck the moisten'd ground,
As from the confines of the wood they pour,
And joyous villages partake the roar.
O'er heath far stretch'd, or down, or valley low,
The stiff-limb'd peasant glorying in the show

Pursues in vain, where youth itself soon tires,
Spare of the transports that the chase inspires:
For who unmounted long can charm the eye,
Or hear the music of the leading cry?
Poor, faithful Trouncer! thou canst lead no more;
All thy fatigues and all thy triumphs o'er!
Triumphs of worth, whose long-excelling fame
Was still to follow true the hunted game;
Beneath enormous oaks, Britannia's boast,
In thick, impenetrable covers lost,
When the warm pack in faltering silence stood,
Thine was the note that roused the listening wood,
Rekindling every joy with tenfold force,
Through all the mazes of the tainted course,
Still foremost thou the dashing stream to cross,
And tempt along the animated horse;
Foremost o'er fen or level mead to pass,
And sweep the showering dewdrops from the grass;
Then bright emerging from the mist below
To climb the woodland hill's exulting brow.
Pride of thy race! with worth far less than thine,
Full many human leaders daily shine!
Less faith, less constancy, less generous zeal!—
Then no disgrace my humble verse shall feel,
Where not one lying line to riches bows,
Or poison'd sentiment from rancour flows;
Nor flowers are strewn around ambition's ear:
An honest dog's a nobler theme by far.
Each sportsman heard the tidings with a sigh,
When death's cold touch had stopt his tuneful cry;
And though high deeds, and fair exalted praise,
In memory lived, and flow'd in rustic lays,
Short was the strain of monumental wo:
"Foxes rejoice! here buried lies your foe!"
In safety housed, throughout night's lengthening reign
The cock sends forth a loud and piercing strain;
More frequent, as the glooms of midnight flee,
And hours roll round that brought him liberty,
When Summer's early dawn, mild, clear, and bright,
Chased quick away the transitory night:—
Hours now in darkness veil'd; yet loud the scream
Of geese impatient for the playful stream;
And all the feather'd tribe imprison'd raise
Their morning notes of inharmonious praise:
And many a clamorous hen and cockrel gay,
When daylight slowly through the fog breaks way,
Fly wantonly abroad: but, ah, how soon
The shades of twilight follow hazy noon,
Shortening the busy day!—day that slides by
Amidst th' unfinish'd toils of husbandry;
Toils still each morn resumed with double care,
To meet the icy terrors of the year;
To meet the threats of Boreas undismay'd,
And Winter's gathering frowns and hoary head.
Then welcome cold; welcome ye snowy nights!
Heaven midst your rage shall mingle pure delights,
And confidence of hope the soul sustain,
While devastation sweeps along the plain:
Nor shall the child of poverty despair,
But bless the power that rules the changing year,
Assured,—though horrors round his cottage reign,—
That Spring will come and nature smile again.

WINTER.

ARGUMENT.

Tenderness to cattle. Frozen turnips. The cowyard Night. The farm-house. Fireside. Farmer's advice and instruction. Nightly cares of the stable. Dobbin. The post-horse. Sheep-stealing dogs. Walks occasioned thereby. The ghost. Lamb time. Returning Spring. Conclusion.

With kindred pleasures moved, and cares oppress'd,
Sharing alike our weariness and rest;
Who lives the daily partner of our hours,
Through every change of heat, and frost, and showers;
Partakes our cheerful meals, partaking first
In mutual labour, and fatigue, and thirst;
The kindly intercourse will ever prove
A bond of amity and social love.
To more than man this generous warmth extends,
And oft the team and shivering herd befriends;
Tender solicitude the bosom fills,
And pity executes what reason wills:
Youth learns compassion's tale from every tongue
And flies to aid the helpless and the young.
When now, unsparing as the scourge of war,
Blasts follow blasts, and groves dismantled roar,
Around their home the storm-pinch'd cattle lows
No nourishment in frozen pastures grows;
Yet frozen pastures every morn resound
With fair abundance thundering to the ground.
For though on hoary twigs no buds peep out,
And e'en the hardy brambles cease to sprout,
Beneath dread Winter's level sheets of snow
The sweet nutritious turnip deigns to grow.
Till now imperious want and wide-spread dearth
Bid labour claim her treasures from the earth.
On Giles, and such as Giles, the labour falls,
To strew the frequent load where hunger calls.
On driving gales sharp hail indignant flies,
And sleet, more irksome still, assails his eyes;
Snow clogs his feet; or if no snow is seen,
The field with all its juicy store to screen,
Deep goes the frost, till every root is found
A mass of rolling ice upon the ground.
No tender ewe can break her nightly fast,
Nor heifer strong begin the cold repast,
Till Giles with ponderous beetle foremost go,
And scattering splinters fly at every blow;
When pressing round him, eager for the prize,
From their mix'd breath warm exhalations rise.
In beaded rows if drops now deck the spray,
While the sun grants a momentary ray,
Let but a cloud's broad shadow intervene,
And stiffen'd into gems the drops are seen;
And down the furrow'd oak's broad southern side
Streams of dissolving rime no longer glide.
Though night approaching bids for rest prepare,
Still the flail echoes through the frosty air,
Nor stops till deepest shades of darkness come,
Sending at length the weary labourer home.
From him, with bed and nightly food supplied,
Throughout the yard, housed round on every side,
Deep plunging cows their rustling feast enjoy,
And snatch sweet mouthfuls from the passing boy
Who moves unseen beneath his trailing load,
Fills the tall racks, and leaves a scatter'd road,

Where oft the swine from ambush warm and dry
Rolt out, and scamper headlong to their sty,
When Giles with well-known voice, already there,
Deigns them a portion of his evening care.
Him, though the cold may pierce, and storms molest,
Succeeding hours shall cheer with warmth and rest;
Gladness to spread, and raise the grateful smile,
He hurls the fagot bursting from the pile,
And many a log and rifted trunk conveys,
To heap the fire, and wide extend the blaze,
That quivering strong through every opening flies,
Whilst smoky columns unobstructed rise.
For the rude architect, unknown to fame,
(Nor symmetry nor elegance his aim,)
Who spread his floors of solid oak on high,
On beams rough-hewn, from age to age that lie,
Bade his wide fabric unimpair'd sustain
The orchard's store, and cheese, and golden grain;
Bade, from its central base, capacious laid,
The well-wrought chimney rear its lofty head;
Where since hath many a savory ham been stored,
And tempests howl'd, and Christmas gambols roar'd.
Flat on the hearth the glowing embers lie,
And flames reflected dance in every eye:
There the long billet, forced at last to bend,
While gushing sap froths out at either end,
Throws round its welcome heat:—the ploughman smiles,
And oft the joke runs hard on sheepish Giles,
Who sits joint tenant of the corner stool,
The converse sharing, though in duty's school;
For now attentively 'tis his to hear,
Interrogations from the master's chair.
"Left ye your bleating charge, when daylight fled,
Near where the haystack lifts its snowy head?
Whose fence of bushy furze, so close and warm,
May stop the slanting bullets of the storm.
For, hark! it blows; a dark and dismal night:
Heaven guide the traveller's fearful steps aright!
Now from the woods mistrustful and sharp-eyed,
The fox in silent darkness seems to glide,
Stealing around us, listening as he goes,
If chance the cock or stammering capon crows,
Or goose, or nodding duck, should darkling cry
As if apprized of lurking danger nigh:
Destruction waits them, Giles, if e'er you fail
To bolt their doors against the driving gale.
Strew'd you (still mindful of th' unshelter'd head)
Burdens of straw, the cattle's welcome bed? [see,
Thine heart should feel, what thou mayst hourly
That duty's basis is humanity.
Of pain's unsavory cup though thou mayst taste,
(The wrath of Winter from the bleak north-east,)
Thine utmost sufferings in the coldest day
A period terminates, and joys repay.
Perhaps e'en now, while here those joys we boast,
Full many a bark rides down the neighbouring coast,
Where the high northern waves tremendous roar,
Drove down by blasts from Norway's icy shore.
The seaboy there, less fortunate than thou,
Feels all thy pains in all the gusts that blow;
His freezing hands now drench'd, now dry, by turns;
Now lost, now seen, the distant light that burns,
On some tall cliff upraised a flaming guide,
That throws its friendly radiance o'er the tide.
His labours cease not with declining day,
But toils and perils mark his watery way;
And whilst in peaceful dreams secure *we* lie,
The ruthless whirlwinds rage along the sky;
Round his head whistling;—and shalt thou repine,
While this protecting roof still shelters thine!"
Mild as the vernal shower, his words prevail,
And aid the moral precept of his tale:
His wondering hearers learn, and ever keep
These first ideas of the restless deep;
And, as the opening mind a circuit tries,
Present felicities in value rise.
Increasing pleasures every hour they find,
The warmth more precious, and the shelter kind:
Warmth that long reigning bids the eyelids close,
As through the blood its balmy influence goes,
When the cheer'd heart forgets fatigues and cares,
And drowsiness alone dominion bears.
Sweet then the ploughman's slumbers, hale and young,
When the last topic dies upon his tongue;
Sweet then the bliss his transient dreams inspire,
Till chilblains wake him, or the snapping fire.
He starts, and ever thoughtful of his team,
Along the glittering snow a feeble gleam
Shoots from his lantern, as he yawning goes
To add fresh comforts to their night's repose;
Diffusing fragrance as their food he moves,
And pats the jolly sides of those he loves.
Thus full replenish'd, perfect ease possess'd,
From night till morn alternate food and rest.
No rightful cheer withheld, no sleep debarr'd,
Their each day's labour brings its sure reward.
Yet when from plough or lumbering cart set free,
They taste a while the sweets of liberty:
E'en sober Dobbin lifts his clumsy heel
And kicks, disdainful of the dirty wheel:
But soon, his frolic ended, yields again,
To trudge the road, and wear the chinkling chain.
Shortsighted Dobbin!—thou canst only see
The trivial hardships that *encompass* thee:
Thy chains were freedom, and thy toils repose:
Could the poor post-horse tell thee all his woes:
Show thee his bleeding shoulders, and unfold
The dreadful anguish he endures for gold:
Hired at each call of business, lust, or rage,
That prompts the traveller on from stage to stage.
Still on *his* strength depends their boasted speed;
For them his limbs grow weak, his bare ribs bleed;
And though he groaning quickens at command,
Their extra shilling in the rider's hand
Becomes his bitter scourge:—'tis *he* must feel
The double efforts of the lash and steel;
Till when, up hill, the destined inn he gains,
And trembling under complicated pains,
Prone from his nostrils, darting on the ground,
His breath emitted floats in clouds around:
Drops chase each other down his chest and sides,
And spatter'd mud his native colour hides:
Through his swoln veins the boiling torrent flows,
And every nerve a separate torture knows.
His harness loosed, he welcomes, eager-eyed,
The pail's full draught that quivers by his side;
And joys to see the well-known stable door,
As the starved mariner the friendly shore.

Ah, well for him if here his sufferings ceased,
And ample hours of rest his pains appeased!
But roused again, and sternly bade to rise,
And shake refreshing slumber from his eyes,
Ere his exhausted spirits can return,
Or through his frame reviving ardour burn, [sore,
Come forth he must, though limping, maim'd, and
He hears the whip; the chaise is at the door;—
The collar tightens, and again he feels
His half-heal'd wounds inflamed; again the wheels
With tiresome sameness in his ears resound,
O'er blinding dust, or miles of flinty ground.
Thus nightly robb'd, and injured day by day,
His piecemeal murderers wear his life away.
What say'st thou, Dobbin? what though hounds await
With open jaws the moment of thy fate,
No better fate attends *his* public race;
His life is misery, and his end disgrace.
Then freely bear thy burden to the mill:
Obey but one short law,—thy driver's will.
Affection to thy memory ever true,
Shall boast of mighty loads that Dobbin drew;
And back to childhood shall the mind with pride
Recount thy gentleness in many a ride
To pond, or field, or village fair, when thou
Heldst high thy braided mane and comely brow!
And oft the tale shall rise to homely fame
Upon thy generous spirit and thy name.

Though faithful to a proverb we regard
The midnight chieftain of the farmer's yard,
Beneath whose guardianship all hearts rejoice,
Woke by the echo of his hollow voice;
Yet as the hound may faltering quit the pack,
Snuff the fowl scent, and hasten yelping back;
And e'en the docile pointer know disgrace,
Thwarting the general instinct of his race;
E'en so the mastiff, or the meaner cur
At times will from the path of duty err,
(A pattern of fidelity by day:
By night a murderer, lurking for his prey;)
And round the pastures or the fold will creep,
And coward-like, attack the peaceful sheep.
Alone the wanton mischief he pursues,
Alone in reeking blood his jaws imbrues;
Chasing amain his frighten'd victims round,
Till death in wild confusion strews the ground;
Then wearied out, to kennel sneaks away,
And licks his guilty paws till break of day.

The deed discover'd, and the news once spread,
Vengeance hangs o'er the unknown culprit's head:
And careful shepherds extra hours bestow
In patient watchings for the common foe;
A foe most dreaded now, when rest and peace
Should wait the season of the flock's increase.

In part these nightly terrors to dispel,
Giles, ere he sleeps, his little flock must tell.
From the fireside with many a shrug he hies,
Glad if the full-orb'd moon salute his eyes,
And through th' unbroken stillness of the night
Shed on his path her beams of cheering light.
With sauntering step he climbs the distant stile,
Whilst all around him wears a placid smile;
There views the white-robed clouds in clusters driven,
And all the glorious pageantry of heaven.
Low, on the utmost boundary of the sight,
The rising vapours catch the silver light;
Thence fancy measures, as they parting fly,
Which first will throw its shadow on the eye,
Passing the source of light; and thence away,
Succeeded quick by brighter still than they.
Far yet above these wafted clouds are seen
(In a remoter sky, still more serene,)
Others, detach'd in ranges through the air,
Spotless as snow, and countless as they're fair,
Scatter'd immensely wide from east to west,
The beauteous semblance of a flock at rest.
These, to the raptured mind, aloud proclaim
Their MIGHTY SHEPHERD'S everlasting Name.

Whilst thus the loiterer's utmost stretch of soul
Climbs the still clouds, or passes those that roll,
And loosed imagination soaring goes
High o'er his home, and all his little woes,
Time glides away; neglected duty calls;
At once from plains of light to earth he falls,
And down a narrow lane, well known by day,
With all his speed pursues his sounding way,
In thought still half-absorb'd, and chill'd with cold,
When lo! an object frightful to behold;
A grisly spectre, clothed in silver-gray,
Around whose feet the waving shadow's play,
Stands in his path!—He stops, and not a breath
Heaves from his heart, that sinks almost to death.
Loud the owl halloos o'er his head unseen;
All else is silent, dismally serene:
Some prompt ejaculation, whisper'd low,
Yet bears him up against the threatening foe;
And thus poor Giles, though half inclined to fly,
Mutters his doubts, and strains his steadfast eye.
"'Tis not my crimes thou comest here to reprove;
No murders stain my soul, no perjured love;
If thou'rt indeed what here thou seem'st to be,
Thy dreadful mission cannot reach to me.
By parents taught still to mistrust mine eyes,
Still to approach each object of surprise,
Lest fancy's formful visions should deceive
In moonlight paths, or glooms of falling eve,
This then's the moment when my mind should try
To scan thy motionless deformity;
But O, the fearful task! yet well I know
An aged ash, with many a spreading bough,
(Beneath whose leaves I've found a summer's bower,
Beneath whose trunk I've weather'd many a shower,)
Stands singly down this solitary way,
But far beyond where now my footsteps stay.
'Tis true, thus far I've come with heedless haste;
No reckoning kept, no passing objects traced:
And can I then have reach'd that very tree?
Or is its reve end form assumed by thee?"
The happy thought alleviates his pain:
He creeps another step; then stops again:
Till slowly, as his noiseless feet draw near,
Its perfect lineaments at once appear;
Its crown of shivering ivy whispering peace,
And its white bark that fronts the moon's pale face.
Now, whilst his blood mounts upward, now he knows
The solid gain that from conviction flows;
And strengthen'd confidence shall hence fulfil
(With conscious innocence more valued still

The dreariest task that winter nights can bring,
By churchyard dark, or grove, or fairy ring;
Still buoying up the timid mind of youth,
Till loitering reason hoists the scale of truth.
With these blest guardians Giles his course pursues,
Till numbering his heavy-sided ewes,
Surrounding stillness tranquillize his breast,
And shape the dreams that wait his hours of rest.

As when retreating tempests we behold,
Whose skirts at length the azure sky unfold,
And full of murmurings and mingled wrath,
Slowly unshroud the smiling face of earth,
Bringing the bosom joy; so Winter flies!—
And see the source of life and light uprise!
A heightening arch o'er southern hills he bends;
Warm on the cheek the slanting beam descends,
And gives the reeking mead a brighter hue,
And draws the modest primrose bud to view.
Yet frosts succeed, and winds impetuous rush,
And hailstorms rattle through the budding bush;
And nigh-fall'n lambs require the shepherd's care,
And teeming ewes, that still their burdens bear;
Beneath whose sides to-morrow's dawn may see
The milk-white strangers bow the trembling knee;
At whose first birth the powerful instinct's seen
That fills with champions the daisied green:
For ewes that stood aloof with fearful eye,
With stamping foot now men and dogs defy,
And obstinately faithful to their young,
Guard their first steps to join the bleating throng.

But casualties and death from damps and cold
Will still attend the well-conducted fold:
Her tender offspring dead, the dam aloud
Calls, and runs wild amidst th' unconscious crowd;
And orphan'd sucklings raise the piteous cry;
No wool to warm them, no defenders nigh.
And must her streaming milk then flow in vain?
Must unregarded innocence complain?
No;—ere this strong solicitude subside,
Maternal fondness may be fresh applied,
And the adopted stripling still may find
A parent most assiduously kind.
For this he's doom'd awhile disguised to range,
(For fraud or force must work the wish'd-for change;)
For this his predecessor's skin he wears,
Till, cheated into tenderness and cares,
The unsuspecting dam, contented grown,
Cherish and guard the foundling as her own.

Thus all by turns to fair perfection rise;
Thus twins are parted to increase their size:
Thus instinct yields as interest points the way,
Till the bright flock, augmenting every day,
On sunny hills and vales of springing flowers,
With ceaseless clamour greet the vernal hours.

The humbler shepherd here with joy beholds
Th' approved economy of crowded folds,
And, in his small contracted round of cares,
Adjusts the practice of each hint he bears:
For boys with emulation learn to glow,
And boast their pastures, and their healthful show
Of well-grown lambs, the glory of the Spring;
And field to field in competition bring.

E'en Giles, for all his cares and watchings past,
And all his contests with the wintry blast,
Claims a full share of that sweet praise bestow'd
By gazing neighbours, when along the road,
Or village green, his curly-coated throng
Suspends the chorus of the spinner's song;
When admiration's unaffected grace
Lisps from the tongue, and beams in every face.
Delightful moments!—Sunshine, health, and joy,
Play round, and cheer the elevated boy!
"Another spring!" his heart exulting cries;
"Another year! with promised blessings rise!—
ETERNAL POWER! from whom those blessings flow,
Teach me still more to wonder, more to know!
Seed-time and harvest let me see again;
Wander the leaf-strewn wood, the frozen plain:
Let the first flower, corn-waving field, plain, tree,
Here round my home, still lift my soul to THEE;
And let me ever, midst thy bounties, raise
An humble note of thankfulness and praise!"

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH, the founder of what is called the Lake school of poetry, was born in 1770, of a respectable family, at Cockermouth, in Cumberland. He received his early education at the grammar-school of Hawkshead, where he greatly excelled in his classical studies, and was remarkable for his thoughtful disposition, and taste for poetry, in which he made his first attempt, when at the age of thirteen. In 1787, he was removed to St. John's College, Cambridge, where he graduated B. A. and M. A.; and, in 1793, he published a poetical account of a pedestrian tour on the continent, entitled Descriptive Sketches in Verse, &c., followed by the Evening Walk, an epistle, in verse, addressed to a young lady. In alluding to the Descriptive Sketches, says Coleridge, "seldom, if ever, was the emergence of an original poetic genius above the literary horizon more evidently announced." After wandering about in various parts of England, our author took a cottage at Alforton, in Somersetshire, near the then residence of Coleridge, where they were regarded by the good people of the neighbourhood as spies and agents of the French Directory. Our benevolent author, however, appears to have been considered the more dangerous character of the two. "As to Coleridge," one of the parish authorities is said to have remarked, "there is not so much harm in him, for he is a wild brain that talks whatever comes uppermost; but that —— (Wordsworth) he is the dark traitor. You never hear him say a syllable on the subject." In 1798, he published a volume of his Lyrical Ballads, which met with much abuse and few admirers, but those who applauded, applauded enthusiastically.

In 1803, he married a Miss Mary Hutchinson, of Penrith, and settled at Grassmere, in Westmoreland, for which county, as well as that of Cumberland, he was subsequently appointed distributor of stamps. In 1807, he gave to the public a second volume of his Ballads; and, in 1809, with an intention to recommend a vigorous prosecution of the war with Spain, he published his only prose production, concerning the relations of Great Britain, Spain, and Portugal to each other. In 1814, appeared, in quarto, his Excursion, a poem, which has been highly extolled, and is undoubtedly one of his most original and best compositions. It was followed, in 1815, by the White Doe of Rylstone; and, in 1819, by his Peter Bell, to the merits of which we must confess ourselves strangers. During the same year, he published his Wagonner, a tale; followed, in 1820, by the River Duddon, a series of sonnets; and Vaudracour and Julia, with other pieces; and Ecclesiastical Sketches. In 1822, he printed Memorials of a Tour on the Continent; also a Description of the Scenery of the Lakes in the North of England, with illustrative remarks on the scenery of the Alps. His last publication was Yarrow Revisited, which appeared in 1834.

The genius of Mr. Wordsworth has been a matter of critical dispute ever since he first made pretension to any, and it is yet a question with some, whether his productions are not those of "an inspired idiot." It would be, however, useless to deny him the reputation of a poet, though between the equally extravagant adoration and censure, of which he has been the object, it is difficult to define the exact position which will be ultimately assigned him in the rank of literature. Coleridge, who, as might be expected, is one of his most enthusiastic admirers, says that, "in imaginative powers, Wordsworth stands nearest of all modern writers to Shakspeare and Milton, and yet in a kind perfectly unborrowed, and his own." The author of an essay on his theory and writings, printed in Blackwood's Magazine for 1830, gives a very fair estimate of his poetical genius. "The variety of subjects," he observes, "which Wordsworth has touched; the varied powers which he has displayed; the passages of redeeming beauty interspersed even amongst the worst and dullest of his productions; the originality of detached thoughts, scattered throughout works, to which, on the whole, we must deny the praise of originality; the deep pathos, and occasional grandeur of his style; the real poetical feeling which generally runs through its many modulations; his accurate observation of external nature; and the success with which he blends the purest and most devotional thoughts with the glories of the visible universe—all these are merits, which so far 'make up in number what they want in weight,' that, although insufficient to raise him to the shrine, they fairly admit him within the sacred temple of poesy." For our own parts, though we are not among those who call, as some of his admirers do, the poetry of Wordsworth "an actual revelation," we admit to have found in his works beauties which no other poet, perhaps, could have struck out of the peculiar sphere to which he has confined his imagination. His Recollections of Early Childhood, and a few others, are sublime compositions; whilst, on the other hand, his lines to a Glow-worm, *et id omne genus*, are despicable and ridiculous.

The private character of Mr. Wordsworth has never been impeached by his most virulent enemies, if he has any; and no man is more esteemed and respected for his amiable qualities.

THE EXCURSION,

BEING A PORTION OF THE RECLUSE.

PREFACE.

THE title announces that this is only a portion of a poem; and the reader must be here apprized that it belongs to the second part of a long and laborious work which is to consist of three parts.—The author will candidly acknowledge that, if the first of these had been completed, and in such a manner as to satisfy his own mind, he should have preferred the natural order of publication, and have given that to the world first; but, as the second division of the work was designed to refer more to passing events, and to an existing state of things, than the others were meant to do, more continuous exertion was naturally bestowed upon it, and greater progress made here than in the rest of the poem; and as this part does not depend upon the preceding, to a degree which will materially injure its own peculiar interest, the author, complying with the earnest entreaties of some valued friends, presents the following pages to the public.

It may be proper to state whence the poem, of which the Excursion is a part, derives its title of the Recluse.—Several years ago, when the author retired to his native mountains, with the hope of being enabled to construct a literary work that might live, it was a reasonable thing that he should take a review of his own mind, and examine how far nature and education had qualified him for such employment. As subsidiary to this preparation, he undertook to record, in verse, the origin and progress of his own powers, as far as he was acquainted with them. That work, addressed to a dear friend, most distinguished for his knowledge and genius, and to whom the author's intellect is deeply indebted, has been long finished; and the result of the investigation which gave rise to it was a determination to compose a philosophical poem, containing views of man, nature, and society; and to be entitled, the Recluse; as having for its principal subject the sensations and opinions of a poet living in retirement.—The preparatory poem is biographical, and conducts the history of the author's mind to the point when he was imboldened to hope that his faculties were sufficiently matured for entering upon the arduous labour which he had proposed to himself; and the two works have the same kind of relation to each other, if he may so express himself, as the antichapel has to the body of a Gothic church. Continuing this allusion, he may be permitted to add, that his minor pieces, which have been long before the public, when they shall be properly arranged, will be found by the attentive reader to have such connexion with the main work as may give them claim to be likened to the little cells, oratories, and sepulchral recesses, ordinarily included in those edifices.

The author would not have deemed himself justified in saying, upon this occasion, so much of performances either unfinished, or unpublished, if he had not thought that the labour bestowed by him upon what he has heretofore and now laid before the public, entitled him to candid attention for such a statement as he thinks necessary to throw light upon his endeavours to please, and he would hope, to benefit his countrymen.—Nothing further need be added, than that the first and third parts of the Recluse will consist chiefly of meditations in the author's own person; and that in the intermediate part (the Excursion) the intervention of characters speaking is employed, and something of a dramatic form adopted.

It is not the author's intention formally to announce a system: it was more animating to him to proceed in a different course; and if he shall succeed in conveying to the mind clear thoughts, lively images, and strong feelings, the reader will have no difficulty in extracting the system for himself. And in the mean time the following passage, taken from the conclusion of the first book of the Recluse, may be acceptable as a kind of prospectus of the design and scope of the whole poem.

"On man, on nature, and on human life,
Musing in solitude, I oft perceive
Fair trains of imagery before me rise,
Accompanied by feelings of delight
Pure, or with no unpleasing sadness mixt;
And I am conscious of affecting thoughts
And dear remembrances whose presence soothes
Or elevates the mind, intent to weigh
The good and evil of our mortal state.
—To these emotions, whensoe'er they come,
Whether from breath of outward circumstance,
Or from the soul—an impulse to herself,
I would give utterance in numerous verse.
Of truth, of grandeur, beauty, love, and hope—
And melancholy fear subdued by faith;
Of blessed consolations in distress;
Of moral strength, and intellectual power;
Of joy in widest commonalty spread;
Of the individual mind that keeps her own
Inviolate retirement, subject there
To conscience only, and the law supreme
Of that Intelligence which governs all;
I sing:—'fit audience let me find though few!'
"So pray'd, more gaining than he ask'd, the bard,
Holiest of men.—Urania, I shall need
Thy guidance, or a greater muse, if such
Descend to earth or dwell in highest heaven!
For I must tread on shadowy ground, must sink
Deep—and, aloft ascending, breathe in world
To which the heaven of heavens is but a veil.
All strength—all terror, single or in bands,
That ever was put forth in personal form;
Jehovah—with his thunder, and the choir
Of shouting angels, and the empyreal thrones
I pass them unalarm'd. Not chaos, not
The darkest pit of lowest Erebus,
Nor aught of blinder vacancy—scoop'd out
By help of dreams, can breed such fear and awe
As fall upon us often when we look
Into our minds, into the mind of man,
My haunt, and the main region of my song.
—Beauty—a living presence of the earth,

Surpassing the most fair ideal forms
Which craft of delicate spirits hath composed
From earth's materials—waits upon my steps;
Pitches her tents before me as I move,
An hourly neighbour. Paradise, and groves
Elysian, fortunate fields—like those of old
Sought in th' Atlantic main, why should they be
A history only of departed things,
Or a mere fiction of what never was
For the discerning intellect of man,
When wedded to this goodly universe
In love and holy passion, shall find these
A simple produce of the common day.
—I, long before the blissful hour arrives,
Would chant, in lonely peace, the spousal verse
Of this great consummation;—and, by words
Which speak of nothing more than what we are,
Would I arouse the sensual from their sleep
Of death, and win the vacant and the vain
To noble raptures; while my voice proclaims
How exquisitely the individual mind
(And the progressive powers perhaps no less
Of the whole species) to the external world
Is fitted;—and how exquisitely, too,
Theme this but little heard of among men,
Th' external world is fitted to the mind;
And the creation (by no lower name
Can it be call'd) which they with blended might
Accomplish:—this is our high argument.
—Such grateful haunts foregoing, if I oft
Must turn elsewhere—to travel near the tribes
And fellowships of men, and see ill sights
Of madding passions mutually inflamed;
Must hear humanity in fields and groves
Pipe solitary anguish; or must hang
Brooding above the fierce confederate storm
Of sorrow, barricadoed evermore
Within the walls of cities; may these sounds
Have their authentic comment,—that even these
Hearing, I be not downcast or forlorn?
—Descend, prophetic spirit! that inspirest
The human soul* of universal earth,
Dreaming on things to come; and dost possess
A metropolitan temple in the hearts
Of mighty poets; upon me bestow
A gift of genuine insight; that my song
With star-like virtue in its place may shine;
Shedding benignant influence,—and secure,
Itself, from all malevolent effect
Of those mutations that extend their sway
Throughout the nether sphere!—And if with this
I mix more lowly matter; with the thing
Contemplated, describe the mind and man
Contemplating, and who, and what he was,
The transitory being that beheld
This vision,—when and where, and how he lived;—
Be not this labour useless. If such theme
May sort with highest objects, then, dread power,
Whose gracious favour is the primal source
Of all illumination, may my life
Express the image of a better time,
More wise desires, and simpler manners;—nurse
My heart in genuine freedom:—all pure thoughts
Be with me;—so shall thy unfailing love
Guide, and support, and cheer me to the end!"

* Not mine own fears, nor the prophetic soul
Of the wide world dreaming on things to come.
Shakspeare's Sonnets.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

WILLIAM, EARL OF LONSDALE, K. G. &c. &c.

Oft, through thy fair domains, illustrious peer!
In youth I roam'd, on youthful pleasures bent;
And mused in rocky cell or sylvan tent,
Beside swift-flowing Lowther's current clear.
—Now, by thy care befriended, I appear
Before thee, Lonsdale, and this work present,
A token (may it prove a monument!)
Of high respect and gratitude sincere.
Gladly would I have waited till my task
Had reached its close; but life is insecure,
And hope full oft fallacious as a dream:
Therefore, for what is here produced I ask
Thy favour; trusting that thou wilt not deem
The offering, though imperfect, premature.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

Rydal Mount, Westmoreland,
July 29, 1814.

THE EXCURSION.

ARGUMENT.

A summer forenoon. The author reaches a ruined cottage upon a common, and there meets with a revered friend the Wanderer, of whom he gives an account. The Wanderer while resting under the shade of the trees that surround the cottage relates the history of its last inhabitant.

BOOK FIRST.

THE WANDERER.

'Twas summer, and the sun had mounted high:
Southward the landscape indistinctly glared
Through a pale steam: but all the northern downs,
In clearest air ascending, show'd far off
A surface dappled o'er with shadows flung
From brooding clouds: shadows that lay in spots
Determined and unmoved, with steady beams
Of bright and pleasant sunshine interposed;
Pleasant to him who on the soft cool moss
Extends his careless limbs along the front
Of some huge cave, whose rocky ceiling casts
A twilight of its own, an ample shade,
Where the wren warbles; while the dreaming man,
Half conscious of the soothing melody,
With sidelong eye looks out upon the scene,
By power of that impending covert thrown
To finer distance. Other lot was mine;
Yet with good hope that soon I should obtain
As grateful resting-place, and livelier joy.
Across a bare wide common I was toiling
With languid steps that by the slippery ground
Were baffled; nor could my weak arm disperse
The host of insects gathering round my face,
And ever with me as I paced along.
Upon that open level stood a grove,
The wish'd for port to which my course was bound.

Thither I came, and there, amid the gloom
Spread by a brotherhood of lofty elms,
Appear'd a roofless hut; four naked walls
That stared upon each other! I looked round,
And to my wish and to my hope espied
Him whom I sought; a man of reverend age,
But stout and hale, for travel unimpair'd.
There was he seen upon the cottage bench,
Recumbent in the shade, as if asleep;
An iron-pointed staff lay at his side.
Him had I mark'd the day before—alone
And station'd in the public way, with face
Turn'd toward the sun then setting, while that staff
Afforded to the figure of the man
Detain'd for contemplation or repose,
Graceful support; his countenance meanwhile
Was hidden from my view, and he remain'd
Unrecognised; but, stricken by the sight,
With slacken'd footsteps I advanced, and soon
A glad congratulation we exchanged,
At such unthought of meeting.—For the night
We parted, nothing willingly; and now
He by appointment waited for me here,
Beneath the shelter of these clustering elms.
We were tried friends: amid a pleasant vale,
In the antique market village where were pass'd
My school-days, an apartment he had own'd,
To which at intervals the Wanderer drew,
And found a kind of home or harbour there.
He loved me; from a swarm of rosy boys
Singled out me, as he in sport would say,
For my grave looks—too thoughtful for my years.
As I grew up, it was my best delight
To be his chosen comrade. Many a time,
On holydays, we rambled through the woods:
We sate—we walk'd; he pleased me with report
Of things which he had seen; and often touch'd
Abstrusest matter, reasonings of the mind
Turn'd inward; or at my request would sing
Old songs—the product of his native hills;
A skilful distribution of sweet sounds,
Feeding the soul, and eagerly imbibed
As cool, refreshing water by the care
Of the industrious husbandman, diffused [drought,
Through a parch'd meadow-ground, in time of
Still deeper welcome found his pure discourse:
How precious when in riper days I learn'd
To weigh with care his words, and to rejoice
In the plain presence of his dignity!
O! many are the poets that are sown
By nature; men endow'd with highest gifts,
The vision and the faculty divine;
Yet wanting the accomplishment of verse,
(Which, in the docile season of their youth,
It was denied them to acquire, through lack
Of culture and th' inspiring aid of books,
Or haply by a temper too severe,
Or a nice backwardness afraid of shame,)
Not having here as life advanced, been led
By circumstance to take unto the height
The measure of themselves, these favour'd beings,
All but a scatter'd few, live out their time,
Husbanding that which they possess within,
And go to the grave unthought of. Strongest minds
Are often those of whom the noisy world
Hears least; else surely this man had not left
His graces unreveal'd and unproclaim'd.
But, as the mind was fill'd with inward light,
So not without distinction had he lived,
Beloved and honour'd—far as he was known.
And some small portion of his eloquent speech,
And something that may serve to set in view
The feeling pleasures of his loneliness,
His observations, and the thoughts his mind
Had dealt with—I will here record in verse;
Which, if with truth it correspond, and sink
Or rise as venerable nature leads,
The high and tender muses shall accept
With gracious smile, deliberately pleased,
And listening time reward with sacred praise.
Among the hills of Athol he was born;
Where, on a small hereditary farm,
An unproductive slip of rugged ground,
His parents, with their numerous offspring, dwelt
A virtuous household, though exceeding poor!
Pure livers were they all, austere and grave,
And fearing God; the very children taught
Stern self-respect, a reverence for God's word,
And an habitual piety, maintain'd
With strictness scarcely known on English ground.
From his sixth year, the boy of whom I speak,
In summer tended cattle on the hills;
But, through th' inclement and the perilous days
Of long-continuing winter, he repair'd,
Equipp'd with satchel, to a school, that stood
Sole building on a mountain's dreary edge,
Remote from view of city spire, or sound
Of minster clock! From that bleak tenement
He, many an evening, to his distant home
In solitude returning, saw the hills
Grow larger in the darkness, all alone
Beheld the stars come out above his head,
And travell'd through the wood, with no one near
To whom he might confess the things he saw.
So the foundations of his mind were laid.
In such communion, not from terror free,
While yet a child, and long before his time,
He had perceived the presence and the power
Of greatness; and deep feelings had impress'd
Great objects on his mind, with portraiture
And colour so distinct, that on his mind
They lay like substances, and almost seem'd
To haunt the bodily sense. He had received
A precious gift; for, as he grew in years,
With these impressions would he still compare
All his remembrances, thoughts, shapes, and forms
And, being still unsatisfied with aught
Of dimmer character, he thence attain'd
An active power to fasten images
Upon his brain; and on their pictured lines
Intensely brooded, even till they acquired
The liveliness of dreams. Nor did he fail,
While yet a child, with a child's eagerness
Incessantly to turn his ear and eye
On all things which the moving seasons brought
To feed such appetite: nor this alone
Appeased his yearning:—in the after day
Of boyhood, many an hour in caves forlorn,
And mid the hollow depths of naked crags
He sate, and e'en in their fix'd lineaments,
Or from the power of a peculiar eye,
Or by creative feeling overborne.

Or by predominance of thought oppress'd,
E'en in their fix'd and steady lineaments
He traced an ebbing and a flowing mind,
Expression ever varying!
Thus inform'd
He had small need of books; for many a tale
Traditionary, round the mountains hung,
And many a legend, peopling the dark woods,
Nourish'd imagination in her growth,
And gave the mind that apprehensive power
By which she is made quick to recognise
The moral properties and scope of things.
But eagerly he read, and read again,
Whate'er the minister's old shelf supplied;
The life and death of martyrs, who sustain'd,
With will inflexible, those fearful pangs
Triumphantly display'd in records left
Of persecution, and the covenant—times
Whose echo rings through Scotland to this hour!
And there, by lucky hap, had been preserved
A straggling volume, torn and incomplete,
That left half told the preternatural tale,
Romance of giants, chronicle of fiends,
Profuse in garniture of wooden cuts
Strange and uncouth; dire faces, figures dire,
Sharp-kneed, sharp-elbow'd, and lean-ankled too,
With long and ghostly shanks—forms which once seen
Could never be forgotten!
In his heart,
Where fear sate thus, a cherish'd visitant,
Was wanting yet the pure delight of love
By sound diffused, or by the breathing air,
Or by the silent looks of happy things,
Or flowing from the universal face
Of earth and sky. But he had felt the powe
Of nature, and already was prepared,
By his intense conceptions, to receive
Deeply the lesson deep of love which he,
Whom nature, by whatever means, has taught
To feel intensely, cannot but receive.
Such was the boy—but for the growing youth
What soul was his, when, from the naked top
Of some bold headland, he beheld the sun
Rise up, and bathe the world in light! He look'd—
Ocean and earth, the solid frame of earth
And ocean's liquid mass, beneath him lay
In gladness and deep joy. The clouds were touch'd,
And in their silent faces did he read
Unutterable love. Sound needed none,
Nor any voice of joy; his spirit drank
The spectacle; sensation, soul, and form,
All melted into him; they swallow'd up
His animal being; in them did he live,
And by them did he live; they were his life.
In such access of mind, in such high hour
Of visitation from the living God,
Thought was not; in enjoyment it expired.
No thanks he breathed, he proffer'd no request;
Rapt into still communion that transcends
Th' imperfect offices of prayer and praise.
His mind was a thanksgiving to the power
That made him, it was blessedness and love!
A herdsman on the lonely mountain tops,
Such intercourse was his, and in this sort
Was his existence oftentimes *possess'd*.
O then how beautiful, how bright appear'd
The written promise! Early had he learn'd
To reverence the volume that displays
The mystery, the life which cannot die;
But in the mountains did he *feel* his faith.
All things, responsive to the writing, there
Breathed immortality, revolving life,
And greatness still revolving; infinite;
There littleness was not; the least of things
Seem'd infinite; and there his spirit shaped
Her prospects, nor did he believe,—he *saw*.
What wonder if his being thus became
Sublime and comprehensive! Low desires,
Low thoughts had there no place; yet was his heart
Lowly; for he was meek in gratitude,
Oft as he call'd those ecstasies to mind,
And whence they flow'd; and from them he acquired
Wisdom, which works through patience; thence he learn'd
In oft-recurring hours of sober thought
To look on nature with a humble heart,
Self-question'd where it did not understand,
And with a superstitious eye of love.
So pass'd the time; yet to the nearest town
He duly went with what small overplus
His earnings might supply, and brought away
The book that most had tempted his desires
While at the stall he read. Among the hills
He gazed upon that mighty orb of song,
The divine Milton. Lore of different kind,
The annual savings of a toilsome life,
His schoolmaster supplied: books that explain
The purer elements of truth involved
In lines and numbers, and, by charm severe,
(Especially perceived where nature droops
And feeling is suppress'd) preserve the mind
Busy in solitude and poverty.
These occupations oftentimes deceived
The listless hours, while in the hollow vale,
Hollow and green, he lay on the green turf
In pensive idleness. What could be do,
Thus daily thirsting, in that lonesome life,
With blind endeavours? Yet still uppermost,
Nature was at his heart as if he felt,
Though yet he knew not how, a wasting power
In all things that from her sweet influence
Might tend to wean him. Therefore with her hues
Her forms, and with the spirit of her forms,
He clothed the nakedness of austere truth.
While yet he linger'd in the rudiments
Of science, and among her simplest laws,
His triangles—they were the stars of heaven,
The silent stars! Oft did he take delight
To measure the altitude of some small crag
That is the eagle's birthplace, or some peak
Familiar with forgotten years, that shows
Inscribed, as with the silence of the thought,
Upon its bleak and visionary sides,
The history of many a winter storm,
Or obscure records of the path of fire.
And thus before his eighteenth year was told,
Accumulated feelings press'd his heart
With still increasing weight; he was o'erpower'd
By nature, by the turbulence subdued
Of his own mind; by mystery and hope,
And the first virgin passion of a soul

Communing with the glorious universe.
Full often wish'd he that the winds might rage
When they were silent; far more fondly now
Than in his earlier season did he love
Tempestuous nights—the conflict and the sounds
That live in darkness:—from his intellect
And from the stillness of abstracted thought
He ask'd repose; and, failing oft to win
The peace required, he scann'd the laws of light
Amid the roar of torrents, where they send
From hollow clefts up to the clearer air
A cloud of mist, that smitten by the sun
Varies its rainbow hues. But vainly thus,
And vainly by all other means, he strove
To mitigate the fever of his heart.

In dreams, in study, and in ardent thought,
Thus was he rear'd; much wanting to assist
The growth of intellect, yet gaining more,
And every moral feeling of his soul
Strengthen'd and braced, by breathing in content
The keen, the wholesome air of poverty,
And drinking from the well of homely life.—
But, from past liberty, and tried restraints,
He now was summon'd to select the course
Of humble industry that promised best
To yield him no unworthy maintenance.
Urged by his mother, he essay'd to teach
A village school; but wandering thoughts were then
A misery to him; and the youth resign'd
A task he was unable to perform.

That stern yet kindly spirit, who constrains
The Savoyard to quit his naked rocks
The freeborn Swiss to leave his narrow vales,
(Spirit attach'd to regions mountainous
Like their own steadfast clouds,) did now impel
His restless mind to look abroad with hope.
An irksome drudgery seems it to plod on,
Through hot and dusty ways, or pelting storm,
A vagrant merchant bent beneath his load!
Yet do such travellers find their own delight;
And their hard service, deem'd debasing now,
Gain'd merited respect in simpler times;
When squire, and priest, and they who round them dwelt
In rustic sequestration—all dependent
Upon the pedlar's toil—supplied their wants,
Or pleased their fancies with the wares he brought.
Not ignorant was the youth that still no few
Of his adventurous countrymen were led
By perseverance in this track of life
To competence and ease;—for him it bore
Attractions manifold;—and this he chose.
His parents on the enterprise bestow'd
Their farewell benediction, but with hearts
Foreboding evil. From his native hills
He wander'd far; much did he see of men,*
Their manners, their enjoyments and pursuits,
Their passions and their feelings; chiefly those
Essential and eternal in the heart,
That, mid the simpler forms of rural life,
Exist more simple in their elements,
And speak a plainer language. In the woods,
A lone enthusiast, and among the fields,
Itinerant in this labour, he had pass'd
The better portion of his time; and there
Spontaneously had his affections thriven
Amid the bounties of the year, the peace
And liberty of nature; there he kept
In solitude and solitary thought
His mind in a just equipoise of love.
Serene it was, unclouded by the cares
Of ordinary life; unvex'd, unwarp'd
By partial bondage. In his steady course,
No piteous revolutions had he felt,
No wild varieties of joy and grief.
Unoccupied by sorrow of its own,
His heart lay open; and, by nature tuned
And constant disposition of his thoughts
To sympathy with man, he was alive
To all that was enjoy'd where'er he went,
And all that was endured; for in himself
Happy, and quiet in his cheerfulness,
He had no painful pressure from without
That made him turn aside from wretchedness
With coward fears. He could *afford* to suffer
With those whom he saw suffer. Hence it came
That in our best experience he was rich,
And in the wisdom of our daily life.

* At the risk of giving a shock to the prejudices of artificial society, I have ever been ready to pay homage to the aristocracy of nature; under a conviction that vigorous human-heartedness is the constituent principle of true taste. It may still, however, be satisfactory to have prose testimony how far a character, employed for purposes of imagination, is founded upon general fact. I, therefore, subjoin an extract from an author who had opportunities of being well acquainted with a class of men, from whom my own personal knowledge imboldened me to draw this portrait.

"We learn from Cæsar and other Roman writers, that the travelling merchants who frequented Gaul and other barbarous countries, either newly conquered by the Roman arms, or bordering on the Roman conquests, were ever the first to make the inhabitants of those countries familiarly acquainted with the Roman modes of life, and to inspire them with an inclination to follow the Roman fashions, and to enjoy Roman conveniencies. In North America, travelling merchants from the settlements have done and continue to do much more toward civilizing the Indian natives, than all the missionaries, Papist or Protestant, who have ever been sent among them.

"It is farther to be observed, for the credit of this most useful class of men, that they commonly contribute, by their personal manners, no less than by the sale of their wares, to the refinement of the people among whom they travel. Their dealings form them to great quickness of wit and acuteness of judgment. Having constant occasion to recommend themselves and their goods, they acquire habits of the most obliging attention and the most insinuating address. As in their peregrinations they have opportunity of contemplating the manners of various men and various cities, they become eminently skilled in the knowledge of the world. *As they wander, each alone, through thinly-inhabited districts, they form habits of reflection and of sublime contemplation.* With all these qualifications, no wonder, that they should often be, in remote parts of the country, the best mirrors of fashion, and censors of manners: and should contribute much to polish the roughness, and soften the rusticity of our peasantry. It is not more than twenty or thirty years, since a young man going from any part of Scotland to England, of purpose to *carry the pack*, was considered, as going to lead the life, and acquire the fortune of a gentleman. When, after twenty years' absence, in that honourable line of employment, he returned with his acquisitions to his native country, he was regarded as a gentleman to all intents and purposes."—*Heron's Journey in Scotland*, vol. i. p. 89.

For hence, minutely, in his various rounds,
He had observed the progress and decay
Of many minds, of minds and bodies too
The history of many families,
How they had prosper'd; how they were o'erthrown
By passion or mischance; or such misrule
Among the unthinking masters of the earth
As makes the nations groan.—This active course
He follow'd till provision for his wants
Had been obtain'd;—the wanderer then resolved
To pass the remnant of his days—untask'd
With needless services—from hardship free.
His calling laid aside, he lived at ease.
But still he loved to pace the public roads
And the wild paths; and by the summer's warmth
Invited, often would he leave his home
And journey far, revisiting the scenes
That to his memory were most endear'd.—
Vigorous in health, of hopeful spirits, undamp'd
By worldly-mindedness or anxious care;
Observant, studious, thoughtful, and refresh'd
By knowledge gather'd up from day to day;—
Thus had he lived a long and innocent life.
The Scottish church, both on himself and those
With whom from childhood he grew up, had held
The strong hand of her purity; and still
Had watch'd him with an unrelenting eye.
This he remember'd in his riper age
With gratitude, and reverential thoughts.
But by the native vigour of his mind,
By his habitual wanderings out of doors,
By loneliness, and goodness, and kind works,
Whate'er, in docile childhood or in youth,
He had imbibed of fear or darker thought
Was melted all away: so true was this,
That sometimes his religion seem'd to me
Self-taught, as of a dreamer in the woods;
Who to the model of his own pure heart
Shaped his belief as grace divine inspired,
Or human reason dictated with awe.
And surely never did there live on earth
A man of kindlier nature. The rough sports
And teasing ways of children vex'd not him;
Indulgent listener was he to the tongue
Of garrulous age; nor did the sick man's tale,
To his fraternal sympathy address'd,
Obtain reluctant hearing.
Plain his garb;
Such as might suit a rustic sire, prepared
For Sabbath duties; yet he was a man
Whom no one could have pass'd without remark.
Active and nervous was his gait; his limbs
And his whole figure breathed intelligence.
Time had compress'd the freshness of his cheek
Into a narrower circle of deep red,
But had not tamed his eye; that, under brows
Shaggy and gray, had meanings which it brought
From years of youth; which, like a being made
Of many beings, he had wondrous skill
To blend with knowledge of the years to come,
Human, or such as lie beyond the grave.

So was he framed; and such his course of life
Who now, with no appendage but a staff,
The prized memorial of relinquish'd toils,
Upon that cottage bench reposed his limbs,
Screen'd from the sun. Supine the wanderer lay,
His eyes as if in drowsiness half shut,
The shadows of the breezy elms above
Dappling his face. He had not heard the sound
Of my approaching steps, and in the shade
Unnoticed did I stand, some minutes' space.
At length I hail'd him, seeing that his hat
Was moist with water-drops, as if the brim
Had newly scoop'd a running stream. He rose,
And ere our lively greeting into peace
Had settled, "'Tis," said I, "a burning day:
My lips are parch'd with thirst, but you, it seems,
Have somewhere found relief." He, at the word,
Pointing towards a sweet-brier, bade me climb
The fence where that aspiring shrub look'd out
Upon the public way. It was a plot
Of garden ground run wild, its matted weeds
Mark'd with the steps of those, whom, as they pass'd,
The gooseberry trees that shot in long lank slips
Or currants, hanging from their leafless stems
In scanty strings, had tempted to o'erleap
The broken wall. I look'd around, and there,
Where too tall hedge-rows of thick alder boughs
Join'd in a cold, damp nook, espied a well
Shrouded with willow flowers and plumy fern.
My thirst I slaked, and from the cheerless spot
Withdrawing, straightway to the shade return'd
Where sate the old man on the cottage bench;
And, while beside him, with uncover'd head,
I yet was standing, freely to respire,
And cool my temples in the fanning air,
Thus did he speak. "I see around me here
Things which you cannot see: we die, my friend,
Nor we alone, but that which each man loved
And prized in his peculiar nook of earth
Dies with him, or is changed; and very soon
Even of the good is no memorial left.—
The poets, in their elegies and songs
Lamenting the departed, call the groves,
They call upon the hills and streams to mourn,
And senseless rocks; nor idly; for they speak,
In these their invocations, with a voice
Obedient to the strong creative power
Of human passion. Sympathies there are
More tranquil, yet perhaps of kindred birth,
That steal upon the meditative mind,
And grow with thought. Beside yon spring I stood,
And eyed its waters till we seem'd to feel
One sadness, they and I. For them a bond
Of brotherhood is broken: time has been
When, every day, the touch of human hand
Dislodged the natural sleep that binds them up
In mortal stillness; and they minister'd
To human comfort. Stooping down to drink,
Upon the slimy footstone I espied
The useless fragment of a wooden bowl,
Green with the moss of years, and subject only
To the soft handling of the elements:
There let the relic lie—fond thought—vain words!
Forgive them;—never—never did my steps
Approach this door but she who dwelt within
A daughter's welcome gave me, and I loved her
As my own child. O, sir! the good die first,
And they whose hearts are dry as summer dust

Burn to the socket. Many a passenger
Hath bless'd poor Margaret for her gentle looks,
When she upheld the cool refreshment drawn
From that forsaken spring: and no one came
But he was welcome; no one went away
But that it seem'd she loved him. She is dead,
The light extinguish'd of her lonely hut,
The hut itself abandon'd to decay,
And she forgotten in the quiet grave!
"I speak," continued he, "of one whose stock
Of virtues bloom'd beneath this lowly roof.
She was a woman of a steady mind,
Tender and deep in her excess of love,
Not speaking much, pleased rather with the joy
Of her own thoughts: by some especial care
Her temper had been framed, as if to make
A being—who by adding love to peace
Might live on earth a life of happiness.
Her wedded partner lack'd not on his side
The humble worth that satisfied her heart:
Frugal, affectionate, sober, and withal
Keenly industrious. She with pride would tell
That he was often seated at his loom,
In summer, ere the mower was abroad
Among the dewy grass,—in early spring,
Ere the last star had vanish'd.—They who pass'd
At evening, from behind the garden fence
Might hear his busy spade, which he would ply,
After his daily work, until the light
Had fail'd, and every leaf and flower were lost
In the dark hedges. So their days were spent
In peace and comfort; and a pretty boy
Was their best hope,—next to the God in heaven.
"Not twenty years ago, but you I think
Can scarcely bear it now in mind, there came
Two blighting seasons, when the fields were left
With half a harvest. It pleased Heaven to add
A worse affliction in the plague of war;
This happy land was stricken to the heart!
A wanderer then among the cottages
I, with my freight of winter raiment, saw
The hardships of that season; many rich
Sank down, as in a dream, among the poor;
And of the poor did many cease to be,
And their place knew them not. Meanwhile, abridged
Of daily comforts, gladly reconciled
To numerous self-denials, Margaret
Went struggling on through those calamitous years
With cheerful hope, until the second autumn,
When her life's helpmate on a sick-bed lay,
Smitten with perilous fever. In disease
He linger'd long: and when his strength return'd,
He found the little he had stored, to meet
The hour of accident or crippling age,
Was all consumed. A second infant now
Was added to the troubles of a time
Laden, for them and all of their degree,
With care and sorrow: shoals of artisans
From ill requitted labour turn'd adrift,
Sought daily bread from public charity.
They, and their wives and children—happier far
Could they have lived as do the little birds
That peck along the hedge-rows, or the kite
That makes her dwelling on the mountain rocks!
"A sad reverse it was for him who long
Had fill'd with plenty, and possess'd in peace
This lonely cottage. At his door he stood,
And whistled many a snatch of merry tunes
That had no mirth in them; or with his knife
Carved uncouth figures on the heads of sticks—
Then, not less idly, sought, through every nook
In house or garden, any casual work
Of use or ornament; and with a strange,
Amusing, yet uneasy novelty,
He blended, where he might, the various tasks
Of summer, autumn, winter, and the spring.
But this endured not; his good humour soon
Became a weight in which no pleasure was:
And poverty brought on a petted mood
And a sore temper: day by day he drooped,
And he would leave his work—and to the town,
Without an errand, would direct his steps
Or wander here and there among the fields.
One while he would speak lightly of his babes,
And with a cruel tongue: at other times
He toss'd them with a false unnatural joy:
And 'twas a rueful thing to see the looks
Of the poor, innocent children. 'Every smile,'
Said Margaret to me, here beneath these trees,
'Made my heart bleed.'"
At this the wanderer pauses;
And, looking up to those enormous elms,
He said, "'Tis now the hour of deepest noon.—
At this still season of repose and peace,
This hour when all things which are not at rest
Are cheerful; while this multitude of flies
Is filling all the air with melody;
Why should a tear be in an old man's eye?
Why should we thus, with an untoward mind,
And in the weakness of humanity,
From natural wisdom turn our hearts away,
To natural comfort shut our eyes and ears,
And, feeding on disquiet, thus disturb
The calm of nature with our restless thoughts?"

He spake with somewhat of a solemn tone:
But, when he ended, there was in his face
Such easy cheerfulness, a look so mild,
That for a little time it stole away
All recollection, and that simple tale
Pass'd from my mind like a forgotten sound.
Awhile on trivial things we held discourse,
To me soon tasteless. In my own despite,
I thought of that poor woman as of one
Whom I had known and loved. He had rehearsed
Her homely tale with such familiar power,
With such an active countenance, an eye
So busy, that the things of which he spake
Seem'd present; and attention now relax'd,
A heartfelt chillness crept along my veins.
I rose; and, having left the breezy shade,
Stood drinking comfort from the warmer sun,
That had not cheer'd me long—ere, looking round
Upon that tranquil ruin, I return'd,
And begg'd of the old man that, for my sake,
He would resume his story.—
He replied,
"It were a wantonness, and would demand
Severe reproof, if we were men whose hearts
Could hold vain dalliance with the misery
Even of the dead: contented thence to draw

A momentary pleasure, never mark'd
By reason, barren of all future good.
But we have known that there is often found
In mournful thoughts, and always might be found,
A power to virtue friendly: were 't not so,
I am a dreamer among men, indeed,
An idle dreamer! 'tis a common tale,
An ordinary sorrow of man's life,
A tale of silent suffering, hardly clothed
In bodily form.—But without further bidding
I will proceed.

"While thus it fared with them,
To whom this cottage, till those hapless years,
Had been a blessed home, it was my chance
To travel in a country far remote;
And when these lofty elms once more appear'd,
What pleasant expectations lured me on
O'er the flat common!—With quick step I reach'd
The threshold, lifted with light hand the latch;
But, when I enter'd, Margaret look'd at me
A little while; then turn'd her head away
Speechless,—and, sitting down upon a chair,
Wept bitterly. I wist not what to do,
Nor how to speak to her. Poor wretch! at last
She rose from off her seat, and then,—O sir!
I cannot *tell* how she pronounced my name:—
With fervent love, and with a face of grief,
Unutterably helpless, and a look
That seem'd to cling upon me, she inquired
If I had seen her husband. As she spake
A strange surprise and fear came to my heart,
Nor had I power to answer ere she told
That he had disappear'd—not two months gone.
He left his house: two wretched days had past,
And on the third, as wistfully she raised
Her head from off her pillow, to look forth,
Like one in trouble, for returning light,
Within her chamber casement she espied
A folded paper, lying as if placed
To meet her waking eyes. This tremblingly
She open'd—found no writing, but beheld
Pieces of money carefully enclosed,
Silver and gold.—'I shudder'd at the sight,'
Said Margaret, 'for I knew it was his hand
Which placed it there: and ere that day was ended,
That long and anxious day! I learn'd from one
Sent hither by my husband to impart
The heavy news,—that he had join'd a troop
Of soldiers, going to a distant land.
He left me thus—he could not gather heart
To take a farewell of me; for he fear'd
That I should follow with my babes, and sink
Beneath the misery of that wandering life.'

"This tale did Margaret tell with many tears:
And, when she ended, I had little power
To give her comfort, and was glad to take
Such words of hope from her own mouth as served
To cheer us both:—but long we had not talk'd
Ere we built up a pile of better thoughts
And with a brighter eye she look'd around
As if she had been shedding tears of joy.
We parted.—'Twas the time of early spring;
I left her busy with her garden tools;
And well remember, o'er that fence she look'd,
And, while I paced along the footway path,
Call'd out, and sent a blessing after me,
With tender cheerfulness; and with a voice
That seem'd the very sound of happy thoughts.

"I roved o'er many a hill and many a dale,
With my accustom'd load; in heat and cold,
Through many a wood, and many an open ground
In sunshine and in shade, in wet and fair,
Drooping or blithe of heart, as might befall;
My best companions now the driving winds,
And now the 'trotting brooks' and whispering trees,
And now the music of my own sad steps,
With many a shortlived thought that pass'd between,
And disappear'd.—I journey'd back this way,
When, in the warmth of midsummer, the wheat
Was yellow: and the soft and bladed grass,
Springing afresh, had o'er the hay-field spread
Its tender verdure. At the door arrived,
I found that she was absent. In the shade,
Where now we sit, I waited her return.
Her cottage, then a cheerful object, wore
Its customary look,—only, it seem'd,
The honeysuckle, crowding round the porch,
Hung down in heavier tufts: and that bright weed,
The yellow stonecrop, suffer'd to take root
Along the window's edge, profusely grew,
Blinding the lower panes. I turn'd aside,
And stroll'd into her garden. It appear'd
To lag behind the season, and had lost
Its pride of neatness. Daisy flowers and thrift
Had broken their trim lines, and straggled o'er
The paths they used to deck:—carnations, once
Prized for surpassing beauty, and no less
For the peculiar pains they had required,
Declined their languid heads, wanting support.
The cumbrous bindweed, with its wreaths and bells,
Had twined about her two small rows of pease,
And dragg'd them to the earth.—Ere this an hour
Was wasted.—Back I turn'd my restless steps;
A stranger pass'd; and, guessing whom I sought,
He said that she was used to ramble far.—
The sun was sinking in the west; and now
I sate with sad impatience. From within
Her solitary infant cried aloud;
Then, like a blast that dies away self-still'd,
The voice was silent. From the bench I rose;
But neither could divert nor soothe my thoughts.
The spot, though fair, was very desolate—
The longer I remain'd more desolate
And, looking round me, now I first observed
The corner-stones, on either side the porch,
With dull red stains discolour'd and stuck o'er
With tufts and hairs of wool, as if the sheep
That fed upon the common, thither came
Familiarly; and found a couching-place
Even at her threshold. Deeper shadows fell
From these tall elms;—the cottage clock struck eight:—
I turn'd, and saw her distant a few steps.
Her face was pale and thin—her figure, too,
Was changed. As she unlock'd the door, she said,
'It grieves me you have waited here so long,
But, in good truth, I've wander'd much of late,
And, sometimes—to my shame I speak—have need
Of my best prayers to bring me back again.'
While on the board she spread our evening meal,

She told me—interrupting not the work
Which gave employment to her listless hands—
That she had parted with her elder child;
To a kind master on a distant farm
Now happily apprenticed.—'I perceive
You look at me, and you have cause; to-day
I have been travelling far; and many days
About the fields I wander, knowing this
Only, that what I seek I cannot find;
And so I waste my time: for I am changed;
And to myself,' said she, 'have done much wrong
And to this helpless infant. I have slept
Weeping, and weeping have I waked; my tears
Have flow'd as if my body were not such
As others are; and I could never die.
But I am now in mind and in my heart
More easy, and I hope,' said she, 'that God
Will give me patience to endure the things
Which I behold at home.' It would have grieved
Your very soul to see her; sir, I feel
The story linger in my heart; I fear
'Tis long and tedious; but my spirit clings
To that poor woman:—so familiarly
Do I perceive her manner, and her look
And presence, and so deeply do I feel
Her goodness, that, not seldom, in my walks
A momentary trance comes over me;
And to myself I seem to muse on one
By sorrow laid asleep:—or borne away,
A human being destined to awake
To human life, or something very near
To human life, when he shall come again
For whom she suffer'd. Yes, it would have grieved
Your very soul to see her: evermore
Her eyelids droop'd, her eyes were downward cast;
And, when she at her table gave me food,
She did not look at me. Her voice was low,
Her body was subdued. In every act
Pertaining to her house affairs, appear'd
The careless stillness of a thinking mind
Self occupied; to which all outward things
Are like an idle matter. Still she sigh'd,
But yet no motion of the breast was seen,
No heaving of the heart. While by the fire
We sate together, sighs came on my ear,
I knew not how, and hardly whence they came.
"Ere my departure, to her care I gave,
For her son's use, some tokens of regard,
Which with a look of welcome she received;
And I exhorted her to place her trust
In God's good love, and seek his help by prayer.
I took my staff, and when I kiss'd her babe
The tears stood in her eyes. I left her then
With the best hope and comfort I could give;
She thank'd me for my wish;—but for my hope
Methought, she did not thank me.
"I return'd,
And took my rounds along this road again
Ere on its sunny bank the primrose flower
Peep'd forth; to give an earnest of the spring.
I found her sad and drooping; she had learn'd
No tidings of her husband; if he lived,
She knew not that he lived; if he were dead,
She knew not he was dead. She seem'd the same
In person and appearance; but her house
Bespake a sleepy hand of negligence;
The floor was neither dry nor neat, the hearth
Was comfortless, and her small lot of books,
Which in the cottage window, heretofore
Had been piled up against the corner panes
In seemly order, now, with straggling leaves
Lay scatter'd here and there, open or shut,
As they had chanced to fall. Her infant babe
Had from its mother caught the trick of grief,
And sigh'd among its playthings. Once again
I turn'd towards the garden gate, and saw,
More plainly still, that poverty and grief
Were now come nearer to her: weeds defaced
The harden'd soil, and knots of wither'd grass:
No ridges there appear'd of clear, black mould,
No winter greenness; of her herbs and flowers,
It seem'd the better part were gnaw'd away
Or trampled into earth; a chain of straw,
Which had been twined about the slender stem
Of a young apple tree, lay at its root,
The bark was nibbled round by truant sheep.
Margaret stood near, her infant in her arms,
And noting that my eye was on the tree,
She said, 'I fear it will be dead and gone
Ere Robert come again.' Towards the house
Together we return'd; and she inquired
If I had any hope:—but for her babe
And for her little orphan boy, she said,
She had no wish to live, that she must die
Of sorrow. Yet I saw the idle loom
Still in its place; his Sunday garments hung
Upon the selfsame nail; his very staff
Stood undisturb'd behind the door. And when,
In bleak December, I retraced this way,
She told me that her little babe was dead,
And she was left alone. She now, released
From her maternal cares, had taken up
Th' employment common through these wilds, and gain'd,
By spinning hemp, a pittance for herself;
And for this end had hired a neighbour's boy
To give her needful help. That very time
Most willingly she put her work aside,
And walk'd with me along the miry road,
Heedless how far; and in such piteous sort
That any heart had ached to hear her, begg'd
That, wheresoe'er I went, I still would ask
For him whom she had lost. We parted then—
Our final parting; for from that time forth
Did many seasons pass ere I return'd
Into this track again.
"Nine tedious years;
From their first separation, nine long years,
She linger'd in unquiet widowhood;
A wife and widow. Needs must it have been
A sore heart-wasting! I have heard, my friend,
That in yon arbour oftentimes she sate
Alone, through half the vacant Sabbath day
And, if a dog pass'd by, she still would quit
The shade, and look abroad. On this old bench
For hours she sate; and evermore her eye
Was busy in the distance, shaping things
That made her heart beat quick. You see that path
Now faint,—the grass has crept o'er its gray line
There, to and fro, she paced through many a day
Of the warm summer, from a belt of hemp
That girt her waist, spinning the long-drawn thread

With backward steps. Yet ever as there pass'd
A man whose garments show'd the soldier's red,
Or crippled mendicant in sailor's garb,
The little child who sate to turn the wheel
Ceased from his task; and she with faltering voice
Made many a fond inquiry; and when they,
Whose presence gave no comfort, were gone by,
Her heart was still more sad. And by yon gate,
That bars the traveller's road, she often stood,
And when a stranger horseman came, the latch
Would lift, and in his face look wistfully:
Most happy, if, from aught discovered there
Of tender feeling, she might dare repeat
The same sad question. Meanwhile her poor hut
Sank to decay: for he was gone, whose hand,
At the first nipping of October frost,
Closed up each chink, and with fresh bands of straw
Checker'd the green-grown thatch. And so she lived
Through the long winter, reckless and alone;
Until the house by frost, and thaw, and rain,
Was sapp'd; and while she slept, the nightly damps
Did chill her breast: and in the stormy day
Her tatter'd clothes were ruffled by the wind;
E'en at the side of her own fire. Yet still
She loved this wretched spot, nor would for worlds
Have parted hence: and still that length of road,
And this rude bench, one torturing hope endear'd,
Fast rooted at her heart: and here, my friend,
In sickness she remain'd; and here she died,
Last human tenant of these ruin'd walls."

The old man ceased: he saw that I was moved;
From that low bench, rising instinctively
I turn'd aside in weakness, nor had power
To thank him for the tale which he had told.
I stood, and leaning o'er the garden wall,
Review'd that woman's sufferings; and it seem'd
To comfort me while with a brother's love
I bless'd her—in the impotence of grief.
At length towards the cottage I return'd
Fondly,—and traced, with interest more mild,
That secret spirit of humanity
Which, 'mid the calm, oblivious tendencies
Of nature, 'mid her plants, and weeds, and flowers,
And silent overgrowings, still survived.
The old man, noting this, resumed, and said,
"My friend! enough to sorrow you have given,
The purposes of wisdom ask no more;
Be wise and cheerful; and no longer read
The forms of things with an unworthy eye.
She sleeps in the calm earth, and peace is here.
I well remember that those very plumes,
Those weeds, and the high speargrass on that wall,
By mist and silent rain-drops silver'd o'er,
As once I pass'd, did to my heart convey
So still an image of tranquillity,
So calm and still, and look'd so beautiful
Amid th' uneasy thoughts which fill'd my mind,
That what we feel of sorrow and despair
From ruin and from change, and all the grief
The passing shows of being leave behind,
Appear'd an idle dream, that could not live
Where meditation was. I turn'd away,
And walk'd along my road in happiness."

He ceased. Ere long the sun declining shot
A slant and mellow radiance, which began
To fall upon us, while, beneath the trees,
We sate on that low bench: and now we felt,
Admonish'd thus, the sweet hour coming on.
A linnet warbled from those lofty elms,
A thrush sang loud, and other melodies,
At distance heard, peopled the milder air.
The old man rose, and, with a sprightly mien
Of hopeful preparation, grasp'd his staff:
Together casting then a farewell look
Upon those silent walls, we left the shade;
And, ere the stars were visible, had reach'd
A village inn,—our evening resting place.

BOOK II.

THE SOLITARY.

ARGUMENT.

The author describes his travels with the wanderer, whose character is further illustrated. Morning scene, and view of a village wake. Wanderer's account of a friend whom he purposes to visit. View, from an eminence, of the valley which his friend had chosen for his retreat. Feelings of the author at the sight of it. Sound of singing from below. A funeral procession. Descent into the valley. Observations drawn from the wanderer at sight of a book accidentally discovered in a recess in the valley. Meeting with the wanderer's friend, the solitary. Wanderer's description of the mode of burial in this mountainous district. Solitary contrasts with this, that of the individual carried a few minutes before from the cottage. Brief conversation. The cottage entered. Description of the solitary's apartment. Repast there. View from the window of two mountain summits and the solitary's description of the companionship they afford him. Account of the departed inmate of the cottage. Description of a grand spectacle upon the mountains, with its effect upon the solitary's mind. Quit the house.

In days of yore how fortunately fared
The minstrel! wandering on from hall to hall,
Baronial court or royal! cheer'd with gifts
Munificent, and love, and ladies' praise;
Now meeting on his road an armed knight
Now resting with a pilgrim by the side
Of a clear brook;—beneath an abbey's roof
One evening sumptuously lodged; the next
Humbly in a religious hospital;
Or with some merry outlaws of the wood;
Or haply shrouded in a hermit's cell.
Him, sleeping or awake, the robber spared;
He walk'd—protected from the sword of war
By virtue of that sacred instrument
His harp, suspended at the traveller's side:
His dear companion wheresoe'er he went
Opening from land to land an easy way
By melody, and by the charm of verse.
Yet not the noblest of that honour'd race
Drew happier, loftier, more impassion'd thoughts
From his long journeyings and eventful life,
Than this obscure itinerant had skill
To gather, ranging through the tamer ground
Of these our unimaginative days;
Both while he trod the earth in humblest guise
Accoutred with his burden and his staff;
And now, when free to move with lighter pace.

What wonder, then, if I, whose favourite school

Hath been the fields, the roads, and rural lanes,
Look'd on this guide with reverential love?
Each with the other pleased, we now pursued
Our journey—beneath favourable skies.
Turn wheresoe'er we would, he was a light
Unfailing: not a hamlet could we pass,
Rarely a house, that did not yield to him
Remembrances: or from his tongue call forth
Some way-beguiling tale. Nor less regard
Accompanied those strains of apt discourse,
Which nature's various objects might inspire;
And in the silence of his face I read
His overflowing spirit. Birds and beasts,
And the mute fish that glances in the stream,
And harmless reptile coiling in the sun,
And gorgeous insect hovering in the air,
The fowl domestic, and the household dog,
In his capacious mind—he loved them all:
Their rights acknowledging he felt for all.
Oft was occasion given me to perceive
How the calm pleasures of the pasturing herd
To happy contemplation sooth'd his walk;
How the poor brute's condition, forced to run
Its course of suffering in the public road,
Sad contrast! all too often smote his heart
With unavailing pity. Rich in love
And sweet humanity, he was, himself,
To the degree that he desired, beloved.
Greetings and smiles we met with all day long
From faces that he knew; we took our seats
By many a cottage hearth, where he received
The welcome of an inmate come from far.
Nor was he loath to enter ragged huts,
Huts where his charity was blest; his voice
Heard as the voice of an experienced friend.
And, sometimes, where the poor man held dispute
With his own mind, unable to subdue
Impatience through inaptness to perceive
General distress in his particular lot;
Or cherishing resentment, or in vain
Struggling against it, with a soul perplex'd,
And finding in herself no steady power
To draw the line of comfort that divides
Calamity, the chastisement of heaven,
From the injustice of our brother men;
To him appeal was made as to a judge!
Who, with an understanding heart, allay'd
The perturbation; listen'd to the plea;
Resolved the dubious point; and sentence gave
So grounded, so applied, that it was heard
With soften'd spirit—even when it condemn'd.
Such intercourse I witness'd, while we roved,
Now as his choice directed, now as mine;
Or both, with equal readiness of will,
Our course submitting to the changeful breeze
Of accident. But when the rising sun
Had three times call'd us to renew our walk,
My fellow traveller, with earnest voice,
As if the thought were but a moment old,
Claim'd absolute dominion for the day.
We started—and he led towards the hills
Up through an ample vale, with higher hills
Before us, mountains stern and desolate;
But, in the majesty of distance, now
Set off, and to our ken appearing fair
Of aspect, with aërial softness clad,
And beautified with morning's purple beams.
The wealthy, the luxurious, by the stress
Of business roused, or pleasure, ere their time,
May roll in chariots, or provoke the hoofs
Of the fleet coursers they bestride, to raise
From earth the dust of morning, slow to rise;
And they, if blest with health and hearts at ease,
Shall lack not their enjoyment:—but how faint
Compared with ours! who, pacing side by side
Could, with an eye of leisure, look on all
That we beheld; and lend the listening sense
To every grateful sound of earth and air;
Pausing at will—our spirits braced, our thoughts
Pleasant as roses in the thickets blown,
And pure as dew bathing their crimson leaves.
Mount slowly, sun! that we may journey long,
By this dark hill protected from thy beams!
Such is the summer pilgrim's frequent wish;
But quickly from among our morning thoughts
'Twas chased away: for, toward the western side
Of the broad vale, casting a casual glance,
We saw a throng of people;—wherefore met?
Blithe notes of music, suddenly let loose
On the thrill'd ear, and flags uprising, yield
Prompt answer: they proclaim the annual wake,
Which the bright season favours.—Tabor and pipe
In purpose join to hasten and reprove
The laggard rustic; and repay with boon
Of merriment a party-colour'd knot,
Already form'd upon the village green.
Beyond the limits of the shadow cast
By the broad hill, glisten'd upon our sight
That gay assemblage. Round them and above
Glitter, with dark recesses interposed,
Casement, and cottage-roof, and stems of trees
Half-veil'd in vapory cloud, the silver steam
Of dews fast melting on their leafy boughs
By the strong sunbeams smitten. Like a mast
Of gold, the maypole shines; as if the rays
Of morning, aided by exhaling dew,
With gladsome influence could reanimate
The faded garlands dangling from its sides.
Said I, "the music and the sprightly scene
Invite us; shall we quit our road, and join
These festive matins?"—He replied, "not loath
Here would I linger, and with you partake,
Not one hour merely, but till evening's close
The simple pastimes of the day and place.
By the fleet racers, ere the sun be set,
The turf of yon large pasture will be skimm'd;
There, too, the lusty wrestlers shall contend:
But know we not that he, who intermits
Th' appointed task and duties of the day,
Untunes full oft the pleasures of the day;
Checking the finer spirits that refuse
To flow, when purposes are lightly changed?
We must proceed—a length of journey yet
Remains untraced." Then, pointing with his staff
Raised toward those craggy summits, his intent
He thus imparted.
"In a spot that lies
Among yon mountain fastnesses conceal'd
You will receive, before the hour of noon,
Good recompense, I hope, for this day's toil—
From sight of one who lives secluded there

Lonesome and lost: of whom, and whose past life,
(Not to forestall such knowledge as may be
More faithfully collected from himself,)
This brief communication shall suffice.
"Though now sojourning there, he, like myself,
Sprang from a stock of lowly parentage
Among the wilds of Scotland, in a tract
Where many a shelter'd and well-tended plant,
Bears, on the humblest ground of social life,
Blossoms of piety and innocence.
Such grateful promises his youth display'd:
And, having shown in study forward zeal,
He to the ministry was duly call'd;
And straight incited by a curious mind
Fill'd with vague hopes, he undertook the charge
Of chaplain to a military troop,
Cheer'd by the Highland bagpipe, as they march'd
In plaided vest,—his fellow countrymen.
This office filling, yet by native power
And force of native inclination, made
An intellectual ruler in the haunts
Of social vanity—he walk'd the world,
Gay, and affecting graceful gayety;
Lax, buoyant—less a pastor with his flock
Than a soldier among soldiers—lived and roam'd
Where fortune led:—and fortune, who oft proves
The careless wanderer's friend, to him made known
A blooming lady—a conspicuous flower,
Admired for beauty, for her sweetness praised;
Whom he had sensibility to love,
Ambition to attempt, and skill to win.
"For this fair bride, most rich in gifts of mind,
Nor sparingly endow'd with worldly wealth
His office he relinquish'd; and retired
From the world's notice to a rural home.
Youth's season yet with him was scarcely past,
And she was in youth's prime. How full their joy,
How free their love! nor did that love decay,
Nor joy abate, till, pitiable doom!
In the short course of one undreaded year
Death blasted all.—Death suddenly o'erthrew
Two lovely children—all that they possess'd!
The mother follow'd:—miserably bare
The one survivor stood; he wept, he pray'd
For his dismissal; day and night, compell'd
By pain to turn his thoughts towards the grave,
And face the regions of eternity.
And uncomplaining apathy displaced
This anguish; and, indifferent to delight,
To aim and purpose, he consumed his days,
To private interest dead, and public care.
So lived he; so he might have died.
"But now,
To the wide world's astonishment, appear'd
A glorious opening, the unlook'd for dawn,
That promised everlasting joy to France!
Her voice of social transport reach'd e'en him!
He broke from his contracted bounds, repair'd
To the great city, an emporium then
Of golden expectations, and receiving
Freights every day from a new world of hope.
Thither his popular talents he transferr'd
And, from the pulpit, zealously maintain'd
The cause of Christ and civil liberty,
As one, and moving to one glorious end.
Intoxicating service! I might say
A happy service; for he was sincere
As vanity and fondness for applause,
And new and shapeless wishes, would allow.
"That righteous cause (such power hath freedom) bound,
For one hostility, in friendly league
Ethereal natures and the worst of slaves;
Was served by rival advocates that came
From regions opposite as heaven and hell,
One courage seem'd to animate them all:
And, from the dazzling conquests daily gain'd
By their united efforts, there arose
A proud and most presumptuous confidence
In the transcendent wisdom of the age,
And her discernment; not alone in rights,
And in the origin and bounds of power
Social and temporal; but in laws divine,
Deduced by reason, or to faith reveal'd.
An overweening trust was raised; and fear
Cast out, alike of person and of thing.
Plague from this union spread, whose subtle bane
The strongest did not easily escape:
And he, what wonder! took a mortal taint.
How shall I trace the change, how bear to tell
That he broke faith with them whom he had laid
In earth's dark chambers, with a Christian's hope!
An infidel contempt of holy writ
Stole by degrees upon his mind; and hence
Life, like that Roman Janus, double-faced;
Vilest hypocrisy, the laughing, gay
Hypocrisy, not leagued with fear, but pride.
Smooth words he had to wheedle simple souls
But, for disciples of the inner school,
Old freedom was old servitude, and they
The wisest whose opinions stoop'd the least
To known restraints: and who most boldly drew
Hopeful prognostications from a creed,
That, in the light of false philosophy,
Spread like a halo round a misty moon,
Widening its circle as the storms advance.
"His sacred function was at length renounced;
And every day and every place enjoy'd
Th' unshackled layman's natural liberty;
Speech, manners, morals, all without disguise.
I do not wish to wrong him;—though the course
Of private life licentiously display'd
Unhallow'd actions—planted like a crown
Upon the insolent, aspiring brow
Of spurious notions—worn as open signs
Of prejudice subdued—he still retain'd,
'Mid such abasement, what he had received
From nature—an intense and glowing mind.
Wherefore, when humbled liberty grew weak,
And mortal sickness on her face appear'd,
He colour'd objects to his own desire
As with a lover's passion. Yet his moods
Of pain were keen as those of better men,
Nay keener—as his fortitude was less,
And he continued, when worse days were come,
To deal about his sparkling eloquence,
Struggling against the strange reverse with zeal
That show'd like happiness: but, in despite
Of all this outside bravery, within,
He neither felt encouragement nor hope:
For moral dignity, and strength of mind,

Were wanting; and simplicity of life;
And reverence for himself; and, last and best,
Confiding thoughts, through love and fear of him
Before whose sight the troubles of this world
Are vain as billows in a tossing sea.
"The glory of the times fading away,
The splendour, which had given a festal air
To self-importance, hallow'd it, and veil'd
From his own sight,—this gone, he forfeited
All joy in human nature; was consumed,
And vex'd, and chafed, by levity and scorn,
And fruitless indignation; gall'd by pride;
Made desperate by contempt of men who throve
Before his sight in power or fame, and won,
Without desert, what he desired; weak men,
Too weak e'en for his envy or his hate!
Tormented thus, after a wandering course
Of discontent, and inwardly opprest
With malady—in part, I fear, provoked
By weariness of life, he fix'd his home,
Or, rather say, sate down by very chance,
Among these rugged hills; where now he dwells,
And wastes the sad remainder of his hours
In self-indulging spleen, that doth not want
Its own voluptuousness; on this resolved,
With this content, that he will live and die
Forgotten,—at safe distance from a 'world
Not moving to his mind.'"
These serious words
Closed the preparatory notices
That served my fellow traveller to beguile
The way, while we advanced up that wide vale.
Diverging now (as if his quest had been
Some secret of the mountains, cavern, fall
Of water—or some boastful eminence,
Renown'd for splendid prospect far and wide)
We scaled, without a track to ease our steps,
A steep ascent; and reach'd a dreary plain,
With a tumultuous waste of huge hill tops
Before us; savage region! which I paced
Dispirited: when, all at once, behold!
Beneath our feet, a little lowly vale,
A lowly vale, and yet uplifted high
Among the mountains; even as if the spot
Had been, from eldest time by wish of theirs,
So placed, to be shut out from all the world!
Urn-like it was in shape, deep as an urn;
With rocks encompass'd, save that to the south
Was one small opening, where a heath-clad ridge
Supplied a boundary less abrupt and close:
A quiet, treeless nook, with two green fields,
A liquid pool that glitter'd in the sun,
And one bare dwelling; one abode, no more!
It seem'd the home of poverty and toil,
Though not of want: the little fields, made green
By husbandry of many thrifty years,
Paid cheerful tribute to the moorland house.
There crows the cock, single in his domain:
The small birds find in spring no thicket there
To shroud them; only from the neighbouring vales
The cuckoo, straggling up to the hill tops,
Shouteth faint tidings of some gladder place.
Ah! what a sweet recess, thought I, is here!
Instantly throwing down my limbs at ease
Upon a bed of heath;—full many a spot
Of hidden beauty have I chanced t' espy
Among the mountains; never one like this;
So lonesome, and so perfectly secure:
Not melancholy—no, for it is green,
And bright, and fertile, furnish'd in itself
With the few needful things that life requires.
In rugged arms how soft it seems to lie,
How tenderly protected! Far and near
We have an image of the pristine earth,
The planet in its nakedness; were this
Man's only dwelling, sole appointed seat,
First, last, and single in the breathing world,
It could not be more quiet: peace is here
Or nowhere; days unruffled by the gale
Of public news or private; years that pass
Forgetfully; uncall'd upon to pay
The common penalties of mortal life,
Sickness or accident, or grief, or pain.
On these and kindred thoughts intent I lay
In silence musing by my comrade's side,
He also silent: when from out the heart
Of that profound abyss a solemn voice,
Or several voices in one solemn sound,
Was heard—ascending: mournful, deep, and slow
The cadence, as of psalms—a funeral dirge;
We listen'd, looking down upon the hut,
But seeing no one: meanwhile from below
The strain continued, spiritual as before.
And now distinctly could I recognise
These words:—"Shall in the grave thy love be known,
In death thy faithfulness?"—"God rest his soul!"
The wanderer cried, abruptly breaking silence,—
"He is departed, and finds peace at last!"
This scarcely spoken, and those holy strains
Not ceasing, forth appear'd in view a band
Of rustic persons, from behind the hut
Bearing a coffin in the midst, with which
They shaped their course along the sloping side
Of that small valley; singing as they moved;
A sober company and few, the men
Bareheaded, and all decently attired!
Some steps when they had thus advanced, the dirge
Ended; and, from the stillness that ensued
Recovering, to my friend I said, "You spake,
Methought, with apprehension that these rites
Are paid to him upon whose shy retreat
This day we purposed to intrude."—"I did so,
But let us hence, that we may learn the truth:
Perhaps it is not he but some one else
For whom this pious service is perform'd;
Some other tenant of the solitude."
So, to a steep and difficult descent
Trusting ourselves, we wound from crag to crag,
Where passage could be won; and, as the last
Of the mute train, upon the heathy top
Of that off-sloping outlet, disappear'd,
I, more impatient in my downward course,
Had landed upon easy ground; and there
Stood waiting for my comrade. When behold
An object that enticed my steps aside!
A narrow, winding entry open'd out
Into a platform—that lay, sheepfold wise,
Enclosed between an upright mass of rock
And one old moss-grown wall;—a cool recess
And fanciful! For, where the rock and wall
Met in an angle, hung a penthouse, framed,

By thrusting two rude staves into the wall
And overlaying them with mountain sods;
To weather-fend a little turf-built seat
Whereon a full grown man might rest, nor dread
The burning sunshine, or a transient shower;
But the whole plainly wrought by children's hands!
Whose skill had throng'd the floor with a proud show
Of baby-houses, curiously arranged;
Nor wanting ornaments of walks between,
With mimic trees inserted in the turf,
And gardens interposed. Pleased with the sight,
I could not choose but beckon to my guide,
Who, entering, round him threw a careless glance,
Impatient to pass on, when I exclaim'd,
"Lo! what is here?" and stooping down, drew forth
A book, that, in the midst of stones and moss
And wreck of party-colour'd earthenware
Aptly disposed, had lent its help to raise
One of those petty structures. "Gracious heaven!"
The wanderer cried, "it cannot but be his,
And he is gone?" The book, which in my hand
Had open'd of itself, (for it was swoln
With searching damp, and seemingly had lain
To the injurious elements exposed
From week to week,) I found to be a work
In the French tongue, a novel of Voltaire,
His famous optimist. "Unhappy man!"
Exclaim'd my friend: "here then has been to him
Retreat within retreat, a sheltering place
Within how deep a shelter! He had fits,
E'en to the last, of genuine tenderness,
And loved the haunts of children here, no doubt.
Pleasing and pleased, he shared their simple sports,
Or sate companionless; and here the book,
Left and forgotten in his careless way,
Must by the cottage children have been found:
Heaven bless them, and their inconsiderate work!
To what odd purpose have the darlings turn'd
This sad memorial of their hapless friend!"
"Me," said I, "most doth it surprise to find
Such book in such a place!"—"A book it is,"
He answered, "to the person suited well,
Though little suited to surrounding things;
'Tis strange, I grant; and stranger still had been
To see the man who own'd it, dwelling here,
With one poor shepherd, far from all the world!
Now, if our errand hath been thrown away,
As from these intimations I forbode,
Grieved shall I be—less for my sake than yours;
And least of all for him who is no more."
By this, the book was in the old man's hand;
And he continued, glancing on the leaves
An eye of scorn. "The lover," said he, "doom'd
To love when hope hath fail'd him—whom no depth
Of privacy is deep enough to hide,
Hath yet his bracelet or his lock of hair,
And that is joy to him. When change of times
Hath summon'd kings to scaffolds, do but give
The faithful servant, who must hide his head
Henceforth in whatsoever nook he may,
A kerchief sprinkled with his master's blood,
And he too hath his comforter. How poor,
Beyond all poverty how destitute,
Must that man have been left, who, hither driven,
Flying or seeking, could yet bring with him
No dearer relic, and no better stay,
Than this dull product of a scoffer's pen,
Impure conceits discharging from a heart
Harden'd by impious pride! I did not fear
To tax you with this journey;"—mildly said
My venerable friend, as forth we stepp'd
Into the presence of the cheerful light—
"For I have knowledge that you do not shrink
From moving spectacles;—but let us on."
So speaking, on he went, and at the word
I follow'd, till he made a sudden stand:
For full in view, approaching through a gate
That open'd from the enclosure of green fields
Into the rough uncultivated ground,
Behold the man whom he had fancied dead!
I knew, from his deportment, mien, and dress,
That it could be no other; a pale face,
A tall and meagre person, in a garb
Not rustic, dull and faded like himself!
He saw us not, though distant but few steps;
For he was busy, dealing, from a store
Upon a broad leaf carried, choicest strings
Of red, ripe currants; gift by which he strove,
With intermixture of endearing words,
To soothe a child, who walk'd beside him, weeping
As if disconsolate.—"They to the grave
Are bearing him, my little one," he said,
"To the dark pit; but he will feel no pain;
His body is at rest, his soul in heaven."
More might have follow'd—but my honour'd friend
Broke in upon the speaker with a frank
And cordial greeting.—Vivid was the light
That flash'd and sparkled from the other's eyes:
He was all fire: the sickness from his face
Pass'd like a fancy that is swept away;
Hands join'd he with his visitant,—a grasp,
An eager grasp; and many moments' space,
When the first glow of pleasure was no more,
And much of what had vanish'd was return'd,
An amicable smile retain'd the life
Which it had unexpectedly received,
Upon his hollow cheek. "How kind," he said,
"Nor could your coming have been better timed:
For this, you see, is in our narrow world
A day of sorrow. I have here a charge"—
And, speaking thus, he patted tenderly
The sunburnt forehead of the weeping child—
"A little mourner, whom it is my task
To comfort;—but how came ye?—if yon track
(Which doth at once befriend us and betray)
Conducted hither your most welcome feet,
Ye could not miss the funeral train—they yet
Have scarcely disappear'd." "This blooming child,"
Said the old man, "is of an age to weep
At any grave or solemn spectacle,
Inly distress'd or overpower'd with awe,
He knows not why;—but he, perchance, this day
Is shedding orphan's tears; and you yourself
Must have sustain'd a loss."—"The hand of death,"
He answer'd, "has been here; but could not well
Have fall'n more lightly, if it had not fall'n
Upon myself."—The other left these words
Unnoticed, thus continuing.—
"From yon crag
Down whose steep sides we dropp'd into the vale,

We heard the hymn they sang—a solemn sound
Heard anywhere, but in a place like this
'Tis more than human! Many precious rites
And customs of our rural ancestry
Are gone, or stealing from us; this, I hope,
Will last for ever. Often have I stopp'd
When on my way, I could not choose but stop,
So much I felt the awfulness of life,
In that one moment when the corse is lifted
In silence, with a hush of decency,
Then from the threshold moves with song of peace,
And confidential yearnings, to its home,
Its final home in earth. What traveller—who—
(How far soe'er a stranger) does not own
The bond of brotherhood, when he sees them go,
A mute procession on the houseless road;
Or passing by some single tenement
Or cluster'd dwellings, where again they raise
The monitory voice? But most of all
It touches, it confirms, and elevates,
Then, when the body, soon to be consign'd
Ashes to ashes, dust bequeath'd to dust,
Is raised from the church aisle, and forward borne
Upon the shoulders of the next in love,
The nearest in affection or in blood;
Yea, by the very mourners who had knelt
Beside the coffin, resting on its lid
In silent grief their unuplifted heads,
And heard meanwhile the psalmist's mournful
plaint,
And that most awful scripture which declares
We shall not sleep, but we shall all be changed!—
Have I not seen?—Ye likewise may have seen—
Son, husband, brothers—brothers side by side,
And son and father also side by side,
Rise from that posture;—and in concert move,
On the green turf following the vested priest,
Four dear supporters of one senseless weight,
From which they do not shrink, and under which
They faint not, but advance toward the grave
Step after step—together, with their firm
Unhidden faces; he that suffers most,
He outwardly, and inwardly perhaps,
The most serene, with most undaunted eye!
O! blest are they who live and die like these,
Loved with such love, and with such sorrow
mourn'd!"
"That poor man taken hence to-day," replied
The solitary, with a faint, sarcastic smile
Which did not please me, "must be deem'd, I fear,
Of the unblest; for he will surely sink
Into his mother earth without such pomp
Of grief, depart without occasion given
By him for such array of fortitude.
Full seventy winters hath he lived, and mark!
This simple child will mourn his one short hour
And I shall miss him; scanty tribute! yet,
This wanting, he would leave the sight of men,
If love were his sole claim upon their care,
Like a ripe date which in the desert falls
Without a hand to gather it." At this
I interposed, though loath to speak, and said,
"Can it be thus among so small a band
As ye must needs be here? in such a place
I would not willingly, methinks, lose sight
Of a departing cloud."—"'Twas not for love,"
Answer'd the sick man with a careless voice—
"That I came hither; neither have I found
Among associates who have power of speech,
Nor in such other converse as is here,
Temptation so prevailing as to change
That mood, or undermine my first resolve."—
Then speaking in like careless sort, he said
To my benign companion,—"Pity 'tis
That fortune did not guide you to this house
A few days earlier; then would you have seen
What stuff the dwellers in a solitude,
That seems by nature hollow'd out to be
The seat and bosom of pure innocence,
Are made of; an ungracious matter this!
Which, for truth's sake, yet in remembrance too
Of past discussions with this zealous friend
And advocate of humble life, I now
Will force upon his notice; undeterr'd
By the example of his own pure course,
And that respect and deference which a soul
May fairly claim, by niggard age enrich'd
In what she values most—the love of God
And his frail creature, man:—but ye shall hear.
I talk—and ye are standing in the sun
Without refreshment!"
Saying this, he led
Towards the cottage;—homely was the spot;
And, to my feeling, ere we reach'd the door,
Had almost a forbidding nakedness;
Less fair, I grant, e'en painfully less fair,
Than it appear'd when from the beetling rock
We had look'd down upon it. All within,
As left by the departed company,
Was silent; and the solitary clock
Tick'd, as I thought, with melancholy sound.—
Following our guide, we clomb the cottage stairs
And reach'd a small apartment dark and low,
Which was no sooner enter'd than our host
Said gayly, "This is my domain, my cell,
My hermitage, my cabin,—what you will—
I love it better than a snail his house.
But now ye shall be feasted with our best."
So, with more ardour than an unripe girl
Left one day mistress of her mother's stores,
He went about his hospitable task.
My eyes were busy, and my thoughts no less,
And pleased I look'd upon my gray-hair'd friend,
As if to thank him: he return'd that look,
Cheer'd, plainly, and yet serious. What a wreck
Had we around us! scatter'd was the floor,
And, in like sort, chair, window-seat, and shelf,
With books, maps, fossils, wither'd plants and
flowers,
And tufts of mountain moss: mechanic tools
Lay intermix'd with scraps of paper,—some
Scribbled with verse; a broken angling-rod
And shatter'd telescope, together link'd
By cobwebs, stood within a dusty nook;
And instruments of music, some half made,
Some in disgrace, hung dangling from the walls.
But speedily the promise was fulfill'd;
A feast before us, and a courteous host
Inviting us in glee to sit and eat.
A napkin, white as foam of that rough brook
By which it had been bleach'd, o'erspread the board;
And was itself half cover'd with a load

Of dainties,—oaten bread, curd, cheese, and cream.
And cakes of butter curiously embosse'd,
Butter that had imbibed from meadow flowers
A golden hue, delicate as their own,
Faintly reflected in a lingering stream;
Nor lack'd, for more delight on that warm day,
Our table, small parade of garden fruits,
And whortleberries from the mountain side.
The child, who long ere this had still'd his sobs
Was now a help to his late comforter,
And moved, a willing page, as he was bid,
Ministering to our need.
In genial mood,
While at our pastoral banquet thus we sate
Fronting the window of that little cell,
I could not, ever and anon, forbear
To glance an upward look on two huge peaks,
That from some other vale peer'd into this.
"Those lusty twins," exclaim'd our host, "if here
It were your lot to dwell, would soon become
Your prized companions.—Many are the notes
Which, in his tuneful course, the wind draws forth
From rocks, woods, caverns, heaths, and dashing shores;
And well those lofty brethren bear their part
In the wild concert—chiefly when the storm
Rides high; then all the upper air they fill
With roaring sound, that ceases not to flow,
Like smoke, along the level of the blast,
In mighty current; theirs, too, is the song
Of stream and headlong flood that seldom fails;
And, in the grim and breathless hour of noon,
Methinks that I have heard them echo back
The thunder's greeting:—nor have nature's laws
Left them ungifted with a power to yield
Music of finer tone; a harmony,
So do I call it, though it be the hand
Of silence, though there be no voice;—the clouds,
The mist, the shadows, light of golden suns,
Motions of moonlight, all come thither—touch,
And have an answer—thither come, and shape
A language not unwelcome to sick hearts
And idle spirits:—there the sun himself,
At the calm close of summer's longest day,
Rests his substantial orb;—between those heights
And on the top of either pinnacle,
More keenly than elsewhere in night's blue vault,
Sparkle the stars, as of their station proud.
Thoughts are not busier in the mind of man
Than the mute agents stirring there:—alone
Here do I sit and watch."—
A fall of voice,
Regretted like the nightingale's last note,
Had scarcely closed this high-wrought rhapsody
Ere with inviting smile the wanderer said,
"Now for the tale with which you threaten'd us!"
"In truth the threat escaped me unawares;
Should the tale tire you, let this challenge stand
For my excuse. Dissever'd from mankind,
As to your eyes and thoughts we must have seem'd
When ye look'd down upon us from the crag,
Islanders of a stormy mountain sea.
We are not so;—perpetually we touch
Upon the vulgar ordinance of the world,
And he, whom this our cottage hath to-day
Relinquish'd, lived dependent for his bread
Upon the laws of public charity.
The housewife, tempted by such slender gains
As might from that occasion be distill'd,
Open'd, as she before had done for me,
Her doors t' admit this homeless pensioner;
The portion gave of course but wholesome fare
Which appetite required—a blind, dull nook
Such as she had—the *kennel* of his rest!
This, in itself not ill, would yet have been
Ill borne in earlier life, but his was now
The still contentedness of seventy years.
Calm did he sit beneath the wide-spread tree
Of his old age; and yet less calm and meek
Willingly meek or venerably calm,
Than slow and torpid; paying in this wise
A penalty, if penalty it were,
For spendthrift feats, excesses of his prime.
I loved the old man, for I pitied him!
A task it was, I own, to hold discourse
With one so slow in gathering up his thoughts,
But he was a cheap pleasure to my eyes;
Mild, inoffensive, ready in *his* way,
And helpful to his utmost power: and there
Our housewife knew full well what she possess'd!
He was her vassal of all labour, till'd
Her garden, from the pasture fetch'd her kine;
And, one among the orderly array
Of haymakers, beneath the burning sun
Maintain'd his place: or heedfully pursued
His course, on errands bound, to other vales,
Leading sometimes an inexperienced child,
Too young for any profitable task.
So moved he like a shadow that perform'd
Substantial service. Mark me now, and learn
For what reward! The moon her monthly round
Hath not completed since our dame, the queen
Of this one cottage and this lonely dale,
Into my little sanctuary rush'd—
Voice to a rueful treble humanized,
And features in deplorable dismay—
I treat the matter lightly, but, alas!
It is most serious: persevering rain
Had fall'n in torrents; all the mountain tops
Were hidden, and black vapours coursed their sides;
This had I seen, and saw; but, till she spake,
Was wholly ignorant that my ancient friend,
Who at her bidding, early and alone,
Had clomb aloft to delve the moorland turf
For winter fuel, to his noontide meal
Return'd not, and now, haply, on the heights
Lay at the mercy of this raging storm.
'Inhuman!'—said I, 'was an old man's life
Not worth the trouble of a thought?—alas?
This notice comes too late.' With joy I saw
Her husband enter—from a distant vale.
We sallied forth together; found the tools
Which the neglected veteran had dropp'd,
But through all quarters look'd for him in vain.
We shouted—but no answer! Darkness fell
Without remission of the blast or shower,
And fears for our own safety drove us home.
I, who weep little, did I will confess,
The moment I was seated here alone,
Honour my little cell with some few tears
Which anger and resentment could not dry.
All night the storm endured; and soon as help

Had been collected from the neighbouring vale,
With morning we renew'd our quest; the wind
Was fall'n, the rain abated, but the hills
Lay shrouded in impenetrable mist;
And long and hopelessly we sought in vain.
Till, chancing on that lofty ridge to pass
A heap of ruin, almost without walls,
And wholly without roof, (the bleach'd remains
Of a small chapel, where, in ancient time,
The peasants of these lonely valleys used
To meet for worship on that central height)—
We there espied the object of our search,
Lying full three parts buried among tufts
Of heath plant, under and above him strewn,
To baffle, as he might, the watery storm:
And there we found him breathing peaceably,
Snug as a child that hides itself in sport
'Mid a green haycock in a sunny field.
We spake—he made reply, but would not stir
At our entreaty; less from want of power
Than apprehension and bewildering thoughts.
So was he lifted gently from the ground,
And with their freight the shepherds homeward moved
Through the dull mist, I following—when a step,
A single step, that freed me from the skirts
Of the blind vapour, open'd to my view
Glory beyond all glory ever seen
By waking sense or by the dreaming soul!
Th' appearance, instantaneously disclosed,
Was of a mighty city—boldly say
A wilderness of building, sinking far
And self-withdrawn into a wondrous depth,
Far sinking into splendour—without end!
Fabric it seem'd of diamond and of gold,
With alabaster domes, and silver spires.
And blazing terrace upon terrace, high
Uplifted; here, serene pavilions bright,
In avenues disposed; there towers begirt
With battlements that on their restless fronts
Bore stars—illumination of all gems!
By earthly nature had the effect been wrought
Upon the dark materials of the storm
Now pacified; on them, and on the coves
And mountain steeps and summits, whereunto
The vapours had receded, taking there
Their station under a cerulean sky.
O, 'twas an unimaginable sight!
Clouds, mists, streams, watery rocks and emerald turf.
Clouds of all tincture, rocks and sapphire sky,
Confused, commingled, mutually inflamed,
Molten together, and composing thus,
Each lost in each, that marvellous array
Of temple, palace, citadel, and huge
Fantastic pomp of structure without name,
In fleecy folds voluminous inwrapp'd.
Right in the midst, where interspace appear'd
Of open court, an object like a throne
Beneath a shining canopy of state
Stood fix'd; and fix'd resemblances were seen
To implements of ordinary use,
But vast in size, in substance glorified;
Such as by Hebrew prophets were beheld
In vision—forms uncouth of mightiest power
For admiration and mysterious awe.
Below me was the earth; this little vale
Lay low beneath my feet; 'twas visible—
I saw not, but I felt that it was there.
That which I *saw* was the reveal'd abode
Of spirits in beatitude: my heart
Swell'd in my breast.—'I have been dead,' I cried,
'And now I live! O! wherefore do I live?'
And with that pang I pray'd to be no more!
But I forget our charge, as utterly
I then forgot him:—there I stood and gazed;
The apparition faded not away,
And I descended. Having reach'd the house,
I found its rescued inmate safely lodged,
And in serene possession of himself,
Beside a genial fire; that seem'd to spread
A gleam of comfort o'er his pallid face.
Great show of joy the housewife made, and truly
Was glad to find her conscience set at ease;
And not less glad, for sake of her good name,
That the poor sufferer had escaped with life.
But, though he seem'd at first to have received
No harm, and uncomplaining as before
Went through his usual tasks, a silent change
Soon show'd itself; he linger'd three short weeks;
And from the cottage hath been borne to-day.
"So ends my dolorous tale, and glad I am
That it is ended." At these words he turn'd—
And, with blithe air of open fellowship,
Brought from the cupboard wine and stouter cheer,
Like one who would be merry. Seeing this,
My gray-hair'd friend said courteously—"Nay, nay,
You have regaled us as a hermit ought;
Now let us forth into the sun!"—Our host
Rose, though reluctantly, and forth we went.

BOOK III.

DESPONDENCY.

ARGUMENT.

Images in the valley. Another recess in it entered and described. Wanderer's sensations. Solitary's excited by the same objects. Contrast between these. Despondency of the solitary gently reproved. Conversation exhibiting the solitary's past and present opinions and feelings, till he enters upon his own history at length. His domestic felicity. Afflictions. Dejection. Roused by the French revolution. Disappointment and disgust. Voyage to America. Disappointment and disgust pursue him. His return. His languor and depression of mind, from want of faith in the great truths of religion, and want of confidence in the virtue of mankind.

A HUMMING bee—a little tinkling rill—
A pair of falcons, wheeling on the wing,
In clamorous agitation, round the crest
Of a tall rock, their airy citadel—
By each and all of these the pensive ear
Was greeted, in the silence that ensued,
When through the cottage threshold we had pass'd,
And, deep within that lonesome valley stood
Once more, beneath the concave of a blue
And cloudless sky. Anon! exclaim'd our host
Triumphantly dispersing with the taunt
The shade of discontent which on his brow
Had gather'd,—"Ye have left my cell,—but see
How nature hems you in with friendly arms!
And by her help ye are my prisoners still

But which way shall I lead you? how contrive,
In spot so parsimoniously endow'd,
That the brief hours, which yet remain, may reap
Some recompense of knowledge or delight?"
So saying, round he look'd, as if perplex'd;
And, to remove those doubts, my gray-hair'd friend
Said—"Shall we take this pathway for our guide?
Upward it winds, as if, in summer heats,
Its line had first been fashion'd by the flock
A place of refuge seeking at the root
Of yon black yew tree; whose protruded boughs
Darken the silver bosom of the crag,
From which she draws her meagre sustenance.
There in commodious shelter may we rest.
Or let us trace this streamlet to his source;
Feebly it tinkles with an earthly sound,
And a few steps may bring us to the spot
Where, haply, crown'd with flowerets and green herbs,
The mountain infant to the sun comes forth,
Like human life from darkness."—A quick turn
Through a strait passage of incumber'd ground,
Proved that such hope was vain:—for now we stood
Shut out from prospect of the open vale,
And saw the water, that composed this rill,
Descending, disembodied, and diffused
O'er the smooth surface of an ample crag,
Lofty, and steep, and naked as a tower.
All further progress here was barr'd. And who,
Thought I, if master of a vacant hour,
Here would not linger, willingly detain'd?
Whether to such wild objects he were led
When copious rains have magnified the stream
Into a loud and white-robed waterfall,
Or introduced at this more quiet time.
Upon a semicirque of turf-clad ground,
The hidden nook discover'd to our view
A mass of rock, resembling, as it lay
Right at the foot of that moist precipice,
A stranded ship, with keel upturn'd,—that rests
Fearless of winds and waves. Three several stones
Stood near, of smaller size, and not unlike
To monumental pillars; and from these
Some little space disjoin'd, a pair were seen,
That with united shoulders bore aloft
A fragment, like an altar, flat and smooth;
Barren the tablet, yet thereon appear'd
A tall and shining holly, that had found
A hospitable chink, and stood upright,
As if inserted by some human hand
In mockery, to wither in the sun,
Or lay its beauty flat before a breeze,
The first that enter'd. But no breeze did now
Find entrance; high or low appear'd no trace
Of motion, save the water that descended,
Diffused adown that barrier of steep rock,
And softly creeping, like a breath of air,
Such as is sometimes seen, and hardly seen,
To brush the still breast of a crystal lake.
"Behold a cabinet for sages built,
Which kings might envy!" Praise to this effect
Broke from the happy old man's reverend lip;
Who to the solitary turn'd, and said,
"In sooth, with love's familiar privilege,
You have decried the wealth which is your own.
Among these rocks and stones, methinks, I see
More than the heedless impress that belongs
To lonely nature's casual work; they bear
A semblance strange of power intelligent,
And of design not wholly worn away.
Boldest of plants that ever faced the wind,
How gracefully that slender shrub looks forth
From its fantastic birthplace! And I own,
Some shadowy intimations haunt me here,
That in these shows a chronicle survives
Of purposes akin to those of man,
But wrought with mightier arm than now prevails.
Voiceless the stream descends into the gulf
With timid lapse; and lo! while in this strait
I stand—the chasm of sky above my head
Is heaven's profoundest azure; no domain
For fickle, shortlived clouds to occupy,
Or to pass through, but rather an abyss
In which the everlasting stars abide;
And whose soft gloom, and boundless depth, might tempt
The curious eye to look for them by day.
Hail contemplation! from the stately towers
Rear'd by the industrious hand of human art
To lift thee high above the misty air
And turbulence of murmuring cities vast:
From academic groves, that have for thee
Been planted, hither come and find a lodge
To which thou mayst resort for holier peace,—
From whose calm centre thou, through height or depth,
Mayst penetrate, wherever truth shall lead;
Measuring through all degrees, until the scale
Of time and conscious nature disappear,
Lost in unsearchable eternity!"
A pause ensued; and with minuter care
We scann'd the various features of the scene:
And soon the tenant of that lonely vale
With courteous voice thus spake—
"I should have grieved
Hereafter, not escaping self-reproach,
If from my poor retirement ye had gone
Leaving this nook unvisited: but, in sooth,
Your unexpected presence had so roused
My spirits, that they were bent on enterprise;
And, like an ardent hunter, I forgot,
Or, shall I say?—disdain'd the game that lurks
At my own door. The shapes before our eyes,
And their arrangement, doubtless must be deem'd
The sport of nature, aided by blind chance
Rudely to mock the works of toiling man.
And hence, this upright shaft of unhewn stone,
From fancy, willing to set off her stores
By sounding titles, hath acquired the name
Of Pompey's pillar; that I gravely style
My Theban obelisk; and, there, behold
A Druid cromlech!—thus I entertain
The antiquarian humour, and am pleased
To skim along the surfaces of things,
Beguiling harmlessly the listless hours.
But if the spirit be oppress'd by sense
Of instability, revolt, decay,
And change, and emptiness, these freaks of nature
And her blind helper, chance, do *then* suffice
To quicken, and to aggravate—to feed
Pity and scorn, and melancholy pride,
Not less than that huge pile (from some abyss

Of mortal power unquestionably sprung)
Whose hoary diadem of pendent rocks
Confines the shrill-voiced whirlwind, round and round
Eddying within its vast circumference,
On Sarum's naked plain; than pyramid
Of Egypt, unsubverted, undissolved;
Or Syria's marble ruins towering high
Above the sandy desert, in the light
Of sun or moon,—forgive me, if I say
That an appearance which hath raised your mind
To an exalted pitch (the self-same cause
Different effect producing) is for me
Fraught rather with depression than delight,
Though shame it were, could I not look around,
By the reflection of your pleasure, pleased.
Yet happier in my judgment, e'en than you
With your bright transports fairly may be deem'd,
The wandering herbalist,—who, clear alike
From vain, and, that worse evil, vexing thoughts,
Casts, if he ever chance to enter here,
Upon these uncouth forms a slight regard
Of transitory interest, and peeps round
For some rare floweret of the hills, or plant
Of craggy fountain; what he hopes for wins,
Or learns, at least, that 'tis not to be won:
Then, keen and eager, as a fine-nosed hound
By soul-engrossing instinct driven along
Through wood or open field, the harmless man
Departs, intent upon his onward quest!
Nor is that fellow wanderer, so deem I,
Less to be envied, (you may trace him oft
By scars which his activity has left
Beside our roads and pathways, though, thank Heaven!
This covert nook reports not of his hand,)
He who with pocket hammer smites the edge
Of luckless rock or prominent stone, disguised
In weather stains or crusted o'er by nature
With her first growths—detaching by the stroke
A chip or splinter—to resolve his doubts;
And, with that ready answer satisfied,
The substance classes by some barbarous name,
And hurries on; or from the fragments picks
His specimen, if haply intervein'd
With sparkling mineral, or should crystal cube
Lurk in its cells—and thinks himself enrich'd,
Wealthier, and doubtless wiser, than before!
Intrusted safely each to his pursuit,
Earnest alike, let both from hill to hill
Range; if it please them, speed from clime to clime;
The mind is full—no pain is in their sport."
"Then," said I, interposing, "one is near,
Who cannot but possess in your esteem
Place worthier still of envy. May I name,
Without offence, that fair-faced cottage boy?
Dame nature's pupil of the lowest form,
Youngest apprentice in the school of art!
Him, as we enter'd from the open glen,
You might have noticed busily engaged,
Heart, soul, and hands,—in mending the defects
Left in the fabric of a leaky dam
Raised for enabling this penurious stream
To turn a slender mill (that new-made plaything)
For his delight—the happiest he of all!"
"Far happiest," answer'd the desponding man,
"If, such as now he is, he might remain!
Ah! what avails imagination high
Or question deep? what profits all that earth,
Or heaven's blue vault, is suffer'd to put forth
Of impulse or allurement, for the soul
To quit the beaten track of life, and soar
Far as she finds a yielding element
In past or future; far as she can go
Through time or space; if neither in the one,
Nor in the other region, nor in aught
That fancy, dreaming o'er the map of things,
Hath placed beyond these penetrable bounds,
Words of assurance can be heard; if nowhere
A habitation, for consummate good,
Nor for progressive virtue, by the search
Can be attain'd,—a better sanctuary
From doubt and sorrow, than the senseless grave?"
"Is this," the gray-hair'd wanderer mildly said,
"The voice, which we so lately overheard,
To that same child addressing tenderly
The consolations of a hopeful mind?
'His body is at rest, his soul in heaven.'
These were your words; and, verily, methinks
Wisdom is ofttimes nearer when we stoop
Than when we soar."
The other, not displeased,
Promptly replied—"My notion is the same.
And I, without reluctance, could decline
All act of inquisition whence we rise,
And what, when breath hath ceased, we may become.
Here are we, in a bright and breathing world—
Our origin, what matters it? In lack
Of worthier explanation, say at once
With the American (a thought which suits
The place where now we stand) that certain men
Leapt out together from a rocky cave;
And these were the first parents of mankind:
Or, if a different image be recall'd
By the warm sunshine, and the jocund voice
Of insects—chirping out their careless lives
On these soft beds of thyme-besprinkled turf,
Choose, with the gay Athenian, a conceit
As sound—blithe race! whose mantles were bedeck'd
With golden grasshoppers, in sign that they
Had sprung, like those bright creatures, from the soil
Whereon their endless generations dwelt.
But stop!—these theoretic fancies jar
On serious minds: then, as the Hindoos draw
Their holy Ganges from a skyey fount,
E'en so deduce the stream of human life
From seats of power divine; and hope, or trust,
That our existence winds her stately course
Beneath the sun, like Ganges, to make part
Of a living ocean; or, to sink ingulf'd,
Like Niger in impenetrable sands
And utter darkness: thought which may be faced,
Though comfortless! Not of myself I speak
Such acquiescence neither doth imply,
In me, a meekly bending spirit—sooth'd
By natural piety; nor a lofty mind,
By philosophic discipline prepared
For calm subjection to acknowledged law;
Pleased to have been, contented not to be.

Such palms I boast not; no! to me, who find,
Reviewing my past way, much to condemn,
Little to praise, and nothing to regret,
(Save some remembrances of dream-like joys
That scarcely seem to have belong'd to me,)
If I must take my choice between the pair
That rule alternately the weary hours,
Night is than day more acceptable; sleep
Doth, in my estimate of good, appear
A better state than waking; death than sleep:
Feelingly sweet is stillness after storm,
Though under covert of the wormy ground!
"Yet be it said, in justice to myself,
That in more genial times, when I was free
To explore the destiny of human kind,
(Not as an intellectual game pursued
With curious subtilty, from wish to cheat
Irksome sensations; but by love of truth
Urged on, or haply by intense delight
In feeding thought, wherever thought could feed,)
I did not rank with those (too dull or nice,
For to my judgment such they then appear'd,
Or too aspiring, thankless at the best)
Who, in this frame of human life, perceive
An object whereunto their souls are tied
In discontented wedlock; nor did e'er,
From me, those dark, impervious shades, that hang
Upon the region whither we are bound,
Exclude a power to enjoy the vital beams,
Of present sunshine. Deities that float
On wings, angelic spirits, I could muse
O'er what from eldest time we have been told
Of your bright forms and glorious faculties,
And with the imagination be content.
Not wishing more; repining not to tread
The little sinuous path of earthly care,
By flowers embellish'd, and by springs refresh'd.
'Blow winds of autumn!—let your chilling breath
Take the live herbage from the mead, and strip
The shady forest of its green attire,—
And let the bursting clouds to fury rouse
The gentle brooks! Your desolating sway,'
Thus I exclaim'd, 'no sadness sheds on me,
And no disorder in your rage I find.
What dignity, what beauty, in this change
From mild to angry, and from sad to gay,
Alternate and revolving! How benign,
How rich in animation and delight,
How bountiful these elements—compared
With aught, as more desirable and fair
Devised by fancy for the golden age;
Or the perpetual warbling that prevails
In Arcady, beneath unalter'd skies,
Through the long year in constant quiet bound,
Night hush'd as night, and day serene as day!"
But why this tedious record? Age, we know,
Is garrulous; and solitude is apt
T' anticipate the privilege of age.
From far ye come; and surely with a hope
Of better entertainment—let us hence!"
Loath to forsake the spot, and still more loath
To be diverted from our present theme,
I said, "My thoughts agreeing, sir, with yours,
Would push this censure farther; for, if smiles
Of scornful pity be the just reward
Of poesy, thus courteously employ'd
In framing models to improve the scheme
Of man's existence, and recast the world,
Why should not grave philosophy be styled
Herself, a dreamer of a kindred stock,
A dreamer yet more spiritless and dull?
Yes, shall the fine immunities she boasts
Establish sounder titles of esteem
For her, who (all too timid and reserved
For onset, for resistance too inert,
Too weak for suffering, and for hope too tame)
Placed among flowery gardens, curtain'd round
With world-excluding groves, the brotherhood
Of soft epicureans, taught—if they
The ends of being would secure, and win
The crown of wisdom—to yield up their souls
To a voluptuous unconcern, preferring
Tranquillity to all things. Or is she,"
I cried, "more worthy of regard, the power,
Who, for the sake of sterner quiet, closed
The stoic's heart against the vain approach
Of admiration, and all sense of joy?"
His countenance gave notice that my zeal
Accorded little with his present mind;
I ceased, and he resumed. "Ah! gentle sir,
Slight, if you will, the means: but spare to slight
The end of those, who did, by system, rank,
As the prime object of a wise man's aim,
Security from shock of accident,
Release from fear; and cherish'd peaceful days
For their own sakes, as mortal life's chief good,
And only reasonable felicity.
What motive drew, what impulse, I would ask,
Through a long course of later ages, drove
The hermit to his cell in forest wide;
Or what detain'd him, till his closing eyes
Took their last farewell of the sun and stars,
Fast anchor'd in the desert? Not alone
Dread of the persecuting sword—remorse.
Wrongs unredress'd, or insults unavenged
And unavengeable, defeated pride,
Prosperity subverted, maddening want,
Friendship betray'd, affection unreturn'd,
Love with despair, or grief in agony;
Not always from intolerable pangs
He fled; but, compass'd round by pleasure, sigh'd
For independent happiness: craving peace,
The central feeling of all happiness,
Not as a refuge from distress or pain,
A breathing-time, vacation, or a truce,
But for its absolute self; a life of peace,
Stability without regret or fear;
That hath been, is, and shall be evermore!
Such the reward he sought; and wore out life,
There, where on few external things his heart
Was set, and those his own; or, if not his,
Subsisting under nature's steadfast law.
"What other yearning was the master tie
Of the monastic brotherhood, upon rock
Aërial, or in green secluded vale,
One after one, collected from afar
An undissolving fellowship?—What but this,
The universal instinct of repose,
The longing for confirm'd tranquillity,
Inward and outward; humble, yet sublime:
The life where hope and memory are as one;
Earth quiet and unchanged; the human soul

Consistent in self-rule; and heaven reveal'd
To meditation in that quietness!
Such was their scheme:—thrice happy he who gain'd
The end proposed! And,—though the same were miss'd
By multitudes, perhaps obtain'd by none,—
They, for the attempt, and for the pains employ'd,
Do, in my present censure, stand redeem'd
From the unqualified disdain, that once
Would have been cast upon them, by my voice
Delivering her decisions from the seat
Of forward youth: that scruples not to solve
Doubts, and determine questions, by the rules
Of inexperienced judgment, ever prone
To overweening faith; and is inflamed,
By courage, to demand from real life
The test of act and suffering—to provoke
Hostility, how dreadful when it comes,
Whether affliction be the foe, or guilt!
"A child of earth, I rested, in that stage
Of my past course to which these thoughts advert,
Upon earth's native energies; forgetting
That mine was a condition which required
Nor energy, nor fortitude—a calm
Without vicissitude; which, if the like
Had been presented to my view elsewhere,
I might have e'en been tempted to despise.
But that which was serene was also bright;
Enliven'd happiness with joy o'erflowing,
With joy, and—O! that memory should survive
To speak the word—with rapture! Nature's boon,
Life's genuine inspiration, happiness
Above what rules can teach, or fancy feign;
Abused, as all possessions are abused
That are not prized according to their worth.
And yet, what worth? what good is given to men,
More solid than the gilded clouds of heaven?
What joy more lasting than a vernal flower?
None! 'tis the general plaint of human kind
In solitude, and mutually address'd
From each to all, for wisdom's sake. This truth
The priest announces from his holy seat:
And, crown'd with garlands in the summer grove,
The poet fits it to his pensive lyre.
Yet, ere that final resting place be gain'd,
Sharp contradictions may arise by doom
Of this same life, compelling us to grieve
That the prosperities of love and joy
Should be permitted, ofttimes, to endure
So long, and be at once cast down for ever.
O, tremble, ye, to whom hath been assign'd
A course of days composing happy months,
And they as happy years; the present still
So like the past, and both so firm a pledge
Of a congenial future, that the wheels
Of pleasure move without the aid of hope:
For mutability is nature's bane;
And slighted hope *will* be avenged: and, when
Ye need her favours, ye shall find her not;
But in her stead—fear—doubt—and agony!"
This was the bitter language of the heart:
But, while he spake, look, gesture, tone of voice,
Though discomposed and vehement, were such
As skill and graceful nature might suggest
To a proficient of the tragic scene
Standing before the multitude, beset
With dark events. Desirous to divert
Or stem the current of the speaker's thoughts,
We signified a wish to leave that place
Of stillness and close privacy, a nook
That seem'd for self-examination made,
Or, for confession, in the sinner's need,
Hidden from all men's view. To our attempt
He yielded not; but pointing to a slope
Of mossy turf defended from the sun,
And, on that couch inviting us to rest,
Full on that tender-hearted man he turn'd
A serious eye, and thus his speech renew'd.
"You never saw, your eyes did never look
On the bright form of her whom once I loved:
Her silver voice was heard upon the earth,
A sound unknown to you; else, honour'd friend!
Your heart had borne a pitiable share
Of what I suffer'd, when I wept that loss,
And suffer now, not seldom, from the thought
That I remember, and can weep no more.
Stripp'd as I am of all the golden fruit
Of self-esteem; and by the cutting blasts
Of self-reproach familiarly assail'd;
I would not yet be of such wintry bareness
But that some leaf of your regard should hang
Upon my naked branches; lively thoughts
Give birth, full often, to unguarded words.
I grieve that, in your presence, from my tongue
Too much of frailty hath already dropp'd;
But that too much demands still more.
"You know
Revered compatriot; and to you, kind sir,
(Not to be deem'd a stranger, as you come
Following the guidance of these welcome feet
To our secluded vale,) it may be told,
That my demerits did not sue in vain
To one on whose mild radiance many gazed
With hope, and all with pleasure. This fair bride,
In the devotedness of youthful love,
Preferring me to parents, and the choir
Of gay companions, to the natal roof,
And all known places and familiar sights,
(Resign'd with sadness gently weighing down
Her trembling expectations, but no more
Than did to her due honour, and to me
Yielded, that day, a confidence sublime
In what I had to build upon,) this bride,
Young, modest, meek, and beautiful, I led
To a low cottage in a sunny bay,
Where the salt sea innoculously breaks,
And the sea breeze as innocently breathes,
On Devon's leafy shores; a shelter'd hold,
In a soft clime encouraging the soil
To a luxuriant bounty! As our steps
Approach the embower'd abode—our chosen seat
See, rooted in the earth, her kindly bed,
The unendanger'd myrtle, deck'd with flowers,
Before the threshold stands to welcome us:
While in the flowering myrtle's neighbourhood,
Not overlook'd but courting no regard,
Those native plants, the holly and the yew,
Gave modest intimation to the mind
How willingly their aid they would unite
With the green myrtle, to endear the hours
Of winter, and protect that pleasant place.
Wild were the walks upon those lonely downs

Track leading into track, how mark'd, how worn
Into bright verdure, between fern and gorse
Winding away its never-ending line
On their smooth surface, evidence was none:
But, there, lay open to our daily haunt,
A range of unappropriated earth,
Where youth's ambitious feet might move at large;
Whence, unmolested wanderers, we beheld
The shining giver of the day diffuse
His brightness o'er a tract of sea and land
Gay as our spirits, free as our desires,
As our enjoyments, boundless. From those heights
We dropp'd, at pleasure, into sylvan combs;
Where arbours of impenetrable shade,
And mossy seats, detain'd us side by side,
With hearts at ease, and knowledge in our hearts
'That all the grove and all the day was ours.'
"But nature call'd my partner to resign
Her share in the pure freedom of that life,
Enjoy'd by us in common. To my hope,
To my heart's wish, my tender mate became
The thankful captive of maternal bonds;
And those wild paths were left to me alone.
There could I meditate on follies past;
And, like a weary voyager escaped
From risk and hardship, inwardly retrace
A course of vain delights and thoughtless guilt,
And self-indulgence—without shame pursued.
There, undisturb'd, could think of, and could thank
Her—whose submissive spirit was to me
Rule and restraint—my guardian—shall I say
That earthly providence, whose guiding love
Within a port of rest had lodged me safe;
Safe from temptation, and from danger far?
Strains follow'd of acknowledgment address'd
To an Authority enthroned above
The reach of sight: from whom, as from their source,
Proceed all visible ministers of good
That walk the earth—Father of heaven and earth,
Father, and King, and Judge, adored and fear'd!
These acts of mind, and memory, and heart,
And spirit—interrupted and relieved
By observations transient as the glance
Of flying sunbeams, or to the outward form
Cleaving with power inherent and intense,
As the mute insect fix'd upon the plant
On whose soft leaves it hangs, and from whose cup
Draws imperceptibly its nourishment—
Endear'd my wanderings; and the mother's kiss
And infant's smile awaited my return.
"In privacy we dwelt—a wedded pair—
Companions daily, often all day long:
Not placed by fortune within easy reach
Of various intercourse, nor wishing aught
Beyond the allowance of our own fireside,
The twain within our happy cottage born,
Inmates, and heirs of our united love;
Graced mutually by difference of sex,
By the endearing names of nature bound,
And with no wider interval of time
Between their several births than served for one
To establish something of a leader's sway;
Yet left them join'd by sympathy in age;
Equals in pleasure, fellows in pursuit.
On these two pillars rested as in air
Our solitude.
"It soothes me to perceive,
Your courtesy withholds not from my words
Attentive audience. But, O! gentle friends,
As times of quiet and unbroken peace,
Though, for a nation, times of blessedness,
Give back faint echoes from the historian's page!
So, in th' imperfect sounds of this discourse,
Depress'd I hear, how faithless is the voice
Which those most blissful days reverberate.
What special record can, or need, be given
To rules and habits, whereby much was done,
But all within the sphere of little things,
Of humble, though, to us, important cares,
And precious interests? Smoothly did our life
Advance, not swerving from the path prescribed:
Her annual, her diurnal round alike
Maintain'd with faithful care. And you divine
The worst effects that our condition saw
If you imagine changes slowly wrought,
And in their progress imperceptible;
Not wish'd for, sometimes noticed with a sigh,
(Whate'er of good or lovely they might bring,)
Sighs of regret, for the familiar good,
And loveliness endear'd—which they removed.
"Seven years of occupation undisturb'd
Establish'd seemingly a right to hold
That happiness: and use and habit gave
To what an alien spirit had acquired
A patrimonial sanctity. And thus,
With thoughts and wishes bounded to this world,
I lived and breathed; most grateful, if t' enjoy
Without repining or desire for more,
For different lot, or change to higher sphere
(Only except some impulses of pride
With no determined object, though upheld
By theories with suitable support)
Most grateful, if in such wise to enjoy
Be proof of gratitude for what we have;
Else, I allow, most thankless. But, at once,
From some dark seat of fatal power was urged
A claim that shatter'd all. Our blooming girl,
Caught in the gripe of death, with such grief time
To struggle in as scarcely would allow
Her cheek to change its colour, was convey'd
From us to regions inaccessible;
Where height or depth, admits not the approach
Of living man, though longing to pursue.
With o'en as brief a warning—and how soon,
With what short interval of time between,
I tremble yet to think of—our last prop,
Our happy life's only remaining stay—
The brother follow'd; and was seen no more!
"Calm as a frozen lake when ruthless winds
Blow fiercely, agitating earth and sky,
The mother now remain'd; as if in her,
Who to the lowest region of the soul,
Had been erewhile unsettled and disturb'd,
This second visitation had no power
To shake; but only to bind up and seal;
And to establish thankfulness of heart
In Heaven's determinations, ever just.
The eminence on which her spirit stood,
Mine was unable to attain. Immense
The space that sever'd us! But, as the sight

Communicates with heaven's ethereal orbs
Incalculably distant; so, I felt
That consolation may descend from far
(And that is intercourse and union, too,)
While, overcome with speechless gratitude,
And with a holier love inspired, I look'd
On her—at once superior to my woes
And partner of my loss. O heavy change!
Dimness o'er this clear luminary crept
Insensibly; th' immortal and divine
Yielded to mortal reflux; her pure glory,
As from the pinnacle of worldly state
Wretched ambition drops astounded, fell
Into a gulf obscure of silent grief,
And keen heart anguish—of itself ashamed,
Yet obstinately cherishing itself;
And, so consumed, she melted from my arms,
And left me, on this earth, disconsolate.
"What follow'd cannot be review'd in thought;
Much less, retraced in words. If she, of life
Blameless, so intimate with love and joy
And all the tender motions of the soul,
Had been supplanted, could I hope to stand—
Infirm, dependent, and now destitute?
I call'd on dreams and visions, to disclose
That which is veil'd from waking thought; conjured
Eternity, as men constrain a ghost
T' appear and answer; to the grave I spake
Imploringly; look'd up, and ask'd the heavens
If angels traversed their cerulean floors,
If fix'd or wandering star could tidings yield
Of the departed spirit—what abode
It occupies—what consciousness retains
Of former loves and interests. Then my soul
Turn'd inward, to examine of what stuff
Time's fetters are composed; and life was put
To inquisition, long and profitless!
By pain of heart, now check'd, and now impell'd—
Th' intellectual power, through words and things,
Went sounding on, a dim and perilous way!
And from those transports, and these toils abstruse,
Some trace am I enabled to retain
Of time, else lost; existing unto me
Only by records in myself not found.
"From that abstraction I was roused,—and how?
E'en as a thoughtful shepherd by a flash
Of lightning startled in a gloomy cave
Of these wild hills. For, lo! the dread Bastile,
With all the chambers in its horrid towers,
Fell to the ground: by violence o'erthrown
Of indignation; and with shouts that drown'd
The crash it made in falling! From the wreck
A golden palace rose, or seem'd to rise
Th' appointed seat of equitable law,
And mild, paternal sway. The potent shock
I felt: the transformation I perceived,
As marvellously seized as in that moment
When from the blind mist issuing, I beheld
Glory—beyond all glory ever seen,
Confusion infinite of heaven and earth,
Dazzling the soul. Meanwhile, prophetic harps
In every grove were ringing. 'War shall cease;
Did ye not hear that conquest is abjured?
Bring garlands, bring forth choicest flowers, to deck
The tree of liberty.' My heart rebounded;
My melancholy voice the chorus join'd;
'Be joyful all ye nations, in all lands,
Ye that are capable of joy be glad!
Henceforth, whate'er is wanting to yourselves
In others ye shall promptly find; and all
Enrich'd by mutual and reflected wealth,
Shall with one heart honour their common kind.
"Thus was I reconverted to the world;
Society became my glittering bride,
And airy hopes my children. From the depths
Of natural passion, seemingly escaped,
My soul diffused herself in wide embrace
Of institutions, and the forms of things;
As they exist in mutable array,
Upon life's surface. What, though in my veins
There flow'd no Gallic blood, nor had I breathed
The air of France, not less than Gallic zeal
Kindled and burnt among the sapless twigs
Of my exhausted heart. If busy men
In sober conclave met, to weave a web
Of amity, whose living threads should stretch
Beyond the seas, and to the farthest pole,
There did I sit, assisting. If, with noise
And acclamations, crowds in open air
Express'd the tumult of their minds, my voice
There mingled, heard or not. The powers of song
I left not uninvoked; and, in still groves,
Where mild enthusiasts tuned a pensive lay
Of thanks and expectation, in accord
With their belief, I sang saturnian rule
Return'd,—a progeny of golden years
Permitted to descend, and bless mankind.
With promises the Hebrew Scriptures teem:
I felt the invitation; and resumed
A long suspended office in the house
Of public worship, where, the glowing phrase
Of ancient inspiration serving me,
I promised also,—with undaunted trust
Foretold, and added prayer to prophecy;
The admiration winning of the crowd;
The help desiring of the pure devout.
"Scorn and contempt forbid me to proceed!
But history, time's slavish scribe, will tell
How rapidly the zealots of the cause
Disbanded, or in hostile ranks appear'd:
Some, tired of honest service; these, outdone,
Disgusted, therefore, or appall'd, by aims
Of fiercer zealots; so confusion reign'd,
And the more faithful were compell'd t' exclaim,
As Brutus did to virtue, 'Liberty,
I worshipp'd thee, and find thee but a shade!'
"Such recantation had for me no charm,
Nor would I bend to it; who should have grieved
At aught, however fair, that bore the mien
Of a conclusion, or catastrophe.
Why then conceal, that, when the simply good
In timid selfishness withdrew, I sought
Other support, not scrupulous whence it came
And, by what compromise it stood, not nice?
Enough if notions seem'd to be high pitch'd,
And qualities determined. Among men
So character'd did I maintain a strife
Hopeless, and still more hopeless every hour;
But, in the process, I began to feel
That, if th' emancipation of the world
Were miss'd, I should at least secure my own

And be in part compensated. For rights,
Widely—inveterately usurp'd upon,
I spake with vehemence; and promptly seized
Whate'er abstraction furnish'd for my needs
Of purposes; nor scrupled to proclaim,
And propagate, by liberty of life,
Those new persuasions. Not that I rejoiced,
Or e'en found pleasure, in such vagrant course,
For its own sake; but farthest from the walk
Which I had trod in happiness and peace,
Was most inviting to a troubled mind;
That, in a struggling and distemper'd world,
Saw a seductive image of herself.
Yet, mark the contradictions of which man
Is still the sport! Here nature was my guide,
The nature of the dissolute; but thee,
O fostering nature! I rejected—smiled
At others' tears in pity: and in scorn
At those, which thy soft influence sometimes drew
From my unguarded heart. The tranquil shores
Of Britain circumscribed me; else, perhaps,
I might have been entangled among deeds,
Which, now, as infamous, I should abhor—
Despise, as senseless: for my spirit relish'd
Strangely the exasperation of that land,
Which turn'd an angry beak against the down
Of her own breast; confounded into hope
Of disencumbering thus her fretful wings.
But all was quieted by iron bonds
Of military sway. The shifting aims,
The moral interests, the creative might,
The varied functions and high attributes
Of civil action, yielded to a power
Formal, and odious, and contemptible.
In Britain, ruled a panic dread of change;
The weak were praised, rewarded, and advanced;
And, from the impulse of a just disdain,
Once more did I retire into myself.
There feeling no contentment, I resolved
To fly, for safeguard, to some foreign shore,
Remote from Europe; from her blasted hopes;
Her fields of carnage, and polluted air.
"Fresh blew the wind, when o'er the Atlantic main
The ship went gliding with her thoughtless crew;
And who among them but an exile, freed
From discontent, indifferent, pleased to sit
Amazing the busily employ'd, not more
With obligation charged, with service tax'd,
Than the loose pendant—to the idle wind
Upon the tall mast streaming: but, ye powers
Of soul and sense—mysteriously allied,
O, never let the wretched, if a choice
Be left him, trust the freight of his distress
To a long voyage on the silent deep!
For, like a plague, will memory break out;
And, in the blank and solitude of things,
Upon his spirit, with a fever's strength,
Will conscience prey. Feebly must they have felt
Who, in old time, attired with snakes and whips
The vengeful furies. *Beautiful* regards
Were turn'd on me—the face of her I loved;
The wife and mother, pitifully fixing
Tender reproaches, insupportable!
Where now that coasted liberty? No welcome
From unknown objects I received; and those,
Known and familiar, which the vaulted sky
Did, in the placid clearness of the night,
Disclose, had accusations to prefer
Against my peace. Within the cabin stood
That volume—as a compass for the soul—
Revered among the nations. I implored
Its guidance; but the infallible support
Of faith was wanting. Tell me, why refused
To one by storms annoy'd and adverse winds;
Perplex'd with currents; of his weakness sick;
Of vain endeavours tired; and by his own,
And by his nature's, ignorance, dismay'd!
"Long-wish'd for sight, the western world appear'd;
And, when the ship was moor'd, I leapt ashore
Indignantly—resolved to be a man,
Who, having o'er the past no power, would live
No longer in subjection to the past,
With abject mind—from a tyrannic lord
Inviting penance, fruitlessly endured.
So, like a fugitive, whose feet have clear'd
Some boundary, which his followers may not cross
In prosecution of their deadly chase,
Respiring I look'd round. How bright the sun,
How promising the breeze! Can aught produced
In the old world compare, thought I, for power
And majesty with this gigantic stream,
Sprung from the desert? And behold a city
Fresh, youthful, and aspiring! What are these
To me, or I to them? As much at least
As he desires that they should be, whom winds
And waves have wafted to this distant shore,
In the condition of a damaged seed,
Whose fibres cannot, if they would, take root.
Here may I roam at large; my business is,
Roaming at large, to observe, and not to feel;
And, therefore, not to act—convinced that all
Which bears the name of action, howsoe'er
Beginning, ends in servitude—still painful,
And mostly profitless. And, sooth to say,
On nearer view, a motley spectacle
Appear'd, of high pretensions—unreproved
But by the obstreperous voice of higher still;
Big passions strutting on a petty stage;
Which a detach'd spectator may regard
Not unamused. But ridicule demands
Quick change of objects; and, to laugh alone,
At a composing distance from the haunts
Of strife and folly, though it be a treat
As choice as musing leisure can bestow;
Yet, in the very centre of the crowd,
To keep the secret of a poignant scorn,
Howe'er to airy demon's suitable,
Of all unsocial courses, is least fit
For the gross spirit of mankind,—the one
That soonest fails to please, and quickliest turns
Into vexation. Let us, then, I said,
Leave this unknit republic to the scourge
Of her own passions; and to regions haste,
Whose shades have never felt th' encroaching axe,
Or soil endured a transfer in the mart
Of dire rapacity. There, man abides,
Primeval nature's child. A creature weak
In combination, (wherefore else driven back
So far, and of his old inheritance
So easily deprived?) but, for that cause,

More dignified, and stronger in himself;
Whether to act, judge, suffer, or enjoy.
True, the intelligence of social art
Hath overpower'd his forefathers, and soon
Will sweep the remnant of his line away;
But contemplations, worthier, nobler far
Than her destructive energies, attend
His independence, when along the side
Of Mississippi, or that northern stream*
That spreads into successive seas, he walks;
Pleased to perceive his own unshackled life,
And his innate capacities of soul,
There imaged: or, when having gain'd the top
Of some commanding eminence, which yet
Intruder ne'er beheld, he thence surveys
Regions of wood and wide Savannah, vast
Expanse of unappropriated earth,
With mind that sheds a light on what he sees;
Free as the sun, and lonely as the sun,
Pouring above his head its radiance down
Upon a living, and rejoicing world!
"So, westward, toward th' unviolated woods
I bent my way; and, roaming far and wide,
Fail'd not to greet the merry mocking-bird;
And, while the melancholy muccawiss
(The sportive bird's companion in the grove)
Repeated, o'er and o'er, his plaintive cry,
I sympathized at leisure with the sound;
But that pure archetype of human greatness,
. found him not. There, in his stead, appear'd
A creature, squalid, vengeful, and impure;
Remorseless, and submissive to no law
But superstitious fear, and abject sloth.
Enough is told! Here am I. Ye have heard
What evidence I seek, and vainly seek;
What from my fellow beings I require,
And cannot find; what I myself have lost,
Nor can regain. How languidly I look
Upon this visible fabric of the world,
May be divined—perhaps it hath been said
But spare your pity, if there be in me
Aught that deserves respect: for I exist—
Within myself—not comfortless. The tenor
Which my life holds, he readily may conceive
Whoe'er hath stood to watch a mountain brook
In some still passage of its course, and seen,
Within the depths of its capacious breast,
Inverted trees, and rocks, and azure sky
And, on its glassy surface, specks of foam,
And conglobated bubbles undissolved,
Numerous as stars; that, by their onward lapse,
Betray to sight the motion of the stream,
Else imperceptible; meanwhile, is heard
A soften'd roar, a murmur; and the sound
Though soothing, and the little floating isles
Though beautiful, are both by nature charged
With the same pensive office; and make known
Through what perplexing labyrinths, abrupt
Precipitations, and untoward straits,
The earth-born wanderer hath pass'd; and quickly
That respite o'er, like traverses and toils
Must be again encounter'd. Such a stream
Is human life; and so the spirit fares
In the best quiet to its course allow'd;
And such is mine,—save only for a hope
That my particular current soon will reach
The unfathomable gulf, where all is still!

BOOK IV.

DESPONDENCY CORRECTED.

ARGUMENT.

State of feeling produced by the foregoing narrative A belief in a superintending Providence the only adequate support under affliction. Wanderer's ejaculation. Account of his own devotional feelings in youth involved. Acknowledges the difficulty of a lively faith. Hence immoderate sorrow. Doubt or despondence not therefore to be inferred. Consolation to the solitary. Exhortations. How received. Wanderer applies his discourse to that other cause of dejection in the solitary's mind. Disappointment from the French revolution. States grounds of hope. Insists on the necessity of patience and fortitude with respect to the course of great revolutions. Knowledge the source of tranquillity. Rural solitude favourable to knowledge of the inferior creatures. Study of their habits and ways recommended. Exhortation to bodily exertion and communion with nature. Morbid solitude pitiable. Superstition better than apathy. Apathy and destitution unknown in the infancy of society. The various modes of religion prevented it. Illustrated in the Jewish, Persian, Babylonian, Chaldean, and Grecian modes of belief. Solitary interposes. Wanderer points out the influence of religious and imaginative feeling in the humble ranks of society. Illustrated from present and past times. These principles tend to recall exploded superstitions and popery. Wanderer rebuts this charge, and contrasts the dignities of the imagination with the presumptive littleness of certain modern philosophers. Recommends other lights and guides. Asserts the power of the soul to regenerate herself. Solitary asks how. Reply. Personal appeal. Happy that the imagination and the affections mitigate the evils of that intellectual slavery which the calculating understanding is apt to produce. Exhortation to activity of body renewed. How to commune with nature Wanderer concludes with a legitimate union

* "A man is supposed to improve by going out into the world, by visiting London. Artificial man does; he extends with his sphere; but, alas! that sphere is microscopic: it is formed of minutiæ, and he surrenders his genuine vision to the artist, in order to embrace it in his ken. His bodily senses grow acute, even to barren and inhuman pruriency; while his mental become proportionally obtuse. The reverse is the man of mind: He who is placed in the sphere of nature and of God, might be a mock at Tattersall's and Brookes's, and a sneer at St. James's: he would certainly be swallowed alive by the first Pizarro that crossed him:—But when he walks along the river of Amazons; when he rests his eye on the unrivalled Andes; when he measures the long and watered Savannah; or contemplates, from a sudden promontory, the distant, vast Pacific—and feels himself a freeman in this vast theatre, and commanding each ready produced fruit of this wilderness, and each progeny of this stream—His exultation is not less than imperial. He is as gentle, too, as he is great. His emotions of tenderness keep pace with his elevation of sentiment; for he says, 'These were made by a good Being, who, unsought by me, placed me here to enjoy them.' He becomes at once a child and a king. His mind is in himself: from hence he argues, and from hence he acts, and he argues unerringly, and acts magisterially: His mind in himself is also in his God; and therefore he loves, and therefore he soars."—*From the Notes upon the Hurricane, a poem, by William Gilbert.*

The reader, I am sure, will thank me for the above quotation, which, though from a strange book, is one of the finest passages of modern English prose.

of the imagination, affections, understanding, and reason. Effect of his discourse. Evening. Return to the cottage.

HERE closed the tenant of that lonely vale
His mournful narrative—commenced in pain,
In pain commenced, and ended without peace:
Yet temper'd, not unfrequently, with strains
Of native feeling, grateful to our minds;
And doubtless yielding some relief to his,
While we sate listening with compassion due.
Such pity yet surviving, with firm voice
That did not falter though the heart was moved,
The wanderer said—
" One adequate support
For the calamities of mortal life
Exists, one only; an assured belief
That the procession of our fate, howe'er
Sad or disturb'd, is order'd by a Being
Of infinite benevolence and power;
Whose everlasting purposes embrace
All accidents, converting them to good.
The darts of anguish *fix* not where the seat
Of suffering hath been thoroughly fortified
By acquiescence in the will supreme
For time and for eternity; by faith,
Faith absolute in God, including hope,
And the defence that lies in boundless love
Of his perfections; with habitual dread
Of aught unworthily conceived, endured
Impatiently; ill-done, or left undone,
To the dishonour of his holy name.
Soul of our souls, and safeguard of the world!
Sustain, thou only canst, the sick of heart;
Restore their languid spirits, and recall
Their lost affections unto thee and thine!"

THEN as we issued from that covert nook,
He thus continued, lifting up his eyes
To heaven, " How beautiful this dome of sky,
And the vast hills, in fluctuation fix'd
At thy command, how awful! Shall the soul,
Human and rational, report of thee
E'en less than these? Be mute who will, who can,
Yet I will praise thee with impassion'd voice;
My lips, that may forget thee in the crowd,
Cannot forget thee here; where thou hast built,
For thy own glory, in the wilderness!
Me didst thou constitute a priest of thine,
In such a temple as we now behold
Rear'd for thy presence; therefore, am I bound
To worship, here, and everywhere, as one
Not doom'd to ignorance, though forced to tread,
From childhood up, the ways of poverty;
From unreflecting ignorance preserved,
And from debasement rescued. By thy grace
The particle divine remain'd unquench'd;
And, 'mid the wild weeds of a rugged soil,
Thy bounty caused to flourish deathless flowers,
From paradise transplanted; wintry age
Impends; the frost will gather round my heart;
And, if they wither, I am worse than dead!
Come, labour, when the worn-out frame requires
Perpetual Sabbath; come, disease and want;
And sad exclusion through decay of sense;
But leave me unabated trust in Thee,
And let thy favour, to the end of life,
Inspire me with ability to seek
Repose and hope among eternal things—
Father of heaven and earth! and I am rich,
And will possess my portion in content!
" And what are things eternal? Powers depart,"
The gray-hair'd wanderer steadfastly replied,
Answering the question which himself had ask'd,
" Possessions vanish, and opinions change,
And passions hold a fluctuating seat:
But, by the storms of circumstance unshaken,
And subject neither to eclipse nor wane,
Duty exists; immutably survive,
For our support, the measures and the forms,
Which an abstract intelligence supplies;
Whose kingdom is, where time and space are not,
Of other converse which mind, soul, and heart,
Do, with united urgency, require.
What more that may not perish? Thou, dread source,
Prime, self-existing cause and end of all,
That, in the scale of being fill their place,
Above our human region, or below,
Set and sustain'd; Thou, who didst wrap the cloud
Of infancy around us, that thyself,
Therein, with our simplicity a while
Might'st hold, on earth, communion undisturb'd—
Who from the anarchy of dreaming sleep,
Or from its deathlike void, with punctual care,
And touch as gentle as the morning light,
Restorest us daily to the powers of sense,
And reason's steadfast rule,—Thou, thou alone
Art everlasting, and the blessed spirits,
Which thou includest, as the sea her waves:
For adoration thou endurest; endure
For consciousness the motions of thy will;
For apprehension those transcendent truths
Of the pure intellect, that stand as laws,
(Submission constituting strength and power,)
E'en to thy being's infinite majesty!
This universe shall pass away—a work
Glorious! because the shadow of thy might,
A step, or link, for intercourse with thee.
Ah! if the time must come, in which my feet
No more shall stray where meditation leads,
By flowing stream, through wood, or craggy wild,
Loved haunts like these, the unimprison'd mind
May yet have scope to range among her own,
Her thoughts, her images, her high desires.
If the dear faculty of sight should fail,
Still, it may be allow'd me to remember
What visionary powers of eye and soul
In youth were mine; when, station'd on the top
Of some huge hill, expectant, I beheld
The sun rise up, from distant climes return'd
Darkness to chase, and sleep, and bring the day
His bounteous gift! or saw him toward the deep
Sink, with a retinue of flaming clouds
Attended; then, my spirit was entranced
With joy exalted to beatitude;
The measure of my soul was fill'd with bliss,
And holiest love; as earth, sea, air, with light,
With pomp, with glory, with magnificence!
" Those fervent raptures are for ever flown;
And, since their date, my soul hath undergone
Change manifold, for better or for worse;
Yet cease I not to struggle, and aspire
Heavenward; and chide the part of me that flags

Through sinful choice; or dread necessity,
On human nature from above imposed.
'Tis, by comparison, an easy task
Earth to despise; but to converse with Heaven,
This is not easy; to relinquish all
We have, or hope, of happiness and joy,
And stand in freedom loosen'd from this world,
I deem not arduous; but must needs confess
That 'tis a thing impossible to frame
Conceptions equal to the soul's desires;
And the most difficult of tasks to *keep*
Heights which the soul is competent to gain.
Man is of dust: ethereal hopes are his,
Which, when they should sustain themselves aloft
Want due consistence; like a pillar of smoke,
That with majestic energy from earth
Rises; but, having reach'd the thinner air,
Melts, and dissolves, and is no longer seen.
From this infirmity of mortal kind
Sorrow proceeds, which else were not; at least,
If grief be something hallow'd and ordain'd,
If, in proportion, it be just and meet,
Through this, 'tis able to maintain its hold,
In that excess which conscience disapproves.
For who could sink and settle to that point
Of selfishness: so senseless who could be
As long and perseveringly to mourn
For any object of his love, removed
From this unstable world, if he could fix
A satisfying view upon that state
Of pure, imperishable blessedness,
Which reason promises, and holy writ
Ensures to all believers? Yet mistrust
Is of such incapacity, methinks,
No natural branch; despondency far less.
And, if there be whose tender frames have droop'd
E'en to the dust; apparently, through weight
Of anguish unrelieved, and lack of power
An agonizing sorrow to transmute,
Infer not hence a hope from those withheld
When wanted most; a confidence impair'd
So pitiably, that, having ceased to see
With bodily eyes, they are borne down by love
Of what is lost, and perish through regret.
O! no, full oft th' innocent sufferer sees
Too clearly; feels too vividly; and longs
To realize the vision, with intense
And over-constant yearning—there—there lies
Th' excess, by which the balance is destroy'd.
Too, too contracted are these walls of flesh,
This vital warmth too cold, these visual orbs,
Though inconceivably endow'd, too dim
For any passion of the soul that leads
To ecstasy; and, all the crooked paths
Of time and change disdaining, takes its course
Along the line of limitless desires.
I speaking now from such disorder free,
Nor rapt, nor craving, but in settled peace.
I cannot doubt that they whom you deplore
Are glorified; or, if they sleep, shall wake
From sleep, and dwell with God in endless love.
Hope, below this, consists not with belief
In mercy, carried infinite degrees
Beyond the tenderness of human hearts:
Hope, below this consists not with belief
In perfect wisdom, guiding mightiest power,
That finds no limits but her own pure will.
"Here then we rest: not fearing for our creed
The worst that human reasoning can achieve,
T' unsettle or perplex it; yet with pain
Acknowledging, and grievous self-reproach,
That, though immovably convinced, we want
Zeal, and the virtue to exist by faith
As soldiers live by courage: as, by strength
Of heart, the sailor fights with roaring seas.
Alas! th' endowment of immortal power
Is match'd unequally with custom, time,
And domineering faculties of sense
In *all*; in most with superadded foes,
Idle temptations, open vanities,
Ephemeral offspring of th' unblushing world;
And, in the private regions of the mind,
Ill govern'd passions, ranklings of despite,
Immoderate wishes, pining discontent,
Distress and care. What then remains? To seek
Those helps, for his occasions ever near,
Who lacks not will to use them; vows, renew'd
On the first motion of a holy thought;
Vigils of contemplation; praise; and prayer,
A stream, which, from the fountain of the heart
Issuing, however feebly, nowhere flows
Without access of unexpected strength.
But, above all, the victory is most sure
For him, who, seeking faith by virtue, strives
To yield entire submission to the law
Of conscience; conscience reverenced and obey'd
As God's most intimate presence in the soul,
And his most perfect image in the world.
Endeavour thus to live; these rules regard;
These helps solicit; and a steadfast seat
Shall then be yours among the happy few
Who dwell on earth, yet breathe empyreal air,
Sons of the morning. For your nobler part,
Ere disencumber'd of her mortal chains,
Doubt shall be quell'd and trouble chased away;
With only such degree of sadness left
As may support longings of pure desire;
And strengthen love, rejoicing secretly
In the sublime attractions of the grave."
While, in this strain, the venerable sage
Pour'd forth his aspirations, and announced
His judgments, near that lonely house we paced
A plot of greensward, seemingly preserved
By nature's care from wreck of scatter'd stones,
And from encroachment of encircling heath:
Small space! but, for reiterated steps,
Smooth and commodious; as a stately deck
Which to and fro the mariner is used
To tread for pastime, talking with his mates
Or haply thinking of far-distant friends,
While the ship glides before a steady breeze.
Stillness prevail'd around us; and the voice,
That spake, was capable to lift the soul
Toward regions yet more tranquil. But, methought
That he, whose fix'd despondency had given
Impulse and motive to that strong discourse,
Was less upraised in spirit than abash'd,
Shrinking from admonition, like a man
Who feels, that to exhort is to reproach.
Yet not to be diverted from his aim,
The sage continued: "For that other loss,

The loss of confidence in social man,
By th' unexpected transports of our age
Carried so high, that every thought, which look'd
Beyond the temporal destiny of the kind
To many seem'd superfluous as, no cause
For such exalted confidence could e'er
Exist; so none is now for fix'd despair;
The two extremes are equally disown'd
By reason; if, with sharp recoil, from one
You have been driven far as its opposite,
Between them seek the point whereon to build
Sound expectations. So doth he advise
Who shared at first the illusion; but was soon
Cast from the pedestal of pride by shocks
Which nature gently gave, in woods and fields;
Nor unreproved by Providence, thus speaking
To the inattentive children of the world,
'Vainglorious generation! what new powers
On you have been conferr'd? what gifts, withheld
From your progenitors, have ye received,
Fit recompense of new desert? what claim
Are ye prepared to urge, that my decrees
For you should undergo a sudden change;
And the weak functions of one busy day,
Reclaiming and extirpating, perform
What all the slowly moving years of time,
With their united force, have left undone?
By nature's gradual processes be taught;
By story be confounded! Ye aspire
Rashly, to fall once more; and that false fruit
Which to your overweening spirits, yields
Hope of a flight celestial, will produce
Misery and shame. But wisdom of her sons
Shall not the less, though late, be justified.'
Such timely warning," said the wanderer, "gave
That visionary voice; and, at this day,
When a Tartarean darkness overspreads
The groaning nations; when the impious rule,
By will or by establish'd ordinance,
Their own dire agents, and constrain the good
To acts which they abhor; though I bewail
This triumph, yet the pity of my heart
Prevents me not from owning, that the law,
By which mankind now suffers, is most just.
For by superior energies; more strict
Affiance in each other; faith more firm
In their unhallow'd principles; the bad
Have fairly earn'd a victory o'er the weak,
The vacillating, inconsistent good.
Therefore, not unconsoled, I wait—in hope
To see the moment, when the righteous cause
Shall gain defenders zealous and devout
As they who have opposed her; in which virtue
Will, to her efforts, tolerate no bounds
That are not lofty as her rights; aspiring
By impulse of her own ethereal zeal.
That Spirit only can redeem mankind;
And when that sacred spirit shall appear,
Then shall *our* triumph be complete as theirs.
Yet, should this confidence prove vain, the wise
Have still the keeping of their proper peace;
Are guardians of their own tranquillity.
They act, or they recede, observe, and feel;
'Knowing the heart of man is set to be
The centre of this world, about the which
Those revolutions of disturbances
Still roll; where all the aspects of misery
Predominate: whose strong effects are such
As he must bear, being powerless to redress;
And that unless above himself he can
Erect himself, how poor a thing is man!'
"Happy is he who lives to understand—
Not human nature only, but explores
All natures,—to the end that he may find
The law that governs each; and where begins
The union, the partition where, that makes
Kind and degree, among all visible beings;
The constitutions, powers, and faculties,
Which they inherit,—cannot step beyond,—
And cannot fall beneath; that do assign
To every class its station and its office,
Through all the mighty commonwealth of things
Up from the creeping plant to sovereign man.
Such converse, if directed by a meek,
Sincere, and humble spirit, teaches love;
For knowledge is delight; and such delight
Breeds love: yet, suited as it rather is
To thought and to the climbing intellect,
It teaches less to love, than to adore;
If that be not indeed the highest love!"
"Yet," said I, tempted here to interpose,
"The dignity of life is not impair'd
By aught that innocently satisfies
The humbler cravings of the heart; and he
Is a still happier man, who, for those heights
Of speculation not unfit, descends;
And such benign affections cultivates
Among the inferior kinds; not merely those
That he may call his own, and which depend,
As individual objects of regard,
Upon his care,—from whom he also looks
For signs and tokens of a mutual bond,—
But others, far beyond this narrow sphere,
Whom, for the very sake of love, he loves.
Nor is it a mean praise of rural life
And solitude, that they do favour most,
Most frequently call forth, and best sustain
These pure sensations; that can penetrate
Th' obstreperous city; on the barren seas
Are not unfelt,—and much might recommend,
How much they might inspirit and endear,
The loneliness of this sublime retreat!"
"Yes," said the sage, resuming the discourse
Again directed to his downcast friend,
"If, with the froward will and grovelling soul
Of man offended, liberty is here,
And invitation every hour renew'd,
To mark *their* placid state, who never heard
Of a command which they have power to break,
Or rule which they are tempted to transgress;
These, with a soothed or elevated heart,
May we behold; their knowledge register;
Observe their ways; and, free from envy, find
Complacence there: but wherefore this to you?
I guess that, welcome to your lonely hearth,
The redbreast feeds in winter from your hand;
A box, perchance, is from your casement hung
For the small wren to build in; not in vain,
The barriers disregarding that surround
This deep abiding-place, before your sight
Mounts on the breeze the butterfly—and soars,
Small creature as she is, from earth's bright flowers

Into the dewy clouds. Ambition reigns
In the waste wilderness: the soul ascends
Towards her native firmament of heaven,
When the fresh eagle, in the month of May,
Upborne, at evening, on replenish'd wing,
This shaded valley leaves,—and leaves the dark
Impurpled hills,—conspicuously renewing
A proud communication with the sun
Low sunk beneath the horizon! List! I heard,
From yon huge breast of rock, a solemn bleat;
Sent forth as if it were the mountain's voice,
As if the visible mountain made the cry.
Again!" The effect upon the soul was such
As he express'd; from out the mountain's heart
The solemn bleat appear'd to issue, startling
The blank air—for the region all around
Stood silent, empty of all shape of life;
It was a lamb—left somewhere to itself,
The plaintive spirit of the solitude!
He paused, as if unwilling to proceed,
Through consciousness that silence in such place
Was best,—the most affecting eloquence.
But soon his thoughts return'd upon themselves,
And in soft tone of speech, he thus resumed.
"Ah! if the heart, too confidently raised,
Perchance too lightly occupied, or lull'd
Too easily, despise or overlook
The vassalage that binds her to the earth,
Her sad dependence upon time, and all
The trepidations of mortality,
What place so destitute and void—but there
The little flower her vanity shall check;
The training worm reprove her thoughtless pride?
"These craggy regions, these chaotic wilds
Does that benignity pervade, that warms
The mole contented with her darksome walk
In the cold ground; and to the emmet gives
Her foresight, and intelligence that makes
The tiny creatures strong by social league;
Supports the generations, multiplies
Their tribes, till we behold a spacious plain
Or grassy bottom, all, with little hills—
Their labour—cover'd, as a lake with waves;
Thousands of cities, in the desert place
Built up of life, and food, and means of life!
Nor wanting here, to entertain the thought,
Creatures that in communities exist,
Less, as might seem, for general guardianship,
Or through dependence upon mutual aid,
Than by participation of delight
And a strict love of fellowship, combined.
What other spirit can it be that prompts
The gilded summer flies to mix and weave
Their sports together in the solar beam,
Or in the gloom of twilight hum their joy?
More obviously, the self-same influence rules
The feather'd kinds; the fieldfare's pensive flock,
The cawing rooks, and seamews from afar,
Hovering above these inland solitudes,
By the rough wind unscatter'd, at whose call
Their voyage was begun: nor is its power
Unfelt among the sedentary fowl
That seek yon pool, and there prolong their stay
In silent congress; or together roused
Take flight: while with their clang the air resounds.
And, over all, in that ethereal vault,
Is the mute company of changeful clouds;
Bright apparition suddenly put forth,
The rainbow, smiling on the faded storm;
The mild assemblage of the starry heavens;
And the great sun, earth's universal lord!
"How bountiful is nature! he shall find
Who seeks not; and to him, who hath not ask'd,
Large measure shall be dealt. Three Sabbath-days
Are scarcely told, since, on a service bent
Of mere humanity, you clomb those heights;
And what a marvellous and heavenly show
Was to your sight reveal'd! the swains moved on
And heeded not; you linger'd, and perceived.
There is a luxury in self-dispraise;
And inward self-disparagement affords
To meditative spleen a grateful feast.
Trust me, pronouncing on your own desert,
You judge unthankfully; distemper'd nerves
Infect the thoughts: the languor of the frame
Depresses the soul's vigour. Quit your couch—
Cleave not so fondly to your moody cell;
Nor let the hallow'd powers, that shed from heaven
Stillness and rest, with disapproving eye
Look down upon your taper, through a watch
Of midnight hours, unseasonably twinkling
In this deep hollow, like a sullen star
Dimly reflected in a lonely pool.
Take courage, and withdraw yourself from ways
That run not parallel to nature's course.
Rise with the lark! your matins shall obtain
Grace, be their composition what it may,
If but with hers perform'd; climb once again,
Climb every day, those ramparts; meet the breeze
Upon their tops,—adventurous as a bee
That from your garden thither soars, to feed
On new blown heath; let yon commanding rock
Be your frequented watchtower; roll the stone
In thunder down the mountains: with all your
might
Chase the wild goat; and, if the bold red deer
Fly to these harbours, driven by hound and horn
Loud echoing, add your speed to the pursuit:
So, wearied to your hut shall you return,
And sink at evening into sound repose."
The solitary lifted toward the hills
A kindling eye; poetic feelings rush'd
Into my bosom, whence these words broke forth:
"O! what a joy it were, in vigorous health,
To have a body (this our vital frame
With shrinking sensibility endued,
And all the nice regards of flesh and blood)
And to the elements surrender it
As if it were a spirit! How divine,
The liberty, for frail, for mortal man
To roam at large among unpeopled glens
And mountainous retirements, only trod
By devious footsteps; regions consecrate
To oldest time! and, reckless of the storm
That keeps the raven quiet in her nest,
Be as a presence or a motion—one
Among the many there; and, while the mists
Flying, and rainy vapours, call out shapes
And phantoms from the crags and solid earth
As fast as a musician scatters sounds
Out of an instrument; and, while the streams
(As at a first creation and in haste

To exercise their untried faculties)
Descending from the region of the clouds,
And starting from the hollows of the earth
More multitudinous every moment, rend
Their way before them—what a joy to roam
An equal among mightiest energies:
And haply sometimes with articulate voice,
Amid the deafening tumult, scarcely heard
By him that utters it, exclaim aloud,
'Be this continued so from day to day,
Nor let the fierce commotion have an end,
Ruinous though it be, from month to month!'"
"Yes," said the wanderer, taking from my lips
The strain of transport, "whosoe'er in youth
Has, through ambition of his soul, given way
To such desires, and grasp'd at such delight,
Shall feel congenial stirrings late and long,
In spite of all the weakness that life brings,
Its cares and sorrows; he though taught to own
The tranquillizing power of time, shall wake,
Wake sometimes to a noble restlessness—
Loving the sports which once he gloried in.
"Compatriot, friend, remote are Garry's hills,
The streams far distant of your native glen;
Yet is their form and image here express'd
With brotherly resemblance. Turn your steps
Wherever fancy leads, by day, by night,
Are various engines working, not the same
As those by which your soul in youth was moved,
But by the great Artificer endued
With no inferior power. You dwell alone:
You walk, you live, you speculate alone;
Yet doth remembrance, like a sovereign prince,
For you a stately gallery maintain
Of gay or tragic pictures. You have seen,
Have acted, suffer'd, travell'd far, observed
With no incurious eye; and books are yours,
Within whose silent chambers treasure lies
Preserved from age to age: more precious far
Than that accumulated store of gold
And orient gems, which, for a day of need,
The sultan hides within ancestral tombs
These hoards of truth you can unlock at will:
And music waits upon your skilful touch,
Sounds which the wandering shepherd from these heights
Hears, and forgets his purpose; furnish'd thus,
How can you droop, if willing to be raised?
"A piteous lot it were to flee from man—
Yet not rejoice in nature. He—whose hours
Are by domestic pleasures uncaress'd
And unenliven'd; who exists whole years
Apart from benefits received or done
'Mid the transactions of the bustling crowd;
Who neither hears, nor feels a wish to hear,
Of the world's interests—such a one hath need
Of a quick fancy, and an active heart,
That, for the day's consumption, books may yield
A not unwholesome food, and earth and air
Supply his morbid humour with delight.
Truth has her pleasure grounds, her haunts of ease
And easy contemplation,—gay parterres,
And labyrinthine walks, her sunny glades
And shady groves for recreation framed;
These may he range, if willing to partake
Their soft indulgences, and in due time
May issue thence, recruited for the tasks
And course of service truth requires from those
Who tend her altars, wait upon her throne,
And guard her fortresses. Who thinks, and feels,
And recognises ever and anon
The breeze of nature stirring in his soul,
Why need such man go desperately astray,
And nurse 'the dreadful appetite of death!'
If tired with systems—each in its degree
Substantial, and all crumbling in their turn,
Let him build systems of his own, and smile
At the fond work, demolish'd with a touch;
If unreligious, let him be at once,
Among ten thousand innocents, enroll'd
A pupil in the many chamber'd school,
Where superstition weaves her airy dreams.
"Life's autumn past, I stand on winter's verge,
And daily lose what I desire to keep;
Yet rather would I instantly decline
To the traditionary sympathies
Of a most rustic ignorance, and take
A fearful apprehension from the owl
Or death-watch, and as readily rejoice,
If two auspicious magpies cross'd my way;
To this would rather bend than see and hear
The repetitions wearisome of sense,
Where soul is dead, and feeling hath no place;
Where knowledge, ill begun in cold remark
On outward things, with formal inference ends;
Or, if the mind turn inward, 'tis perplex'd,
Lost in a gloom of uninspired research;
Meanwhile, the heart within the heart, the seat
Where peace and happy consciousness should dwell,
On its own axis restlessly revolves,
Yet nowhere finds the cheering light of truth.
"Upon the breast of new-created earth
Man walk'd; and when and wheresoe'er he moved,
Alone or mated, solitude was not.
He heard, upon the wind, the articulate voice
Of God; and angels to his sight appear'd,
Crowning the glorious hills of paradise;
Or through the groves gliding like morning mist
Enkindled by the sun. He sate, and talk'd
With winged messengers; who daily brought
To his small island in the ethereal deep
Tidings of joy and love. From these pure heights
(Whether of actual vision, sensible
To sight and feeling, or that in this sort
Have condescendingly been shadowed forth
Communications spiritually maintain'd,
And intuitions moral and divine)
Fell human kind—to banishment condemn'd
That flowing years repeal'd not; and distress
And grief spread wide; but man escaped the doom
Of destitution; solitude was not.
Jehovah—shapeless Power above all powers,
Single and one, the omnipresent God,
By vocal utterance, or blaze of light,
Or cloud of darkness, localized in heaven;
On earth enshrined within the wandering ark;
Or, out of Zion, thundering from his throne
Between the cherubim, on the chosen race
Shower'd miracles, and ceased not to dispense
Judgments, that fill'd the land from age to age
With hope, and love, and gratitude, and fear;
And with amazement smote: thereby t' assert

His scorn'd, or unacknowledged sovereignty.
And when the One, ineffable of name,
Of nature indivisible, withdrew
From mortal adoration or regard,
Not then was deity ingulf'd, nor man,
The rational creature, left, to feel the weight
Of his own reason, without sense or thought,
Of higher reason and a purer will,
To benefit and bless, through mightier power;
Whether the Persian—zealous to reject
Altar and image, and the inclusive walls
And roofs of temples built by human hands—
To loftiest heights ascending from their tops,
With myrtle-wreath'd tiara on his brow,
Presented sacrifice to moon and stars,
And to the winds and mother elements,
And the whole circle of the heavens, for him
A sensitive existence, and a God,
With lifted hands invoked, and songs of praise:
Or, less reluctantly to bonds of sense
Yielding his soul, the Babylonian framed
For influence undefined a personal shape;
And, from the plain, with toil immense, uprear'd
Tower eight times planted on the top of tower;
That Belus, nightly to his splendid couch
Descending, there might rest; upon that height
Pure and serene, diffused—to overlook
Winding Euphrates, and the city vast
Of his devoted worshippers, far-stretch'd,
With grove, and field, and garden, interspersed;
Their town, and foodful region for support
Against the pressure of beleaguring war.
"Chaldean shepherds, ranging trackless fields,
Beneath the concave of unclouded skies
Spread like a sea, in boundless solitude,
Look'd on the polar star, as on a guide
And guardian of their course, that never closed
His steadfast eye. The planetary five
With a submissive reverence they beheld:
Watch'd, from the centre of their sleeping flocks
Those radiant Mercuries, that seem to move
Carrying through ether, in perpetual round,
Decrees and resolutions of the gods;
And, by their aspects, signifying works
Of dim futurity, to man reveal'd.
The imaginative faculty was lord
Of observations natural; and, thus
Led on, those shepherds made report of stars
In set rotation passing to and fro,
Between the orbs of our apparent sphere
And its invisible counterpart, adorn'd
With answering constellations, under earth,
Removed from all approach of living sight,
But present to the dead; who, so they deem'd,
Like those celestial messengers beheld
All accidents, and judges were of all.
"The lively Grecian, in a land of hills,
Rivers, and fertile plains, and sounding shores,
Under a cope of variegated sky,
Could find commodious place for every god,
Promptly received, as prodigally brought,
From the surrounding countries—at the choice
Of all adventurers. With unrivall'd skill,
As nicest observation furnish'd hints
For studious fancy, did his hand bestow
On fluent operations a fix'd shape;
Metal or stone, idolatrously served,
And yet triumphant o'er this pompous show
Of art, this palpable array of sense,
On every side encounter'd; in despite
Of the gross fictions chanted in the streets
By wandering rhapsodists; and in contempt
Of doubt and bold denial hourly urged
Amid the wrangling schools—a spirit hung,
Beautiful region! o'er thy towns and farms,
Statues and temples, and memorial tombs;
And emanations were perceived; and acts
Of immortality, in nature's course,
Exemplified by mysteries, that were felt
As bonds, on grave philosopher imposed
And armed warrior; and in every grove
A gay or pensive tenderness prevail'd,
When piety more awful had relax'd.
'Take, running river, take these locks of mine'—
Thus would the votary say—'this severed hair,
My vow fulfilling, do I here present,
Thankful for my beloved child's return.
Thy banks, Cephisus, he again hath trod,
Thy murmurs heard; and drunk the crystal lymph
With which thou dost refresh the thirsty lip,
And moisten all day long these flowery fields!'
And doubtless, sometimes, when the hair was shed
Upon the flowing stream, a thought arose
Of life continuous, being unimpair'd:
That hath been, is, and where it was and is
There shall endure,—existence unexposed
To the blind walk of mortal accident;
From diminutions safe and weakening age;
While man grows old, and dwindles, and decays;
And countless generations of mankind
Depart; and leave no vestige where they trod.
"We live by admiration, hope, and love;
And, e'en as these are well and wisely fix'd,
In dignity of being we ascend.
But what is error?"—"Answer he who can!"
The skeptic somewhat haughtily exclaim'd:
"Love, hope, and admiration—are they not
Mad fancy's favourite vassals? Does not life
Use them, full oft, as pioneers to ruin,
Guides to destruction? Is it well to trust
Imagination's light when reason's fails,
Th' unguarded taper where the guarded faints?
Stoop from those heights, and soberly declare
What error is; and, of our errors, which
Doth most debase the mind; the genuine seats
Of power, where are they? Who shall regulate
With truth, the scale of intellectual rank!"
"Methinks," persuasively the sage replied,
"That for this arduous office you possess
Some rare advantages. Your early days
A grateful recollection must supply
Of much exalted good by Heaven vouchsafed
To dignify the humblest state. Your voice
Hath, in my hearing, often testified
That poor men's children, they, and they alone
By their condition taught, can understand
The wisdom of the prayer that daily asks
For daily bread. A consciousness is yours
How feelingly religion may be learn'd
In smoky cabins, from a mother's tongue—
Heard while the dwelling vibrates to the din
Of the contiguous torrent, gathering strength

At every moment, and, with strength, increase
Of fury; or, while snow is at the door,
Assaulting and defending, and the wind,
A sightless labourer, whistles at his work—
Fearful, but resignation tempers fear,
And piety is sweet to infant minds.
The shepherd lad, who in the sunshine carves,
On the green turf, a dial, to divide
The silent hours; and who to that report
Can portion out his pleasures, and adapt
His round of pastoral duties, is not left
With less intelligence for *moral* things
Of gravest import. Early he perceives,
Within himself, a measure and a rule,
Which to the sun of truth he can apply,
That shines for him, and shines for all mankind.
Experience daily fixing his regards
On nature's wants, he knows how few they are,
And where they lie, how answer'd and appeased.
This knowledge ample recompense affords
For manifold privations; he refers
His notions to this standard, on this rock
Rests his desires; and hence, in after life,
Soul-strengthening patience, and sublime content.
Imagination—not permitted here
To waste her powers, as in the worldling's mind,
On fickle pleasures, and superfluous cares
And trivial ostentation—is left free
And puissant to range the solemn walks
Of time and nature, girded by a zone
That, while it binds, invigorates and supports.
Acknowledge, then, that whether by the side
Of his poor hut, or on the mountain top,
Or in the cultured field, a man so bred
(Take from him what you will upon the score
Of ignorance or illusion) lives and breathes
For noble purposes of mind: his heart
Beats to the heroic song of ancient days;
His eye distinguishes, his soul creates.
And those illusions, which excite the scorn
Or move the pity of unthinking minds,
Are they not mainly outward ministers
Of inward conscience? with whose service charged
They came and go, appear'd and disappear,
Diverting evil purposes, remorse
Awakening, chastening an intemperate grief
Or pride of heart abating: and, whene'er
For less important ends those phantoms move
Who would forbid them, if their presence serve
Among wild mountains and unpeopled heaths,
Filling a space, else vacant, to exalt
The forms of nature, and enlarge her powers?
"Once more to distant ages of the world
Let us revert, and place before our thoughts
The face which rural solitude might wear
To th' unenlighten'd swains of pagan Greece.
In that fair clime, the lonely herdsman, stretch'd
On the soft grass through half a summer's day,
With music lull'd his indolent repose:
And in some fit of weariness, if he,
When his own breath was silent, chanced to hear
A distant strain, far sweeter than the sounds
Which his poor skill could make, his fancy fetch'd,
E'en from the blazing chariot of the sun
A beardless youth, who touch'd a golden lute,
And fill'd th' illumined groves with ravishment.
The nightly hunter, lifting up his eyes
Towards the crescent moon, with grateful heart
Call'd on the lovely wanderer who bestow'd
That timely light, to share his joyous sport:
And hence, a beaming goddess with her nymphs,
Across the lawn and through the darksome grove
(Not unaccompanied with tuneful notes
By echo multiplied from rock or cave)
Swept in the storm of chase, as moon and stars
Glance rapidly along the clouded heaven,
When winds are blowing strong. The traveller slaked
His thirst from rill or gushing fount, and thank'd
The naiad. Sunbeams, upon distant hills
Gliding apace, with shadows in their train,
Might, with small help from fancy, be transformed
Into fleet oreads sporting visibly.
The zephyrs, fanning as they pass'd, their wings,
Lack'd not, for love, fair objects whom they woo'd
With gentle whisper. Wither'd boughs grotesque,
Stripp'd of their leaves and twigs by hoary age,
From depth of shaggy covert peeping forth
In the low vale, or on steep mountain side;
And, sometimes, intermix'd with stirring horns
Of the live deer, or goat's depending beard—
These were the lurking satyrs, a wild brood
Of gamesome deities; or Pan himself,
The simple shepherd's awe-inspiring god!"
As this apt strain proceeded, I could mark
Its kindly influence, o'er the yielding brow
Of our companion, gradually diffused
While, listening he had paced the noiseless turf,
Like one whose untired ear a murmuring stream
Detains; but tempted now to interpose,
He with a smile exclaim'd—
"'Tis well you speak
At a safe distance from our native land,
And from the mansions where our youth was taught.
The true descendants of those godly men
Who swept from Scotland, in a flame of zeal,
Shrine, altar, image, and the massy piles
That harbour'd them,—the souls retaining yet
The churlish features of that after race
Who fled to caves, and woods, and naked rocks,
In deadly scorn of superstitious rites,
Or what their scruples construed to be such—
How, think you, would they tolerate this scheme
Of fine propensities, that tends, if urged
Far as it might be urged, to sow afresh
The weeds of Roman phantasy, in vain
Uprooted; would re-consecrate our wells
To good Saint Fillan and to fair Saint Anne;
And from long banishment recall Saint Giles,
To watch again with tutelary love
O'er stately Edinborough throned on crags?
A blessed restoration, to behold
The patron, on the shoulders of his priests,
Once more parading through her crowded streets;
Now simply guarded by the sober powers
Of science, and philosophy, and sense!"
This answer follow'd. "You have turn'd my thoughts
Upon our brave progenitors, who rose
Against idolatry with warlike mind,
And shrunk from vain observances, to lurk
In caves, and woods, and under dismal rocks,

Deprived of shelter, covering, fire, and food;
Why? for this very reason that they felt,
And did acknowledge, wheresoe'er they moved,
A spiritual presence, ofttimes misconceived;
But still a high dependence, a divine
Bounty and government, that fill'd their hearts
With joy, and gratitude, and fear, and love:
And from their fervent lips drew hymns of praise,
That through the desert rang. Though favour'd less,
Far less, than these, yet such, in their degree,
Were those bewilder'd pagans of old time.
Beyond their own poor natures and above
They look'd: were humbly thankful for the good
Which the warm sun solicited—and earth
Bestow'd; were gladsome,—and their moral sense
They fortified with reverence for the gods
And they had hopes that overstepp'd the grave.
"Now, shall our great discoverers," he exclaim'd,
Raising his voice triumphantly, "obtain
From sense and reason less than these obtain'd,
Though far misled? Shall men for whom our age
Unbaffled powers of vision hath prepared,
T' explore the world without and world within,
Be joyless as the blind? Ambitious souls—
Whom earth, at this late season, hath produced
To regulate the moving spheres, and weigh
The planets in the hollow of their hand;
And they who rather die than soar, whose pains
Have solved the elements, or analyzed
The thinking principle—shall they in fact
Prove a degraded race? and what avails
Renown, if their presumption make them such?
O! there is laughter at their work in heaven!
Inquire of ancient wisdom: go, demand
Of mighty nature, if 'twas ever meant
That we should pry far off yet be unraised;
That we should pore, and dwindle as we pore,
Viewing all objects unremittingly
In disconnexion dead and spiritless;
And still dividing, and dividing still,
Break down all grandeur, still unsatisfied
With the perverse attempt, while littleness
May yet become more little; waging thus
An impious warfare with the very life
Of our own souls! And if indeed there be
An all-pervading spirit, upon whom
Our dark foundations rest, could he design
That this magnificent effect of power,
The earth we tread, the sky that we behold
By day, and all the pomp which night reveals,
That these—and that superior mystery,
Our vital frame, so fearfully devised,
And the dread soul within it—should exist
Only to be examined, ponder'd, search'd,
Probed, vex'd, and criticised? Accuse me not
Of arrogance, unknown wanderer as I am,
If, having walk'd with nature threescore years,
And offer'd, far as frailty would allow,
My heart a daily sacrifice to truth,
I now affirm of nature and of truth,
Whom I have served, that their DIVINITY
Revolts, offended at the ways of men
Sway'd by such motives, to such end employ'd;
Philosophers, who, though the human soul
Be of a thousand faculties composed,
And twice ten thousand interests, do yet prize
This soul, and the transcendent universe,
No more than as a mirror that reflects
To proud self-love her own intelligence;
That one, poor, infinite object, in the abyss
Of infinite being, twinkling restlessly!
"Nor higher place can be assign'd to him
And his compeers—the laughing sage of Francs
Crown'd was he, if my memory do not err,
With laurel planted upon hoary hairs,
In sign of conquest by his wit achieved,
And benefits his wisdom had conferr'd,
His tottering body was with wreaths of flowers
Opprest, far less becoming ornaments
Than spring oft twines about a mouldering tree
Yet so it pleased a fond, a vain old man,
And a most frivolous people. Him I mean
Who penn'd, to ridicule confiding faith,
This sorry legend; which by chance we found
Piled in a nook, through malice, as might seem,
Among more innocent rubbish." Speaking thus,
With a brief notice when, and how, and where,
We had espied the book, he drew it forth;
And courteously, as if the act removed,
At once, all traces from the good man's heart
Of unbenign aversion or contempt,
Restored it to its owner. "Gentle friend,"
Herewith he grasp'd the solitary's hand,
"You have known better lights and guides than these—
Ah! let not aught amiss within dispose
A noble mind to practise on herself,
And tempt opinion to support the wrongs
Of passion: whatsoe'er be felt or fear'd,
From higher judgment seats make no appeal
To lower: can you question that the soul
Inherits an allegiance, not by choice
To be cast off, upon an oath proposed
By each new upstart notion? In the ports
Of levity no refuge can be found,
No shelter, for a spirit in distress.
He, who by wilful disesteem of life,
And proud insensibility to hope,
Affronts the eye of solitude, shall learn
That her mild nature can be terrible;
That neither she nor silence lack the power
T' avenge their own insulted majesty.
O blest seclusion! when the mind admits
The law of duty; and can therefore move
Through each vicissitude of loss and gain,
Link'd in entire complacence with her choice;
When youth's presumptuousness is mellow'd down
And manhood's vain anxiety dismiss'd;
When wisdom shows her seasonable fruit,
Upon the boughs of sheltering leisure hung
In sober plenty; when the spirit stoops
To drink with gratitude the crystal stream
Of unreproved enjoyment; and is pleased
To muse,—and be saluted by the air
Of meek repentance, wafting wall-flower scents
From out the crumbling ruins of fall'n pride
And chambers of transgression now forlorn.
O, calm, contented days, and peaceful nights
Who, when such good can be obtain'd, would strive
To reconcile his manhood to a couch
Soft, as may seem, but, under that disguise

Stuff'd with the thorny substance of the past,
For fix'd annoyance; and full oft beset
With floating dreams, disconsolate and black,
The vapory phantoms of futurity?
"Within the soul a faculty abides,
That with interpositions, which would hide
And darken, so can deal, that they become
Contingencies of pomp; and serve t' exait
Her native brightness. As the ample moon,
In the deep stillness of a summer even
Rising behind a thick and lofty grove,
Burns like an unconsuming fire of light,
In the green trees; and, kindling on all sides
Their leafy umbrage, turns the dusky veil
Into a substance glorious as her own,
Yea, with her own incorporated, by power
Capacious and serene; like power abides
In man's celestial spirit; virtue thus
Sets forth and magnifies herself; thus feeds
A calm, a beautiful, and silent fire,
From the encumbrances of mortal life,
From error, disappointment,—nay, from guilt:
And sometimes, so relenting justice wills,
From palpable oppressions of despair."
The solitary by these words was touch'd
With manifest emotion, and exclaim'd,
"But how begin? and whence? The mind is free;
Resolve, the haughty moralist would say,
This single act is all that we demand.
Alas! such wisdom bids a creature fly
Whose very sorrow is, that time hath shorn
His natural wings! To friendship let him turn
For succour; but perhaps he sits alone
On stormy waters, in a little boat
That holds but him, and can contain no more!
Religion tells of amity sublime
Which no condition can preclude: of one
Who sees all suffering, comprehends all wants,
All weakness fathoms, can supply all needs;
But is that bounty absolute? His gifts,
Are they not still, in some degree, rewards
For acts of service? Can his love extend
To hearts that own not him? Will showers of grace,
When in the sky no promise may be seen,
Fall to refresh a parch'd and wither'd land?
Or shall the groaning spirit cast her load
At the Redeemer's feet?"
In rueful tone,
With some impatience in his mien he spake;
Back to my mind rush'd all that had been urged
To calm the sufferer when his story closed;
I look'd for counsel as unbending now;
But a discriminating sympathy
Stoop'd to this apt reply—
"As men from men
Do, in the constitution of their souls,
Differ, by mystery not to be explain'd;
And as we fall by various ways, and sink
One deeper than another, self-condemn'd,
Through manifold degrees of guilt and shame,
So manifold and various are the ways
Of restoration, fashion'd to the steps
Of all infirmity, and tending all
To the same point,—attainable by all;
Peace in ourselves, and union with our God.
For you, assuredly, a hopeful road
Lies open: we have heard from you a voice
At every moment soften'd in its course
By tenderness of heart; have seen your eye,
Even like an altar lit by fire from heaven,
Kindle before us. Your discourse this day,
That, like the fabled lethe, wish'd to flow
In creeping sadness, through oblivious shades
Of death and night, has caught at every turn
The colours of the sun. Access for you
Is yet preserved to principles of truth,
Which the imaginative will upholds
In seats of wisdom, not to be approach'd
By the inferior faculty that moulds,
With her minute and speculative pains,
Opinion, ever changing! I have seen
A curious child, who dwelt upon a tract
Of inland ground, applying to his ear
The convolutions of a smooth-lipp'd shell;
To which, in silence hush'd, his very soul
Listen'd intensely; and his countenance soon
Brighten'd with joy; for murmurings from within
Were heard,—sonorous cadences! whereby
To his belief, the monitor express'd
Mysterious union with its native sea.
E'en such a shell the universe itself
Is to the ear of faith: and there are times,
I doubt not, when to you it doth impart
Authentic tidings of invisible things;
Of ebb and flow, and ever during power;
And central peace, subsisting at the heart
Of endless agitation. Here you stand,
Adore, and worship, when you know it not;
Pious beyond the intention of your thought;
Devout above the meaning of your will.
Yes, you have felt, and may not cease to feel.
Th' estate of man would be indeed forlorn
If false conclusions of the reasoning power
Made the eye blind, and closed the passages
Through which the ear converses with the heart.
Has not the soul, the being of your life,
Received a shock of awful consciousness,
In some calm season, when these lofty rocks
At night's approach bring down the unclouded sky
To rest upon their circumambient walls;
A temple framing of dimensions vast,
And yet not too enormous for the sound
Of human anthems,—choral song, or burst
Sublime of instrumental harmony
To glorify th' Eternal! What if these
Did never break the stillness that prevails
Here, if the solemn nightingale be mute,
And the soft woodlark here did never chant
Her vespers, nature fails not to provide
Impulse and utterance. The whispering air
Sends inspiration from the shadowy heights,
And blind recesses of the cavern'd rocks;
The little hills, and waters numberless,
Inaudible by daylight, blend their notes
With the loud streams: and often, at the hour
When issue forth the first pale stars, is heard,
Within the circuit of this fabric huge,
One voice—the solitary raven, flying
Athwart the concave of the dark-blue dome,
Unseen, perchance above all power of sight—
An iron knell! with echoes from afar

Faint—and still fainter—as the cry, with which
The wanderer accompanies her flight
Through the calm region, fades upon the ear,
Diminishing by distance till it seem'd
T' expire, yet from th' abyss is caught again,
And yet again recover'd.

"But descending
From these imaginative heights, that yield
Far-stretching views into eternity,
Acknowledge that in nature's humbler power
Your cherish'd sullenness is forced to bend
E'en here, where her amenities are sown
With sparing hand. Then trust yourself abroad
To range her blooming bowers, and spacious fields,
Where on the labours of the happy throng
She smiles, including in her wide embrace
City, and town, and tower,—and sea with ships
Sprinkled; be our companion while we track
Her rivers populous with gliding life;
While, free as air, o'er printless sands we march,
Or pierce the gloom of her majestic woods;
Roaming, or resting under grateful shade
In peace and meditative cheerfulness;
Where living things, and things inanimate,
Do speak, at heaven's command, to eye and ear,
And speak to social reason's inner sense,
With inarticulate language.

"For the man,
Who, in this spirit, communes with the forms
Of nature, who with understanding heart
Doth know and love such objects as excite
No morbid passions, no disquietude,
No vengeance, and no hatred, needs must feel
The joy of that pure principle of love
So deeply, that, unsatisfied with aught
Less pure and exquisite, he cannot choose
But seek for objects of a kindred love
In fellow natures and a kindred joy.
Accordingly he by degrees perceives
His feelings of aversion soften'd down;
A holy tenderness pervade his frame.
His sanity of reason not impair'd,
Say rather, all his thoughts now flowing clear,
From a clear fountain flowing, he looks round
And seeks for good; and finds the good he seeks;
Until abhorrence and contempt are things
He only knows by name; and, if he hear,
From other mouths, the language which they speak,
He is compassionate; and has no thought,
No feeling, which can overcome his love.

"And further; by contemplating these forms
In the relations which they bear to man,
He shall discern, how, through the various means
Which silently they yield, are multiplied
The spiritual presences of absent things.
Trust me, that for the instructed, time will come
When they shall meet no object but may teach
Some acceptable lesson to their minds
Of human suffering, or of human joy.
So shall they learn, while all things speak of man,
Their duties from all forms; and general laws,
And local accidents, shall tend alike
To rouse, to urge; and, with the will, confer
Th' ability to spread the blessings wide
Of true philanthropy. The light of love
Not failing, perseverance from their steps
Departing not, for them shall be confirm'd
The glorious habit by which sense is made
Subservient still to moral purposes,
Auxiliar to divine. That change shall clothe
The naked spirit, ceasing to deplore
The burden of existence. Science then
Shall be a precious visitant; and then,
And only then, be worthy of her name,
For then her heart shall kindle; her dull eye,
Dull and inanimate, no more shall hang
Chain'd to its object in brute slavery;
But taught with patient interest to watch
The processes of things, and serve the cause
Of order and distinctness, not for this
Shall I forget that its most noble use,
Its most illustrious province, must be found
In furnishing clear guidance, a support
Not treacherous to the mind's *excursive* power.
So build we up the being that we are;
Thus deeply drinking in the soul of things,
We shall be wise perforce; and while inspired
By choice, and conscious that the will is free,
Unswerving shall we move, as if impell'd
By strict necessity, along the path
Of order and of good. Whate'er we see,
Whate'er we feel, by agency direct
Or indirect, shall tend to feed and nurse
Our faculties, shall fix in calmer seats
Of moral strength, and raise to loftier heights
Of love divine, our intellectual soul."

Here closed the sage that eloquent harangue,
Pour'd forth with fervour in continuous stream;
Such as, remote, 'mid savage wilderness,
An Indian chief discharges from his breast
Into the hearing of assembled tribes,
In open circle seated round, and hush'd
As the unbreathing air, when not a leaf
Stirs in the mighty woods. So did he speak:
The words he utter'd shall not pass away;
For they sank into me—the bounteous gift
Of one whom time and nature had made wise
Gracing his language with authority
Which hostile spirits silently allow;
Of one accustom'd to desires that feed
On fruitage gather'd from the tree of life;
To hopes on knowledge and experience built;
Of one in whom persuasion and belief
Had ripen'd into faith, and faith become
A passionate intuition; whence the soul,
Though bound to earth by ties of pity and love,
From all injurious servitude was free.

The sun, before his place of rest were reach'd,
Had yet to travel far, but unto us,
To us who stood low in that hollow dell,
He had become invisible,—a pomp
Leaving behind of yellow radiance spread
Upon the mountain sides, in contrast bold
With ample shadows, seemingly, no less
Than those resplendent lights, his rich bequest,
A dispensation of his evening power.
Adown the path that from the glen had led
The funeral train, the shepherd and his mate
Were seen descending; forth to greet them ran
Our little page; the rustic pair approach;
And in the matron's aspect may be read
A plain assurance that the words which told

How that neglected pensioner was sent
Before his time into a quiet grave,
Had done to her humanity no wrong:
But we are kindly welcomed—promptly served
With ostentatious zeal. Along the floor
Of the small cottage in the lonely dell
A grateful couch was spread for our repose;
Where, in the guise of mountaineers, we slept,
Stretch'd upon fragrant heath, and lull'd by sound
Of far-off torrents charming the still night,
And to tired limbs and over-busy thoughts
Inviting sleep and soft forgetfulness.

BOOK V.

THE PASTOR.

ARGUMENT.

Farewell to the valley. Reflections. Sight of a large and populous vale. Solitary consents to go forward. Vale described. The pastor's dwelling, and some account of him. The churchyard. Church and monuments. The solitary musing, and where. Roused. In the churchyard the solitary communicates the thoughts which had recently passed through his mind. Lofty tone of the wanderer's discourse of yesterday adverted to. Rite of baptism, and the professions accompanying it, contrasted with the real state of human life. Inconsistency of the best men. Acknowledgment that practice falls far below the injunctions of duty as existing in the mind. General complaint of a falling off in the value of life after the time of youth. Outward appearances of content and happiness in degree illusive. Pastor approaches. Appeal made to him. His answer. Wanderer in sympathy with him. Suggestion that the least ambitious inquirers may be most free from error. The pastor is desired to give some portraits of the living or dead from his own observation of life among these mountains. And for what purpose. Pastor consents. Mountain cottage. Excellent qualities of its inhabitants. Solitary expresses his pleasure; but denies the praise of virtue to worth of this kind. Feelings of the priest before he enters upon his account of persons interred in the churchyard. Graves of unbaptized infants. What sensations they excite. Funeral and sepulchral observances, whence. Ecclesiastical establishments, whence derived. Profession of belief in the doctrine of immortality.

Farewell, deep valley, with thy one rude house,
And its small lot of life-supporting fields,
And guardian rocks! Farewell, attractive seat!
To the still influx of the morning light
Open, and day's pure cheerfulness, but veil'd
From human observation, as if yet
Primeval forests wrapp'd thee round with dark
Impenetrable shade; once more farewell,
Majestic circuit, beautiful abyss,
By nature destined from the birth of things
For quietness profound!
Upon the side
Of that brown slope, the outlet of the vale,
Lingering behind my comrades, thus I breathed
A parting tribute to a spot that seem'd
Like the fix'd centre of a troubled world.
And now, pursuing leisurely my way,
How vain, thought I, it is by change of place
To seek that comfort which the mind denies;
Yet trial and temptation oft are shunn'd
Wisely; and by such tenure do we hold
Frail life's possessions, that even they whose fate
Yields no peculiar reason of complaint,
Might, by the promise that is here, be won
To steal from active duties, and embrace
Obscurity, and calm forgetfulness.
Knowledge, methinks in these disorder'd times,
Should be allow'd a privilege to have
Her anchorites, like piety of old;
Men, who, from faction sacred, and unstain'd
By war, might, if so minded, turn aside
Uncensured, and subsist, a scatter'd few
Living to God and nature, and content
With that communion. Consecrated be
The spots where such abide! But happier still
The man, whom, furthermore, a hope attends
That meditation and research may guide
His privacy to principles and powers
Discover'd or invented: or set forth,
Through his acquaintance with the ways of truth,
In lucid order; so that, when his course
Is run, some faithful eulogist may say,
He sought not praise, and praise did overlook
His unobtrusive merit; but his life,
Sweet to himself, was exercised in good
That shall survive his name and memory.
Acknowledgments of gratitude sincere
Accompanied these musings: fervent thanks
For my own peaceful lot and happy choice;
A choice that from the passions of the world
Withdrew, and fix'd me in a still retreat,
Shelter'd, but not to social duties lost,
Secluded, but not buried; and with song
Cheering my days, and with industrious thought,
With ever-welcome company of books,
By virtuous friendship's soul-sustaining aid,
And with the blessings of domestic love.
Thus occupied in mind I paced along,
Following the rugged road, by sledge or wheel
Worn in the moorland, till I overtook
My two associates, in the morning sunshine
Halting together on a rocky knoll,
From which the road descended rapidly
To the green meadows of another vale.
Here did our pensive host put forth his hand
In sign of farewell. "Nay," the old man said,
"The fragrant air its coolness still retains;
The herds and flocks are yet abroad to crop
The dewy grass; you cannot leave us now,
We must not part at this inviting hour."
He yielded, though reluctant; for his mind
Instinctively disposed him to retire
To his own covert; as a billow, heaved
Upon the beach, rolls back into the sea,
So we descend; and winding round a rock
Attain a point that show'd the valley—stretch'd
In length before us; and, not distant far,
Upon a rising ground a gray church tower,
Whose battlements were screen'd by tufted trees
And, towards a crystal mere, that lay beyond
Among steep hills and woods embosom'd, flow'd
A copious stream with boldly winding course;
Here traceable, there hidden—there again
To sight restored, and glittering in the sun,
On the stream's bank, and every where, appear'd
Fair dwellings, single, or in social knots;
Some scatter'd o'er the level, others perch'd

On the hill sides, a cheerful quiet scene,
Now in its morning purity array'd.
"As, 'mid some happy valley of the Alps,"
Said I, "once happy, ere tyrannic power
Wantonly breaking in upon the Swiss,
Destroy'd their unoffending commonwealth,
A popular equality reigns here,
Save for one house of state beneath whose roof
A rural lord might dwell." "No feudal pomp,'
Replied our friend, a chronicler who stood
Where'er he moved upon familiar ground,
"Nor feudal power is there; but there abides,
In his allotted home, a genuine priest,
The shepherd of his flock; or, as a king
Is styled, when most affectionately praised,
The father of his people. Such is he;
And rich and poor, and young and old, rejoice
Under his spiritual sway. He hath vouchsafed
To me some portion of a kind regard;
And something also of his inner mind
Hath he imparted—but I speak of him
As he is known to all. The calm delights
Of unambitious piety he chose,
And learning's solid dignity; though born
Of knightly race, nor wanting powerful friends.
Hither, in prime of manhood, he withdrew
From academic bowers. He loved the spot,
Who does not love his native soil? he prized
The ancient rural character, composed
Of simple manners, feelings unsuppress'd
And undisguised, and strong and serious thought;
A character reflected in himself,
With such embellishment as well beseems
His rank and sacred function. This deep vale
Winds far in reaches hidden from our eyes,
And one a turreted manorial hall
Adorns, in which the good man's ancestors
Have dwelt through ages, patrons of this cure.
To them, and to his own judicious pains,
The vicar's dwelling, and the whole domain,
Owes that presiding aspect which might well
Attract your notice; statelier than could else
Have been bestow'd, through course of common chance,
On an unwealthy mountain benefice."
This said, oft halting we pursued our way;
Nor reach'd the village churchyard till the sun,
Travelling at steadier pace than ours, had risen
Above the summits of the highest hills,
And round our path darted oppressive beams.
As chanced, the portals of the sacred pile
Stood open, and we enter'd. On my frame,
At such transition from the fervid air,
A grateful coolness fell, that seem'd to strike
The heart, in concert with that temperate awe
And natural reverence, which the place inspired.
Not raised in nice proportions was the pile,
But large and massy; for duration built;
With pillars crowded, and the roof upheld
By naked rafters intricately cross'd,
Like leafless underboughs, 'mid some thick grove,
All wither'd by the depth of shade above.
Admonitory texts inscribed the walls,
Each, in its ornamental scroll, enclosed,
Each also crown'd with winged heads, a pair
Of rudely painted cherubim. The floor
Of nave and aisle, in unpretending guise,
Was occupied by oaken benches, ranged
In seemly rows; the chancel only show'd
Some inoffensive marks of earthly state
And vain distinction. A capacious pew
Of sculptured oak stood here, with drapery lined;
And marble monuments were here display'd
Thronging the walls; and on the floor beneath
Sepulchral stones appear'd, with emblems graven
And foot-worn epitaphs, and some with small
And shining effigies of brass inlaid.
The tribute by these various records claim'd,
Without reluctance did we pay; and read
The ordinary chronicle of birth,
Office, alliance, and promotion, all
Ending in dust; of upright magistrates,
Grave doctors strenuous for the mother church
And uncorrupted senators, alike
To king and people true. A brazen plate,
Not easily decipher'd, told of one
Whose course of earthly honour was begun
In quality of page among the train
Of the eighth Henry, when he cross'd the seas
His royal state to show, and prove his strength
In tournament, upon the fields of France.
Another tablet register'd the death,
And praised the gallant bearing, of a knight
Tried in the sea fights of the second Charles.
Near this brave knight his father lay entomb'd;
And, to the silent language giving voice,
I read, how in his manhood's earlier day
He, 'mid th' afflictions of intestine war
And rightful government subverted, found
One only solace; that he had espoused
A virtuous lady tenderly beloved
For her benign perfections; and yet more
Endear'd to him, for this, that in her state
Of wedlock richly crown'd with Heaven's regard,
She with a numerous issue fill'd his house,
Who throve, like plants, uninjured by the storm
That laid their country waste. No need to speak
Of less particular notices assign'd
To youth or maiden gone before their time,
And matrons and unwedded sisters old;
Whose charity and goodness were rehearsed
In modest panegyric. "These dim lines,
What would they tell?" said I; but from the task
Of puzzling out that faded narrative,
With whispers soft my venerable friend
Call'd me; and, looking down the darksome aisle
I saw the tenant of the lonely vale
Standing apart; with curvèd arm reclined
On the baptismal font; his pallid face
Upturn'd, as if his mind were wrapt, or lost
In some abstraction; gracefully he stood,
The semblance bearing of a sculptured form
That leans upon a monumental urn
In peace, from morn to night, from year to year.
Him from that posture did the sexton rouse;
Who enter'd, humming carelessly a tune,
Continuation haply of the notes
That had beguiled the work from which he came,
With spade and mattock o'er his shoulder hung,
To be deposited, for future need,
In their appointed place. The pale recluse
Withdrew; and straight we follow'd, to a spot

Where sun and shade were intermix'd; for there
A broad oak, stretching forth its leafy arms
From an adjoining pasture, overhung
Small space of that green churchyard with a light
And pleasant awning. On the moss-grown wall
My ancient friend and I together took
Our seats; and thus the solitary spake,
Standing before us. "Did you note the mien
Of that self-solaced, easy-hearted churl,
Death's hireling, who scoops out his neighbour's grave,
Or wraps an old acquaintance up in clay,
As unconcern'd as when he plants a tree?
I was abruptly summon'd by his voice
From some affecting images and thoughts,
And from the company of serious words.
Much, yesterday, was said in glowing phrase
Of our sublime dependencies, and hopes
For future states of being; and the wings
Of speculation, joyfully outspread,
Hover'd above our destiny on earth;
But stoop, and place the prospect of the soul
In sober contrast with reality,
And man's substantial life. If this mute earth
Of what it holds could speak, and every grave
Were as a volume, shut, yet capable
Of yielding its contents to eye and ear,
We should recoil, stricken with sorrow and shame
To see disclosed, by such dread proof, how ill
That which is done accords with what is known
To reason, and by conscience is enjoin'd;
How idly, how perversely, life's whole course,
To this conclusion, deviates from the line,
Or of the end stops short, proposed to all
At her aspiring outset. Mark the babe
Not long accustom'd to this breathing world;
One that hath barely learn'd to shape a smile;
Though yet irrational of soul to grasp
With tiny fingers, to let fall a tear;
And, as the heavy cloud of sleep dissolves,
To stretch his limbs, bemocking, as might seem,
Th' outward functions of intelligent man;
A grave proficient in amusive feats
Of puppetry, that from the lap declare
His expectations, and announce his claims
To that inheritance which millions rue
That they were ever born to! In due time
A day of solemn ceremonial comes;
When they, who for this minor hold in trust
Rights that transcend the humblest heritage
Of mere humanity, present their charge,
For this occasion daintily adorn'd,
At the baptismal font. And when the pure
And consecrating element hath cleansed
Th' original stain, the child is there received
Into the second ark, Christ's church, with trust
That he, from wrath redeem'd, therein shall float
Over the billows of this troublesome world
To the fair land of everlasting life.
Corrupt affections, covetous desires,
Are all renounced; high as the thought of man
Can carry virtue, virtue is profess'd;
A dedication made, a promise given
For due provision to control and guide,
And unremitting progress to ensure
In holiness and truth."

"You cannot blame,"
Here interposing fervently I said,
"Rites which attest that man by nature lies
Bedded for good and evil in a gulf
Fearfully low; nor will your judgment scorn
Those services, whereby attempt is made
To lift the creature toward that eminence
On which, now fall'n, erewhile in majesty
He stood; or if not so, whose top serene
At least he feels 'tis given him to descry;
Not without aspirations, evermore
Returning, and injunctions from within
Doubt to cast off and weariness; in trust
That what the soul perceives, if glory lost,
May be, through pains and persevering hope,
Recover'd; or, if hitherto unknown,
Lies within reach, and one day shall be gain'd."
"I blame them not," he calmly answer'd, "no;
The outward ritual and establish'd forms
With which communities of men invest
These inward feelings, and th' aspiring vows
To which the lips give public utterance,
Are both a natural process; and by me
Shall pass uncensured; though the issue prove,
Bringing from age to age its own reproach,
Incongruous, impotent, and blank. But, oh!
If to be weak is to be wretched—miserable,
As the lost angel by a human voice
Hath mournfully pronounced, then, in my mind,
Far better not to move at all than move
By impulse sent from such illusive power,
That finds and cannot fasten down; that grasps
And is rejoiced, and loses while it grasps;
That tempts, imboldens—doth a while sustain,
And then betrays; accuses and inflicts
Remorseless punishment; and so retreads
Th' inevitable circle: better far
Than this, to graze the herb in thoughtless peace,
By foresight or remembrance, undisturbed!
"Philosophy! and thou more vaunted name,
Religion! with thy statelier retinue,
Faith, hope, and charity—from the visible world
Choose for your emblems whatsoe'er ye find
Of safest guidance and of firmest trust,—
The torch, the star, the anchor; nor except
The cross itself, at whose unconscious feet
The generations of mankind have knelt
Ruefully seized, and shedding bitter tears,
And through that conflict seeking rest—of you
High titled powers, am I constrain'd to ask,
Here standing, with th' unvoyageable sky
In faint reflection of infinitude
Stretch'd overhead, and at my pensive feet
A subterraneous magazine of bones,
In whose dark vaults my own shall soon be laid,
Where are your triumphs? your dominion where?
And in what age admitted and confirm'd?
Not for a happy land do I inquire,
Island or grove, that hides a blessed few
Who, with obedience willing and sincere,
To your serene authorities conform;
But whom, I ask, of individual souls,
Have ye withdrawn from passion's crooked ways,
Inspired, and thoroughly fortified? If the heart
Could be inspected to its inmost folds
By sight undazzled with the glare of praise,

Who shall be named—in the resplendent line
Of sages, martyrs, confessors—the man
Whom the best might of conscience, truth and hope,
For one day's little compass has preserved
From painful and discreditable shocks
Of contradiction, from some vague desire
Culpably cherish'd, or corrupt relapse
To some unsanction'd fear?"
"If this be so,
And man," said I, "be in his noblest shape
Thus pitiably infirm; then, He who made,
And who shall judge the creature, will forgive.
Yet, in its general tenor, your complaint
Is all too true; and surely not misplaced:
For, from this pregnant spot of ground, such thoughts
Rise to the notice of a serious mind
By natural exhalation. With the dead
In their repose, the living in their mirth,
Who can reflect, unmoved, upon the round
Of smooth and solemnized complacencies,
By which, on Christian lands, from age to age
Profession mocks performance. Earth is sick,
And heaven is weary, of the hollow words
Which states and kingdoms utter when they talk
Of truth and justice. Turn to private life
And social neighbourhood; look we to ourselves;
A light of duty shines on every day
For all; and yet how few are warm'd or cheer'd!
How few who mingle with their fellow men
And still remain self-govern'd, and apart,
Like this our honour'd friend: and thence acquire
Right to expect his vigorous decline,
That promises to th' end a blest old age!"
"Yet," with a smile of triumph thus exclaim'd
The solitary, "in the life of man,
If to the poetry of common speech
Faith may be given, we see as in a glass
A true reflection of the circling year,
With all its seasons. Grant that spring is there,
In spite of many a rough, untoward blast,
Hopeful and promising with buds and flowers;
Yet where is glowing summer's long rich day,
That *ought* to follow faithfully express'd?
And mellow autumn, charged with bounteous fruit,
Where is she imaged? in what favour'd clime
Her lavish pomp, and ripe magnificence?
Yet, while the better part is miss'd, the worse
In man's autumnal season is set forth
With a resemblance not to be denied,
And that contents him; bowers that hear no more
The voice of gladness, less and less supply
Of outward sunshine and internal warmth;
And, with this change, sharp air and falling leaves,
Foretelling total winter, blank and cold.
"How gay the habitations that bedeck
This fertile valley! Not a house but seems
To give assurance of content within;
Imbosom'd happiness, and placid love;
As if the sunshine of the day were met
With answering brightness in the hearts of all
Who walk this favour'd ground. But chance regards,
And notice forced upon incurious ears;
These, if these only, acting in despite
Of the encomiums by my friend pronounced
On humble life, forbid the judging mind
To trust the smiling aspect of this fair
And noiseless commonwealth. The simple race
Of mountaineers (by nature's self removed
From foul temptations, and by constant care
Of a good shepherd tended as themselves
Do tend their flocks) partake man's general lot
With little mitigation. They escape,
Perchance, guilt's heavier woes; and do not feel
The tedium of fantastic idleness;
Yet life, as with the multitude, with them,
Is fashion'd like an ill-constructed tale;
That on the outset wastes its gay desires,
Its fair adventures, its enlivening hopes,
And pleasant interests—for the sequel leaving
Old things repeated with diminish'd grace;
And all the labour'd novelties at best
Imperfect substitutes, whose use and power
Evince the want and weakness whence they spring."
While in this serious mood we held discourse,
The reverend pastor toward the churchyard gate
Approach'd; and, with a mild, respectful air
Of native cordiality, our friend
Advanced to greet him. With a gracious mien
Was he received, and mutual joy prevail'd.
Awhile they stood in conference, and I guess
That he, who now upon the mossy wall
Sate by my side, had vanish'd, if a wish
Could have transferr'd him to his lonely house
Within the circuit of those guardian rocks.
For me, I look'd upon the pair, well pleased
Nature had framed them both, and both were mark'd
By circumstance, with intermixture fine
Of contrast and resemblance. To an oak
Hardy and grand, a weather-beaten oak,
Fresh in the strength and majesty of age,
One might be liken'd: flourishing appear'd,
Though somewhat past the fulness of his prime,
The other—like a stately sycamore,
That spreads, in gentler pomp, its honey'd shade.
A general greeting was exchanged: and soon
The pastor learn'd that his approach had given
A welcome interruption to discourse
Grave, and in truth too often sad. "Is man
A child of hope? Do generations press
On generations, without progress made?
Halts the individual, ere his hairs be gray,
Perforce? Are we a creature in whom good
Preponderates, or evil? Doth the will
Acknowledge reason's law? A living power
Is virtue, or no better than a name,
Fleeting as health, or beauty, and unsound?
So that the only substance which remains,
(For thus the tenor of complaint hath run,)
Among so many shadows, are the pains
And penalties of miserable life,
Doom'd to decay, and then expire in dust!
Our cogitations this way have been drawn,
These are the points," the wanderer said, "on which
Our inquest turns. Accord, good sir! the light
Of your experience to dispel this gloom:
By your persuasive wisdom shall the heart
That frets, or languishes, be still'd and cheer'd."
"Our nature," said the priest, in mild reply,
"Angels may weigh and fathom: they perceive,

With undistemper'd and unclouded spirit,
The object as it is; but, for ourselves,
That speculative height we may not reach.
The good and evil are our own; and we
Are that which we would contemplate from far.
Knowledge, for us, is difficult to gain—
Is difficult to gain, and hard to keep—
As virtue's self; like virtue is beset
With snares; tried, tempted, subject to decay.
Love, admiration, fear, desire, and hate,
Blind were we without these: through these alone
Are capable to notice or discern,
Or to record; we judge, but cannot be
Indifferent judges. 'Spite of proudest boast,
Reason, best reason, is t' imperfect man
An effort only, and a noble aim;
A crown, an attribute of sovereign power,
Still to be courted—never to be won!
Look forth, or each man dive into himself;
What sees he but a creature too perturb'd,
That is transported to excess; that yearns,
Regrets, or trembles, wrongly, or too much;
Hopes rashly, in disgust as rash recoils;
Battens on spleen, or moulders in despair?
Thus truth is miss'd, and comprehension fails;
And darkness and delusion round our path
Spread, from disease, whose subtile injury lurks
Within the very faculty of sight.
"Yet for the general purposes of faith
In providence, for solace and support,
We may not doubt that who can best subject
The will to reason's law, and strictliest live
And act in that obedience, he shall gain
The clearest apprehension of those truths,
Which unassisted reason's utmost power
Is too infirm to reach. But—waiving this,
And our regards confining within bounds
Of less exalted consciousness—through which
The very multitude are free to range—
We safely may affirm that human life
Is either fair and tempting, a soft scene
Grateful to sight, refreshing to the soul,
Or a forbidding tract of cheerless view;
E'en as the same is look'd at or approach'd.
Thus, when in changeful April snow has fall'n,
And fields are white, if from the sullen north
Your walk conduct you hither, ere the sun
Hath gain'd his noontide height, this churchyard, fill'd
With mounds transversely lying side by side
From east to west, before you will appear
An unillumined, blank, and dreary plain,
With more than wintry cheerlessness and gloom
Saddening the heart. Go forward, and look back,
Look, from the quarter whence the Lord of light,
Of life, of love, and gladness doth dispense
His beams; which, unexcluded in their fall,
Upon the southern side of every grave
Have gently exercised a melting power,
Then will a vernal prospect greet your eye,
All fresh and beautiful, and green and bright,
Hopeful and cheerful: vanish'd is the snow,
Vanish'd or hidden; and the whole domain,
To some too lightly minded might appear
A meadow carpet for the dancing hours.
This contrast, not unsuitable to life,
Is to that other state more apposite,
Death and its twofold aspect; wintry—one,
Cold, sullen, blank, from hope and joy shut out;
The other, which the ray divine hath touch'd,
Replete with vivid promise, bright as spring."
"We see, then, as we feel," the wanderer thus
With a complacent animation spake,
"And in your judgment, sir! the mind's repose
On evidence is not to be ensured
By act of naked reason. Moral truth
Is no mechanic structure, built by rule;
And which, once built, retains a steadfast shape
And undisturb'd proportions; but a thing
Subject, you deem, to vital accidents;
And, like the water-lily, lives and thrives,
Whose root is fix'd in stable earth, whose head
Floats on the tossing waves. With joy sincere
I re-salute these sentiments confirm'd
By your authority. But how acquire
The inward principle that gives effect
To outward argument: the passive will
Meek to admit; the active energy,
Strong and unbounded to embrace, and firm
To keep and cherish? How shall man unite
With self-forgetting tenderness of heart
An earth despising dignity of soul?
Wise in that union, and without it blind!"
"The way," said I, "to court, if not obtain
Th' ingenuous mind, apt to be set aright,
This, in the lonely dell discoursing, you
Declared at large; and by what exercise
From visible nature or the inner self
Power may be train'd, and renovation brought
To those who need the gift. But, after all,
Is aught so certain as that man is doom'd
To breathe beneath a vault of ignorance?
The natural roof of that dark house in which
His soul is pent! How little can be known—
This is the wise man's sigh: how far we err—
This is the good man's not unfrequent pang!
And they perhaps err least, the lowly class
Whom a benign necessity compels
To follow reason's least ambitious course:
Such do I mean who, unperplex'd by doubt,
And unincited by a wish to look
Into high objects farther than they may,
Pace to and fro, from morn till eventide,
The narrow avenue of daily toil
For daily bread."
"Yes," buoyantly exclaim'd
The pale recluse—"praise to the sturdy plough,
And patient spade, and shepherd's simple crook,
And ponderous loom—resounding while it holds
Body and mind in one captivity;
And let the light mechanic tool be hail'd
With honour; which, encasing by the power
Of long companionship, the artist's hand,
Cuts off that hand, with all its world of nerves,
From a too busy commerce with the heart!
Inglorious implements of craft and toil,
Both ye that shape and build, and ye that force,
By slow solicitation, earth to yield
Her annual bounty, sparingly dealt forth
With wise reluctance, you would I extol,
Not for gross good alone which ye produce,
But for th' impertinent and ceaseless strife

Of proofs and reasons ye preclude—in those
Who to your dull society are born,
And with their humble birthright rest content.
Would I had ne'er renounced it!"
A slight flush
Of moral anger previously had tinged
The old man's cheek; but, at this closing turn
Of self-reproach, it pass'd away. Said he,
"That which we feel we utter; as we think
So have we argued; reaping for our pains
No visible recompense. For our relief
You," to the pastor turning thus he spake,
"Have kindly interposed. May I entreat
Your further help? The mine of real life
Dig for us; and present us, in the shape
Of virgin ore, that gold which we, by pains
Fruitless as those of aëry alchymists,
Seek from the torturing crucible. There lies
Around us a domain where you have long
Watch'd both the outward course and inner heart;
Give us, for our abstractions, solid facts;
For our disputes, plain pictures. Say what man
He is who cultivates yon hanging field;
What qualities of mind she bears, who comes,
For morn and evening service, with her pail,
To that green pasture; place before our sight
The family who dwell within yon house
Fenced round with glittering laurel; or in that
Below, from which the curling smoke ascends.
Or rather, as we stand on holy earth,
And have the dead around us, take from them
Your instances; for they are both best known,
And by frail man most equitably judged.
Epitomise the life; pronounce, you can,
Authentic epitaphs on some of these
Who, from their lowly mansions hither brought,
Beneath this turf lie mouldering at our feet.
So, by your records, may our doubts be solved;
And so, not searching higher, we may learn
To prize the breath we share with human kind;
And look upon the dust of man with awe."
The priest replied. "An office you impose
For which peculiar requisites are mine;
Yet much, I feel, is wanting—else the task
Would be most grateful. True indeed it is
That they whom death has hidden from our sight
Are worthiest of the mind's regard; with these
The future cannot contradict the past:
Mortality's last exercise and proof
Is undergone; the transit made that shows
The very soul, reveal'd as she departs.
Yet, on your first suggestion, will I give,
Ere we descend into these silent vaults,
One picture from the living.—
"You behold,
High on the breast of yon dark mountain—dark
With stony barrenness, a shining speck
Bright as a sunbeam sleeping till a shower
Brush it away, or cloud pass over it;
And such it might be deem'd—a sleeping sunbeam;
But 'tis a plot of cultivated ground,
Cut off, an island in the dusky waste;
And that attractive brightness is its own.
The lofty site, by nature framed to tempt
Amid a wilderness of rocks and stones
The tiller's hand, a hermit might have chosen,
For opportunity presented, thence
Far forth to send his wandering eye o'er land
And ocean, and look down upon the works,
The habitations, and the ways of men,
Himself unseen! But no tradition tells
That ever hermit dipp'd his maple dish
In the sweet spring that lurks 'mid yon green fields;
And no such visionary views belong
To those who occupy and till the ground,
And on the bosom of the mountain dwell—
A wedded pair in childless solitude.
A house of stones collected on the spot,
By rude hands built, with rocky knolls in front,
Back'd also by a ledge of rock, whose crest
Of birch trees waves upon the chimney top:
A rough abode—in colour, shape, and size,
Such as in unsafe times of border war
Might have been wish'd for and contrived, t' elude
The eye of roving plunderer—for their need
Suffices and unshaken bears the assault
Of their most dreaded foe, the strong south-west
In anger blowing from the distant sea.
Alone within her solitary hut;
There, or within the compass of her fields,
At any moment may the dame be found
True as the stock-dove to her shallow nest
And to the grove that holds it. She beguiles
By intermingled work of house and field
The summer's day, and winter's; with success
Not equal, but sufficient to maintain,
E'en at the worst, a smooth stream of content,
Until the expected hour at which her mate
From the far-distant quarry's vault returns;
And by his converse crowns a silent day
With evening cheerfulness. In powers of mind,
In scale of culture, few among my flock
Hold lower rank than this sequester'd pair;
But humbleness of heart descends from heaven;
And that best gift of heaven hath fall'n on them;
Abundant recompense for every want.
Stoop from your height, ye proud, and copy these!
Who, in their noiseless dwelling place, can hear
The voice of wisdom whispering Scripture texts
For the mind's government, or temper's peace;
And recommending, for their mutual need,
Forgiveness, patience, hope, and charity!"
"Much was I pleased," the gray-hair'd wanderer said,
"When to those shining fields our notice first
You turn'd; and yet more pleased have from your lips
Gather'd this fair report of them who dwell
In that retirement; whither, by such course
Of evil hap and good as oft awaits
A lone wayfaring man, I once was brought.
Dark on my road th' autumnal evening fell
While I was traversing yon mountain pass,
And night succeeded with unusual gloom:
So that my feet and hands at length became
Guides better than mine eyes; until a light
High in the gloom appear'd, too high, methought,
For human habitation; but I long'd
To reach it, destitute of other hope.
I look'd with steadiness as sailors look
On the north star, or watch-tower's distant lamp,
And saw the light—now fix'd—and shifting now

Not like a dancing meteor, but in line
Of never-varying motion, to and fro:
It is no night-fire of the naked hills,
Thought I, some friendly covert must be near.
With this persuasion thitherward my steps
I turn, and reach at last the guiding light;
Joy to myself! but to the heart of her
Who there was standing on the open hill,
(The same kind matron whom your tongue hath praised,)
Alarm and disappointment! The alarm
Ceased, when she learn'd through what mishap I came,
And by what help had gain'd those distant fields.
Drawn from her cottage, on that open height,
Bearing a lantern in her hand she stood,
Or paced the ground, to guide her husband home,
By that unwearied signal, kenn'd afar;
An anxious duty! which the lofty site,
Traversed but by a few irregular paths,
Imposes, whensoe'er untoward chance
Detains him after his accustom'd hour
Till night lies black upon the ground. 'But come,
Come,' said the matron, 'to our poor abode;
Those dark rocks hide it!' Entering, I beheld
A blazing fire, beside a cleanly hearth
Sate down; and to her office, with leave ask'd,
The dame return'd. Or ere that glowing pile
Of mountain turf required the builder's hand
Its wasted splendour to repair, the door
Open'd, and she re-enter'd with glad looks,
Her helpmate following. Hospitable fare,
Frank conversation, made the evening's treat:
Need a bewilder'd traveller wish for more?
But more was given; I studied as we sate
By the bright fire, the good man's face; composed
Of features elegant; an open brow
Of undisturb'd humanity; a cheek
Suffused with something of a feminine hue;
Eyes beaming courtesy and mild regard;
But, in the quicker turns of the discourse,
Expression slowly varying, that evinced
A tardy apprehension. From a fount
Lost, thought I, in th' obscurities of time,
But honour'd once, these features and that mien
May have descended, though I see them here,
In such a man, so gentle and subdued,
Withal so graceful in his gentleness,
A race illustrious for heroic deeds,
Humbled, but not degraded, may expire.
This pleasing fancy (cherish'd and upheld
By sundry recollections of such fall
From high to low, ascent from low to high,
As books record, and e'en the careless mind
Cannot but notice among men and things)
Went with me to the place of my repose.
"Roused by the crowing cock at dawn of day,
I yet had risen too late to interchange
A morning salutation with my host,
Gone forth already to the far-off seat
Of his day's work. 'Three dark mid-winter months
Pass,' said the matron, 'and I never see,
Save when the Sabbath brings its kind release,
My helpmate's face by light of day. He quits
His door in darkness, nor till dusk returns.
And, through Heaven's blessing, thus we gain th bread
For which we pray; and for the wants provide
Of sickness, accident, and helpless age.
Companions have I many; many friends,
Dependants, comfortors—my wheel, my fire,
All day the house-clock ticking in mine ear,
The cackling hen, the tender chicken brood,
And the wild birds that gather round my porch.
This honest sheep-dog's countenance I read:
With him can talk; nor blush to waste a word
On creatures less intelligent and shrewd.
And if the blustering wind that drives the clouds
Care not for me, he lingers round my door,
And makes me pastime when our tempers suit;
But, above all, my thoughts are my support.
The matron ended—nor could forbear
To exclaim, 'O happy! yielding to the law
Of these privations, richer in the main!
While thankless thousands are opprest and clogg'd
By ease and leisure, by the very wealth
And pride of opportunity made poor;
While tens of thousands falter in their path,
And sink, through utter want of cheering light;
For you the hours of labour do not flag:
For you each evening hath its shining star,
And every Sabbath day its golden sun.'"
"Yes!" said the solitary with a smile
That seem'd to break from an expanding heart,
"The untutor'd bird may found, and so construct
And with such soft materials line her nest,
Fix'd in the centre of a prickly brake,
That the thorns wound her not: they only guard.
Powers not unjustly liken'd to those gifts
Of happy instinct which the woodland bird
Shares with her species, nature's grace sometimes
Upon the individual doth confer,
Among her higher creatures born and train'd
To use of reason. And, I own, that tired
Of th' ostentatious world—a swelling stage
With empty actions and vain passions stuff'd,
And from the private struggles of mankind
Hoping for less than I could wish to hope,
Far less than once I trusted and believed—
I loved to hear of those, who, not contending,
Nor summon'd to contend for virtue's prize,
Miss not the humbler good at which they aim;
Blest with a kindly faculty to blunt
The edge of adverse circumstance, and turn
Into their contraries the petty plagues
And hinderances with which they stand beset.
In early youth, among my native hills,
I knew a Scottish peasant who possess'd
A few small crofts of stone-encumber'd ground;
Masses of every shape and size, that lay
Scatter'd about under the mouldering walls
Of a rough precipice; and some, apart,
In quarters unobnoxious to such chance,
As if the moon had shower'd them down in spite;
But he repined not. Though the plough was scared
By these obstructions, 'round the shady stones
A fertilizing moisture,' said the swain,
'Gathers, and is preserved; and feeding dews
And damps, through all the droughty summer day,
From out their substance issuing maintain
Herbage that never fails: no grass springs up

So green, so fresh, so plentiful, as mine!'
But thinly sown these natures; rare, at least,
The mutual aptitude of seed and soil
That yields such kindly product. He, whose bed
Perhaps yon loose sods cover, the poor pensioner
Brought yesterday from our sequester'd dell
Here to lie down in lasting quiet—he,
If living now, could otherwise report
Of rustic loneliness; that gray-hair'd orphan—
So call him, for humanity to him
No parent was—feelingly could have told,
In life, in death, what solitude can breed
Of selfishness, and cruelty, and vice;
Or, if it breed not, hath not power to cure.
But your compliance, sir, with our request
My words too long have hinder'd."
Undeterr'd,
Perhaps incited rather, by these shocks,
In no ungracious opposition, given
To the confiding spirit of his own
Experienced faith, the reverend pastor said,
Around him looking, "Where shall I begin?
Who shall be first selected from my flock,
Gather'd together in their peaceful fold?"
He paused, and having lifted up his eyes
To the pure heaven, he cast them down again
Upon the earth beneath his feet; and spake.
"To a mysteriously-consorted pair
This place is consecrate; to death and life,
And to the best affections that proceed
From their conjunction;—consecrate to faith
In him who bled for man upon the cross;
Hallow'd to revelation; and no less
To reason's mandates: and the hopes divine
Of pure imagination;—above all,
To charity, and love, that have provided
Within these precincts, a capacious bed
And receptacle, open to the good
And evil, to the just and the unjust;
In which they find an equal resting-place:
E'en as the multitude of kindred brooks
And streams, whose murmur fills this hollow vale,
Whether their course be turbulent or smooth,
Their waters clear or sullied, all are lost
Within the bosom of yon crystal lake,
And end their journey in the same repose!
"And blest are they who sleep; and we that know,
While in a spot like this we breathe and walk,
That all beneath us by the wings are cover'd
Of motherly humanity, outspread
And gathering all within their tender shade,
Though loath and slow to come! A battle field,
In stillness left when slaughter is no more,
With this compared, is a strange spectacle!
A rueful sight the wild shore strewn with wrecks,
And trod by people in afflicted quest
Of friends and kindred, whom the angry sea
Restores not to their prayer! Ah! who would think
That all the scatter'd subjects which compose
Earth's melancholy vision through the space
Of all her climes; these wretched, these depraved,
To virtue lost, insensible of peace,
From the delights of charity cut off,
To pity dead, th' oppressor and th' opprest;
Tyrants who utter the destroying word,
And slaves who will consent to be destroy'd—
Were of one species with the shelter'd few,
Who, with a dutiful and tender hand,
Did lodge, in an appropriated spot,
This file of infants; some that never breathed
The vital air; and others, who, allow'd
That privilege, did yet expire too soon,
Or with too brief a warning, to admit
Administration of the holy rite
That lovingly consigns the babe to th' arms
Of Jesus, and his everlasting care.
These that in trembling hope are laid apart;
And the besprinkled nursling, unrequired
Till he begins to smile upon the breast
That feeds him; and the tottering little one
Taken from air and sunshine when the rose
Of infancy first blooms upon his cheek;
The thinking, thoughtless schoolboy: the bold youth
Of soul impetuous, and the bashful maid
Smitten while all the promises of life
Are opening round her: those of middle age,
Cast down while confident in strength they stand,
Like pillars fix'd more firmly, as might seem,
And more secure, by very weight of all
That, for support, rests on them; the decay'd
And burdensome: and lastly, that poor few
Whose light of reason is with age extinct;
The hopeful and the hopeless, first and last,
The earliest summon'd and the longest spared
Are here deposited, with tribute paid
Various, but unto each some tribute paid;
As if, amid these peaceful hills and groves,
Society were touch'd with kind concern:
And gentle Nature grieved, that one should die;
Or, if the change demanded no regret,
Observed the liberating stroke—and bless'd.
And whence that tribute? wherefore these regards?
Not from the naked *heart* alone of man,
(Though claiming high distinction upon earth
As the sole spring and fountain-head of tears,
His own peculiar utterance for distress
Or gladness.) No," the philosophic priest
Continued, "'tis not in the vital seat
Of feeling to produce them, without aid
From the pure soul, the soul sublime and pure
With her two faculties of eye and ear,
The one by which a creature, whom his sins
Have render'd prone, can upward look to heaven,
The other that empowers him to perceive
The voice of deity, on height and plain,
Whispering those truths in stillness, which the Word,
To the four quarters of the winds, proclaims.
Not without such assistance could the use
Of these benign observances prevail.
Thus are they born, thus foster'd and maintain'd;
And by the care prospective of our wise
Forefathers, who, to guard against the shocks,
The fluctuation and decay of things,
Imbodied and establish'd these high truths
In solemn institutions; men convinced
That life is love and immortality,
The being one, and one the element.
There lies the channel, and original bed

From the beginning, hollow'd out and scoop'd
For man's affections; else betray'd and lost,
And swallow'd up 'mid deserts infinite!
This is the genuine course, the aim, and end
Of prescient reason; all conclusions else
Are abject, vain, presumptuous, and perverse,
The faith partaking of those holy times.
Life, I repeat, is energy of love
Divine or human; exercised in pain,
In strife, and tribulation; and ordain'd,
If so approved and sanctified, to pass,
Through shades and silent rest, to endless joy."

BOOK VI.

THE CHURCHYARD AMONG THE MOUNTAINS.

ARGUMENT.

Poet's address to the state and church of England. The pastor not inferior to the ancient worthies of the church. He begins his narratives with an instance of unrequited love. Anguish of mind subdued, and how. The lonely miner, an instance of perseverance, which leads by contrast to an example of abused talents, irresolution, and weakness. Solitary, applying this covertly to his own case, asks for an instance of some stranger, whose dispositions may have led him to end his days here. Pastor, in answer, gives an account of the harmonizing influence of solitude upon two men of opposite principles, who had encountered agitations in public life. The rule by which peace may be obtained expressed, and where. Solitary hints at an overpowering fatality. Answer of the pastor. What subjects he will exclude from his narratives. Conversation upon this. Instance of an unamiable character, a female, and why given. Contrasted with this, a meek sufferer, from unguarded and betrayed love. Instance of heavier guilt, and its consequences to the offender. With this instance of a marriage contract broken is contrasted one of a widower, evidencing his faithful affection towards his deceased wife by his care of their female children.

Hail to the crown by freedom shaped, to gird
An English sovereign's brow! and to the throne
Whereon he sits! Whose deep foundations lie
In veneration and the people's love;
Whose steps are equity, whose seat is law.
Hail to the state of England! And conjoin
With this a salutation as devout,
Made to the spiritual fabric of her church:
Founded in truth; by blood of martyrdom
Cemented; by the hands of wisdom rear'd
In beauty of holiness, with order'd pomp,
Decent, and unreproved. The voice, that greets
The majesty of both, shall pray for both;
That, mutually protected and sustain'd,
They may endure long as the sea surrounds
This favour'd land, or sunshine warms her soil.
And O, ye swelling hills, and spacious plains!
Besprent from shore to shore with steeple-towers,
And spires whose "silent finger points to heaven;"
Nor wanting, at wide intervals, the bulk
Of ancient minster, lifted above the cloud
Of the dense air, which town or city breeds
To intercept the sun's glad beams,—may ne'er
That true succession fail of English hearts,
Who, with ancestral feeling can perceive
What in those holy structures ye possess
Of ornamental interest and the charm
Of pious sentiment diffused afar,
And human charity, and social love.
Thus never shall th' indignities of time
Approach their reverend graces, unopposed;
Nor shall the elements be free to hurt
Their fair proportions; nor the blinder rage
Of bigot zeal madly to overturn;
And, if the desolating hand of war
Spare them, they shall continue to bestow—
Upon the throng'd abodes of busy men
(Depraved, and ever prone to fill their minds
Exclusively with transitory things)
An air and mien of dignified pursuit;
Of sweet civility—on rustic wilds.
The poet, fostering for his native land
Such hope, entreats that servants may abound
Of those pure altars worthy; ministers
Detach'd from pleasure, to the love of gain
Superior, insusceptible of pride,
And by ambitious longings undisturb'd;
Men, whose delight is where their duty leads
Or fixes them; whose least distinguish'd day
Shines with some portion of that heavenly lustre
Which makes the Sabbath lovely in the sight
Of blessed angels, pitying human cares.
And, as on earth it is the doom of truth
To be perpetually attack'd by foes
Open or covert, be that priesthood still,
For her defence, replenish'd with a band
Of strenuous champions, in scholastic arts
Thoroughly disciplined; nor (if in course
Of the revolving world's disturbances
Cause should recur, which righteous heaven avert
To meet such trial) from their spiritual sire
Degenerate; who, constrain'd to wield the sword
Of disputation, shrunk not, though assail'd
With hostile din, and combating in sight
Of angry umpires, partial and unjust;
And did, thereafter, bathe their hands in fire,
So to declare the conscience satisfied:
Nor for their bodies would accept release;
But, blessing God and praising him, bequeathed
With their last breath, from out the smouldering flame,
The faith which they by diligence had earn'd
Or, through illuminating grace, received,
For their dear countrymen, and all mankind.
O high example, constancy divine!
E'en such a man (inheriting the zeal
And from the sanctity of elder times
Not deviating,—a priest, the like of whom,
If multiplied, and in their stations set,
Would o'er the bosom of a joyful land
Spread true religion, and her genuine fruits)
Before me stood that day; on holy ground
Fraught with the relics of mortality,
Exalting tender themes, by just degrees
To lofty raised; and to the highest, last;
The head and mighty paramount of truths;
Immortal life, in never-fading worlds,
For mortal creatures, conquer'd and secured.
That basis laid, those principles of faith
Announced, as a preparatory act
Of reverence to the spirit of the place;
The pastor cast his eyes upon the ground,
Not, as before, like one oppress'd with awe,

But with a mild and social cheerfulness,
Then to the solitary turn'd, and spake.
"At morn or eve, in your retired domain,
Perchance you not unfrequently have mark'd
A visiter—in quest of herbs and flowers;
Too delicate employ, as would appear
For one, who, though of drooping mien, had yet
From nature's kindliness received a frame
Robust as ever rural labour bred."
The solitary answer'd: "Such a form
Full well I recollect. We often cross'd
Each other's path; but, as th' intruder seem'd
Fondly to prize the silence which he kept,
And I as willingly did cherish mine,
We met, and pass'd, like shadows. I have heard,
From my good host that he was crazed in brain
By unrequited love; and scaled the rocks,
Dived into caves, and pierced the matted woods
In hope to find some virtuous herb of power
To cure his malady!"
The vicar smiled,
"Alas! before to-morrow's sun goes down
His habitation will be here: for him
That open grave is destined."
"Died he then
Of pain and grief?" the solitary ask'd,
"Believe it not—oh! never could that be!"
"He loved," the vicar answer'd, "deeply loved,
Loved fondly, truly, fervently; and dared
At length to tell his love, but sued in vain;
Rejected—yea repell'd—and, if with scorn
Upon the haughty maiden's brow, 'tis but
A high-prized plume which female beauty wears
In wantonness of conquest, or puts on
To cheat the world, or from herself to hide
Humiliation, when no longer free.
That he could brook, and glory in;—but when
The tidings came that she whom he had woo'd
Was wedded to another, and his heart
Was forced to rend away its only hope,
Then, pity could have scarcely found on earth
An object worthier of regard than he,
In the transition of that bitter hour!
Lost was she, lost; nor could the sufferer say
That in the act of preference he had been
Unjustly dealt with; but the maid was gone!
Had vanish'd from his prospects and desires;
Not by translation to the heavenly choir
Who have put off their mortal spoils—ah no!
She lives another's wishes to complete,—
Joy be their lot, and happiness,' he cried,
'His lot and hers as misery is mine!'
"Such was that strong concussion; but the man,
Who trembled, trunk and limbs, like some huge oak
By a fierce tempest shaken, soon resumed
The steadfast quiet natural to a mind
Of composition gentle and sedate,
And in its movements circumspect and slow.
To books, and to the long forsaken desk,
O'er which enchain'd by science he had loved
To bend, he stoutly readdress'd himself,
Resolved to quell his pain, and search for truth
With keener appetite (if that might be)
And closer industry. Of what ensued
Within the heart no outward sign appear'd
Till a betraying sickliness was seen
To tinge his cheek; and through his frame it crept
With slow mutation unconcealable;
Such universal change as autumn makes
In the fair body of a leafy grove
Discolour'd, then divested. 'Tis affirm'd
By poets skill'd in nature's secret ways
That love will not submit to be controll'd
By mastery: and the good man lack'd not friends
Who strove t' instil this truth into his mind,
A mind in all heart mysteries unversed.
'Go to the hills,' said one, 'remit a while
This baneful diligence: at early morn
Court the fresh air, explore the heaths and woods;
And, leaving it to others to foretell,
By calculations sage, the ebb and flow
Of tides, and when the moon will be eclipsed,
Do you, for your own benefit, construct
A calendar of flowers, pluck'd as they blow
Where health abides, and cheerfulness, and peace.'
The attempt was made; 'tis needless to report
How hopelessly: but innocence is strong,
An an entire simplicity of mind,
A thing most sacred in the eyes of heaven,
That opens, for such sufferers, relief
Within their souls, a fount of grace divine;
And doth commend their weakness and disease
To nature's care, assisted in her office
By all the elements that round her wait
To generate, to preserve, and to restore;
And by her beautiful array of forms
Shedding sweet influence from above, or pure
Delight exhaling from the ground they tread."
"Impute it not to impatience, if," exclaim'd
The wanderer, "I infer that he was heal'd
By perseverance in the course prescribed."
"You do not err: the powers, that had been lost
By slow degrees, were gradually regain'd;
The fluttering nerves composed; the beating heart
In rest establish'd; and the jarring thoughts
To harmony restored. But yon dark mould
Will cover him, in the fulness of his strength—
Hastily smitten, by a fever's force;
Yet not with stroke so sudden as refused
Time to look back with tenderness on her
Whom he had loved in passion,—and to send
Some farewell words—with one, but one, request,
That, from his dying hand, she would accept
Of his possessions that which most he prized;
A book, upon whose leaves some chosen plants
By his own hand disposed with nicest care,
In undecaying beauty were preserved;
Mute register, to him, of time and place,
And various fluctuations in the breast;
To her, a monument of faithful love
Conquer'd, and in tranquillity retain'd!
"Close to his destined habitation, lies
One who achieved a humbler victory,
Though marvellous in its kind. A place there is
High in these mountains, that allured a band
Of keen adventurers to unite their pains
In search of precious ore: who tried, were foil'd—
And all desisted, all, save him alone.
He, taking counsel of his own clear thoughts,
And trusting only to his own weak hands,
Urged unremittingly the stubborn work,
Unseconded, uncountenanced; then, as time

Pass'd on, while still his lonely efforts found
No recompense, derided; and at length,
By many pitied; as insane of mind;
By others dreaded as the luckless thrall
Of subterranean spirits feeding hope
By various mockery of sight and sound;
Hope after hope, encouraged and destroy'd.
But when the lord of seasons had matured
The fruits of earth through space of twice ten years
The mountain's entrails offer'd to his view
And trembling grasp the long deterr'd reward.
Not with more transport did Columbus greet
A world, his rich discovery! but our swain,
A very hero till his point was gain'd,
Proved all unable to support the weight
Of prosperous fortune. On the fields he look'd
With an unsettled liberty of thought,
Of schemes and wishes; in the daylight walk'd
Giddy and restless; ever and anon
Quaff'd in his gratitude immoderate cups
And truly might be said to die of joy!
He vanish'd; but conspicuous to this day
The path remains that link'd his cottage door
To the mine's mouth; a long, and slanting track,
Upon the rugged mountain's stony side,
Worn by his daily visits to and from
The darksome centre of a constant hope.
This vestige, neither force of beating rain,
Nor the vicissitudes of frost and thaw
Shall cause to fade, till ages pass away;
And it is named, in memory of the event,
The Path of Perseverance."
"Thou from whom
Man has his strength," exclaim'd the wanderer,
"O!
Do Thou direct it!—to the virtuous grant
The penetrative eye which can perceive
In this blind world the guiding vein of hope,
That like this labourer, such may dig their way
'Unshaken, unseduced, unterrified;'
Grant to the wise *his* firmness of resolve!"
"That prayer were not superfluous," said the priest,
'Amid the noblest relics, proudest dust,
That Westminster, for Britain's glory, holds
Within the bosom of her awful pile,
Ambitiously collected. Yet the sigh,
Which wafts that prayer to heaven, is due to all,
Wherever laid, who living fell below
Their virtue's humbler mark; a sigh of *pain*
If to the opposite extreme they sank.
How would you pity her who yonder rests;
Him, farther off; the pair, who here are laid;
But, above all, that mixture of earth's mould
Whom sight of this green hillock to my mind
Recalls! He lived not till his locks were nipp'd
By seasonable frost of age; nor died
Before his temples, prematurely forced
To mix the manly brown with silver gray,
Gave obvious instance of the sad effect
Produced, when thoughtless folly hath usurp'd
The natural crown that sage experience wears.
Gay, volatile, ingenious, quick to learn,
And prompt to exhibit all that he possess'd
Or could perform! a zealous actor—hired
Into the troop of mirth, a soldier—sworn
Into the lists of giddy enterprise—
Such was he; yet, as if within his frame
Two several souls alternately had lodged,
Two sets of manners could the youth put on;
And, fraught with antics as the Indian bird
That writhes and chatters in her wiry cage;
Was graceful, when it pleased him, smooth and still
As the mute swan that floats adown the stream,
Or, on the waters of the unruffled lake,
Anchors her placid beauty. Not a leaf,
That flutters on the bough, more light than He;
And not a flower, that droops in the green shade,
More winningly reserved! If ye inquire
How such consummate elegance was bred
Amid these wilds, this answer may suffice,
'Twas nature's will; who sometimes undertakes,
For the reproof of human vanity,
Art to outstrip in her peculiar walk.
Hence, for this favourite, lavishly endow'd
With personal gifts, and bright instinctive wit,
While both, embellishing each other, stood
Yet farther recommended by the charm
Of fine demeanour, and by dance and song,
And skill in letters, every fancy shaped
Fair expectations; nor, when to the world's
Capacious field forth went the adventurer there
Were he and his attainments overlook'd,
Or scantily rewarded; but all hopes,
Cherish'd for him, he suffer'd to depart,
Like blighted buds; or clouds that mimick'd land
Before the sailor's eye; or diamond drops
That sparkling deck'd the morning grass; or augh
That *was* attractive—and hath ceased to be!
Yet when this prodigal return'd, the rites
Of joyful greeting were on him bestow'd,
Who, by humiliation undeterr'd,
Sought for his weariness a place of rest
Within his father's gates. Whence came he?—clothed
In tatter'd garb, from hovels where abides
Necessity, the stationary host
Of vagrant poverty; from rifted barns
Where no one dwells but the wide staring owl
And the owl's prey; from these bare haunts, to which
He had descended from the proud saloon,
He came, the ghost of beauty and of health,
The wreck of gayety! but soon revived
In strength, in power refitted, he renew'd
His suit to fortune; and she smiled again
Upon a fickle ingrate. Thrice he rose,
Thrice sank as willingly. For he, whose nerves
Were used to thrill with pleasure, while his voice
Softly accompanied the tuneful harp,
By the nice finger of fair ladies, touch'd
In glittering halls, was able to derive
No less enjoyment from an abject choice.
Who happier for the moment—who more blithe
Than this fall'n spirit? in those dreary holds
His talents lending to exalt the freaks
Of merry-making beggars,—now, provoked
To laughter multiplied in louder peals
By his malicious wit; then, all enchain'd
With mute astonishment, themselves to see
In their own arts outdone, their fame eclipsed,
As by the very presence of the fiend

Who dictates and inspires illusive feats,
For knavish purposes! The city, too,
(With shame I speak it,) to her guilty bowers
Allured him, sunk so low in self-respect
As there to linger, there to eat his bread,
Hired minstrel of voluptuous blandishment;
Charming the air with skill of hand or voice,
Listen who would, be wrought upon who might,
Sincerely wretched hearts, or falsely gay.
Such the too frequent tenor of his boast
In ears that relish'd the report;—but all
Was from his parents happily conceal'd;
Who saw enough for blame and pitying love.
They also were permitted to receive
His last, repentant breath, and closed his eyes,
No more to open on that irksome world
Where he had long existed in the state
Of a young fowl beneath one mother hatch'd
Though from another sprung—of different kind:
Where he had lived, and could not cease to live
Distracted in propensity; content
With neither element of good or ill;
And yet in both rejoicing; man unblest;
Of contradictions infinite the slave,
Till his deliverance, when mercy made him
One with himself, and one with them who sleep."
"'Tis strange," observed the solitary, "strange,
It seems, and scarcely less than pitiful,
That in a land where charity provides
For all that can no longer feed themselves,
A man like this should choose to bring his shame
To the parental door; and with his sighs
Infect the air which he had freely breathed
In happy infancy. He could not pine,
Through lack of converse, no, he must have found
Abundant exercise for thought and speech,
In his dividual being, self-review'd,
Self-catechized, self-punish'd. Some there are
Who, drawing near their final home, and much
And daily longing that the same were reach'd,
Would rather shun than seek the fellowship
Of kindred mould. Such haply here are laid?"
"Yes," said the priest, "the genius of our hills,
Who seems, by these stupendous barriers cast
Round his domain, desirous not alone
To keep his own, but also to exclude
All other progeny, doth sometimes lure,
E'en by this studied depth of privacy,
The unhappy alien hoping to obtain
Concealment, or seduced by wish to find,
In place from outward molestation free,
Helps to internal ease. Of many such
Could I discourse; but as their stay was brief,
So their departure only left behind
Fancies, and loose conjectures. Other trace
Survives, for worthy mention, of a pair
Who, from the pressure of their several fates,
Meeting as strangers, in a petty town
Whose blue roofs ornament a distant reach
Of this far winding vale, remain'd as friends
True to their choice; and gave their bones in trust
To this loved cemetery, here to lodge
With unescutcheon'd privacy interr'd
Far from the family vault. A chieftain one
By right of birth; within whose spotless breast
The fire of ancient Caledonia burn'd.
He, with the foremost whose impatience hail'd
The Stuart, landing to resume, by force
Of arms, the crown which bigotry had lost,
Aroused his clan; and, fighting at their head,
With his brave sword endeavour'd to prevent
Culloden's fatal overthrow. Escaped
From that disastrous rout, to foreign shores
He fled; and when the lenient hand of time
Those troubles had appeased, he sought and gain'd,
For his obscured condition, an obscure
Retreat, within this nook of English ground.
The other, born in Britain's southern tract,
Had fix'd his milder loyalty, and placed
His gentler sentiments of love and hate,
There, where *they* placed them who in conscience
prized
The new succession, as a line of kings
Whose oath had virtue to protect the land
Against the dire assaults of papacy
And arbitrary rule. But launch thy bark
On the distemper'd flood of public life,
And cause for most rare triumph will be thine,
If, spite of keenest eye and steadiest hand,
The stream, that bears thee forward, prove not, soon
Or late, a perilous master. He, who oft,
Under the battlements and stately trees
That round his mansion cast a sober gloom,
Had moralized on this, and other truths
Of kindred import, pleased and satisfied,
Was forced to vent his wisdom with a sigh
Heaved from the heart in fortune's bitterness,
When he had crush'd a plentiful estate
By ruinous contest, to obtain a seat
In Britain's senate. Fruitless was the attempt:
And while the uproar of that desperate strife
Continued yet to vibrate on his ear,
The vanquish'd whig, beneath a *borrow'd* name,
(For the mere sound and echo of his own
Haunted him with sensations of disgust
That he was glad to lose,) slunk from the world
To the deep shade of these untravell'd wilds;
In which the Scottish laird had long possess'd
An undisturb'd abode. Here, then, they met,
Two doughty champions; flaming Jacobite
And sullen Hanoverian! You might think
That losses and vexations, less severe
Than those which they had severally sustain'd,
Would have inclined each to abate his zeal
For his ungrateful cause; no,—I have heard
My reverend father tell that, 'mid the calm
Of that small town encountering thus, they fill'd,
Daily, its bowling-green with harmless strife;
Plagued with uncharitable thoughts the church;
And vex'd the market-place. But in the breasts
Of these opponents gradually was wrought,
With little change of general sentiment,
Such change towards each other, that their days
By choice were spent in constant fellowship;
And if, at times, they fretted with the yoke,
Those very bickerings made them love it more.
"A favourite boundary to their lengthen'd walks
This churchyard was. And, whether they had come
Treading their path in sympathy and link'd
In social converse, or by some short space
Discreetly parted to preserve the peace,
One spirit seldom fail'd t' extend its sway

Over both minds, when they awhile had mark'd
The visible quiet of this holy ground,
And breathed its soothing air; the spirit of hope
And saintly magnanimity; that, spurning
The field of selfish difference, and dispute,
And every care which transitory things,
Earth, and the kingdoms of the earth, create,
Doth, by a rapture of forgetfulness,
Preclude forgiveness, from the praise debarr'd,
Which else the Christian virtue might have claim'd.
There live who yet remember here to have seen
Their courtly figures,—seated on the stump
Of an old yew, their favourite resting place.
But, as the remnant of the long-lived tree
Was disappearing by a swift decay,
They, with joint care, determined to erect,
Upon its site, a dial, that might stand
For public use preserved, and thus survive
As their own private monument; for this
Was the particular spot, in which they wish'd
(And Heaven was pleased t' accomplish the desire)
That, undivided, their remains should lie.
So, where the moulder'd tree had stood, was raised
Yon structure, framing, with th' ascent of steps
That to the decorated pillar lead,
A work of art more sumptuous than might seem
To suit this place; yet built in no proud scorn
Of rustic homeliness: they only aim'd
To ensure for it respectful guardianship.
Around the margin of the plate, whereon
The shadow falls to note the stealthy hours,
Winds an inscriptive legend." At these words
Thither we turn'd, and gather'd, as we read,
The appropriate sense, in Latin numbers couch'd.
Time flies; it is his melancholy task
To bring, and bear away, delusive hopes,
And reproduce the troubles he destroys.
But, while his blindness thus is occupied,
Discerning mortal! do thou serve the will
Of time's eternal master, and that peace
Which the world wants, shall be for thee confirm'd."
"Smooth verse, inspired by no unletter'd muse,"
Exclaim'd the skeptic, "and the strain of thought
Accords with nature's language; the soft voice
Of yon white torrent falling down the rocks
Speaks, less distinctly, to the same effect.
If, then, their blended influence be not lost
Upon our hearts, not wholly lost, I grant,
E'en upon mine, the more are we required
To feel for those among our fellow men,
Who, offering no obeisance to the world,
Are yet made desperate by 'too quick a sense
Of constant infelicity,'—cut off
From peace like exiles on some barren rock,
Their life's appointed prison; not more free
Than sentinels, between two armies, set,
With nothing better, in the chill night air,
Than their own thoughts to comfort them. Say why
That ancient story of Prometheus chain'd?
The vulture—the inexhaustible repast
Drawn from his vitals? Say what meant the woes
By Tantalus entail'd upon his race,
And the dark sorrows of the line of Thebes?
Fictions in form, but in their substance truths,
Tremendous truths! familiar to the men
Of long past times, nor obsolete in ours.
Exchange the shepherd's frock of native gray
For robes with regal purple tinged; convert
The crook into a sceptre:—give the pomp
Of circumstance, and here the tragic muse
Shall find apt subjects for her highest art.
Amid the groves, beneath the shadowy hills,
The generations are prepared; the pangs,
The internal pangs are ready; the dread strife
Of poor humanity's afflicted will
Struggling in vain with ruthless destiny."
"Though," said the priest in answer, "these be terms
Which a divine philosophy rejects,
We, whose establish'd and unfailing trust
Is in controlling providence, admit
That, through all stations, human life abounds
With mysteries:—for, if faith were left untried,
How could the might, that lurks within her, then
Be shown? her glorious excellence—that ranks
Among the first of powers and virtues—proved?
Our system is not fashion'd to preclude
That sympathy which you for others ask;
And I could tell, not travelling for my theme
Beyond these humble graves, of grievous crimes
And strange disasters: but I pass them by,
Loath to disturb what heaven hath hush'd in peace
Still less, far less, am I inclined to treat
Of man degraded in his Maker's sight
By the deformities of brutish vice:
For, in such portraits, though a vulgar face
And a course outside of repulsive life
And unaffecting manners might at once
Be recognised by all—" "Ah! do not think,"
The wanderer somewhat eagerly exclaim'd,
"Wish could be ours that you, for such poor gain,
(Gain shall I call it?—gain of what?—for whom?)
Should breathe a word tending to violate
Your own pure spirit. Not a step we look or
In slight of that forbearance and reserve
Which common human-heartedness inspires,
And mortal ignorance and frailty claim,
Upon this sacred ground, if nowhere else."
"True," said the solitary, "be it far
From us to infringe the laws of charity.
Let judgment here in mercy be pronounced;
This, self-respecting nature prompts, and this
Wisdom enjoins; but, if the thing we seek
Be genuine knowledge, bear we then in mind
How, from his lofty throne, the sun can fling
Colours as bright on exhalations bred
By weedy pool or pestilential swamp,
As by the rivulet sparkling where it runs,
Or the pellucid lake."
"Small risk," said I,
"Of such illusion do we here incur;
Temptation here is none to exceed the truth
No evidence appears that they who rest
Within this ground, were covetous of praise,
Or of remembrance even, deserved or not.
Green is the churchyard, beautiful and green,
Ridge rising gently by the side of ridge,
A heaving surface—almost wholly free
From interruption of sepulchral stones,
And mantled o'er with aboriginal turf
And everlasting flowers. These dalesmen trust
The lingering gleam of their departed lives

To oral records and the silent heart;
Depository faithful, and more kind
Than fondest epitaphs: for, if that fail,
What boots the sculptured tomb? and who can blame,
Who rather would not envy, men that feel
This mutual confidence; if, from such source,
The practice flow,—if thence, or from a deep
And general humility in death?
Nor should I much condemn it, if it spring
From disregard of time's destructive power,
As only capable to prey on things
Of earth and human nature's mortal part.
Yet—in less simple districts, where we see
Stone lift its forehead emulous of stone
In courting notice, and the ground all paved
With commendations of departed worth;
Reading, where'er we turn, of innocent lives,
Of each domestic charity fulfill'd,
And sufferings meekly borne—I, for my part,
Though with the silence pleased that here prevails,
Among those fair recitals also range,
Soothed by the natural spirit which they breathe.
And in the centre of a world whose soil
Is rank with all unkindness, compass'd round
With such memorials, I have sometimes felt,
It was no momentary happiness
To have *one* enclosure where the voice that speaks
In envy or detraction is not heard;
Which malice may not enter; where the traces
Of evil inclinations are unknown;
Where love and pity tenderly unite
With resignation; and no jarring tone
Intrudes the peaceful concert to disturb
Of amity and gratitude."
"Thus sanction'd,"
The pastor said, "I willingly confine
My narratives to subjects that excite
Feelings with these accordant; love, esteem,
And admiration lifting up a veil,
A sunbeam introducing among hearts
Retired and covert; so that ye shall have
Clear images before your gladden'd eyes
Of nature's unambitious underwood,
And flowers that prosper in the shade. And when
I speak of such among my flock as swerved
Or fell, those only will I single out
Upon whose lapse, or error, something more
Than brotherly forgiveness may attend;
To such will we restrict our notice—else
Better my tongue were mute. And yet there are,
I feel, good reasons why we should not leave
Wholly untraced a more forbidding way,
For strength to persevere and to support,
And energy to conquer and repel;—
These elements of virtue, that declare
The native grandeur of the human soul,
Are ofttimes not unprofitably shown
In the perverseness of a selfish course:
Truth every day exemplified, no less
In the gray cottage by the murmuring stream
That in fantastic conqueror's roving camp,
Or 'mid the factious senate, unappall'd
While merciless proscription ebbs and flows.
There," said the vicar, pointing as he spake,
'A woman rests in peace; surpass'd by few
In power of mind, and eloquent discourse.
Tall was her stature; her complexion dark
And saturnine; her head not raised to hold
Converse with heaven, nor yet deprest towards earth
But in projection carried, as she walk'd
For ever musing. Sunken were her eyes;
Wrinkled and furrow'd with habitual thought
Was her broad forehead; like the brow of one
Whose visual nerve shrinks from a painful glare
Of overpowering light. While yet a child,
She, 'mid the humble flowerets of the vale,
Tower'd like the imperial thistle, not unfurnish'd
With its appropriate grace, yet rather seeking
To be admired, than coveted and loved.
E'en at that age she ruled, a sovereign queen
Over her comrades; else their simple sports,
Wanting all relish for her strenuous mind,
Had cross'd her, only to be shunn'd with scorn.
O! pang of sorrowful regret for those
Whom, in their youth, sweet study has enthrall'd,
That they have lived for harsher servitude,
Whether in soul, in body, or estate!
Such doom was her's; yet nothing could subdue
Her keen desire of knowledge, nor efface
Those brighter images—by books imprest
Upon her memory, faithfully as stars
That occupy their places—and, though oft
Hidden by clouds, and oft bedimm'd by haze,
Are not to be extinguish'd, nor impair'd.
"Two passions, both degenerate, for they both
Began in honour, gradually obtain'd
Rule over her, and vex'd her daily life;
An unrelenting avaricious thrift;
And a strange thraldom of maternal love,
That held her spirit in its own despite,
Bound—by vexation, and regret, and scorn,
Constrain'd forgiveness, and relenting vows,
And tears, in pride suppress'd, in shame conceal d—
To a poor dissolute son, her only child.
Her wedded days had open'd with mishap,
Whence dire dependence. What could she perform
To shake the burden off? Ah! there was felt,
Indignantly the weakness of her sex.
She mused—resolved, adhered to her resolve;
The hand grew slack in almsgiving, the heart
Closed by degrees to charity; heaven's blessing
Not seeking from that source, she placed her trust
In ceaseless pains and parsimonious care,
Which got, and sternly hoarded each day's gain.
"Thus all was re-establish'd, and a pile
Constructed, that sufficed for every end
Save the contentment of the builder's mind;
A mind by nature indisposed to aught
So placid, so inactive, as content;
A mind intolerant of lasting peace,
And cherishing the pang which it deplored.
Dread life of conflict! which I oft compared
To th' agitation of a brook that runs
Down rocky mountains—buried now and lost
In silent pools, now in strong eddies chain'd,
But never to be charm'd to gentleness;
Its best attainment fits of such repose
As timid eyes might shrink from fathoming.
"A sudden illness seized her in the strength
Of life's autumnal season. Shall I tell
How on her bed of death the matron lay,

To providence submissive, so she thought;
But fretted, vex'd, and wrought upon—almost
To anger, by the malady that griped
Her prostrate frame with unrelaxing power,
As the fierce eagle fastens on the lamb?
She pray'd, she moan'd—her husband's sister watch'd
Her dreary pillow, waited on her needs;
And yet the very sound of that kind foot
Was anguish to her ears! 'And must she rule,'
This was the dying woman heard to say
In bitterness, 'and must she rule and reign,
Sole mistress of this house, when I am gone?
Sit by my fire—possess what I possess'd—
Tend what I tended—calling it her own!'
Enough;—I fear, too much. One vernal evening,
While she was yet in prime of health and strength
I well remember, while I pass'd her door,
Musing with loitering step, and upward eye
Turn'd towards the planet Jupiter that hung
Above the centre of the vale, a voice
Roused me, her voice; it said, 'that glorious star
In its untroubled element will shine
As now it shines, when we are laid in earth
And safe from all our sorrows.' She is safe,
And her uncharitable acts, I trust,
And harsh unkindnesses, are all forgiven;
Though, in this vale remember'd with deep awe!"

The vicar paused; and toward a seat advanced,
A long stone seat, fix'd in the churchyard wall;
Part shaded by cool sycamore, and part
Offering a sunny resting place to them
Who seek the house of worship, while the bells
Yet ring with all their voices, or before
The last hath ceased its solitary knoll.
Under the shade we all sate down; and there
His office, uninvited, he resumed.
"As on a sunny bank, a tender lamb
Lurks in safe shelter from the winds of March,
Screen'd by its parent, so that little mound
Lies guarded by its neighbour; the small heap
Speaks for itself;—an infant there doth rest,
The sheltering hillock is the mother's grave.
If mild discourse, and manners that conferr'd
A natural dignity on humblest rank!
If gladsome spirits, and benignant looks,
That for a face not beautiful did more
Than beauty for the fairest face can do:
And if religious tenderness of heart,
Grieving for sin, and penitential tears
Shed when the clouds had gather'd and distain'd
The spotless ether of a maiden life;
If these may make a hallow'd spot of earth
More holy in the sight of God or man;
Then, o'er that mould, a sanctity shall brood
Till the stars sicken at the day of doom.
"Ah! what a warning for a thoughtless man,
Could field or grove, could any spot of earth,
Show to his eye an image of the pangs
Which it hath witness'd; render back an echo
Of the sad steps by which it hath been trod!
There by her innocent baby's precious grave,
Yea, doubtless, on the turf that roofs her own,
The mother oft was seen to stand, or kneel
In the broad day, a weeping Magdalene.
Now she is not; the swelling turf reports
Of the fresh shower, but of poor Ellen's tears
Is silent; nor is any vestige left
Of the path worn by mournful tread of her
Who, at her heart's light bidding, once had moved
In virgin fearlessness, with step that seem'd
Caught from the pressure of elastic turf
Upon the mountains gemm'd with morning dew,
In the prime hour of sweetest scents and airs.
Serious and thoughtful was her mind; and yet,
By reconcilement exquisite and rare,
The form, port, motions of this cottage girl
Were such as might have quicken'd and inspired
A Titian's hand, addrest to picture forth
Oread or Dryad glancing through the shade
What time the hunter's earliest horn is heard
Startling the golden hills. A wide spread elm
Stands in our valley, named the Joyful Tree;
From dateless usage which our peasants hold
Of giving welcome to the first of May
By dances round its trunk. And if the sky
Permit, like honours, dance and song, are paid
To the Twelfth Night, beneath the frosty stars
Or the clear moon. The queen of these gay sports,
If not in beauty yet in sprightly air,
Was hapless Ellen. No one touch'd the ground
So deftly, and the nicest maiden's locks
Less gracefully were braided; but this praise,
Methinks, would better suit another place.
"She loved, and fondly deem'd herself beloved.
The road is dim, the current unperceived,
The weakness painful and most pitiful,
By which a virtuous woman, in pure youth,
May be deliver'd to distress and shame.
Such fate was hers. The last time Ellen danced,
Among her equals, round the Joyful Tree,
She bore a secret burden; and full soon
Was left to tremble for a breaking vow,—
Then, to bewail a sternly-broken vow,
Alone, within her widow'd mother's house.
It was the season sweet, of budding leaves,
Of days advancing toward their utmost length,
And small birds singing to their happy mates.
Wild is the music of the autumnal wind
Among the faded woods; but these blithe notes
Strike the deserted to the heart;—I speak
Of what I know, and what we feel within.
Beside the cottage in which Ellen dwelt
Stands a tall ash tree; to whose topmost twig
A thrush resorts, and annually chants,
At morn and evening from that naked perch,
While all the undergrove is thick with leaves,
A time-beguiling ditty, for delight
Of his fond partner, silent in the nest.
'Ah, why,' said Ellen, sighing to herself,
'Why do not words, and kiss, and solemn pledge;
And nature that is kind in woman's breast,
And reason that in man is wise and good,
And fear of Him who is a righteous judge,
Why do not these prevail for human life,
To keep two hearts together, that began
Their spring-time with one love, and that have need
Of mutual pity and forgiveness, sweet
To grant, or be received; while that poor bird—
O come and hear him! thou who hast to me
Been faithless, hear him, though a lowly creature

One of God's simple children that yet know not
The universal Parent, how he sings
As if he wish'd the firmament of heaven
Should listen, and give back to him the voice
Of his triumphant constancy and love;
The proclamation that he makes, how far
His darkness doth transcend our fickle light!'
"Such was the tender passage, not by me
Repeated without loss of simple phrase,
Which I perused, even as the words had been
Committed by forsaken Ellen's hand
To the blank margin of a valentine,
Bedropp'd with tears. 'Twill please you to be told
That, studiously withdrawing from the eye
Of all companionship, the sufferer yet
In lonely reading found a meek resource;
How thankful for the warmth of summer days,
When she could slip into the cottage barn,
And find a secret oratory there;
Or, in the garden, under friendly veil
Of their long twilight, pore upon her book
By the last lingering help of open sky,
Till the dark night dismiss'd her to her bed!
Thus did a waking fancy sometimes lose
Th' unconquerable pang of despised love.
"A kindlier passion open'd on her soul
When that poor child was born. Upon its face
She look'd as on a pure and spotless gift
Of unexpected promise, where a grief
Or dread was all that had been thought of—joy
Far livelier than bewilder'd traveller feels
Amid a perilous waste, that all night long
Hath harass'd him—toiling through fearful storm,
When he beholds the first pale speck serene
Of dayspring, in the gloomy east reveal'd,
And greets it with thanksgiving. 'Till this hour,'
Thus, in her mother's hearing Ellen spake,
'There was a stony region in my heart;
But He, at whose command the parched rock
Was smitten, and pour'd forth a quenching stream,
Hath soften'd that obduracy, and made
Unlook'd for gladness in the desert place,
To save the perishing; and, henceforth, I look
Upon the light with cheerfulness, for thee,
My infant! and for that good mother dear,
Who bore me,—and hath pray'd for me in vain;—
Yet not in vain, it shall not be in vain.'
She spake, nor was th' assurance unfulfill'd,
And if heartrending thoughts would oft return,
They stay'd not long. The blameless infant grew;
The child whom Ellen and her mother loved
They soon were proud of; tended it and nursed,
A soothing comforter, although forlorn;
Like a poor singing bird from distant lands;
Or a choice shrub, which he, who passes by
With vacant mind, not seldom may observe
Fair flowering in a thinly peopled house,
Whose window, somewhat sadly, it adorns.
Through four months' space the infant drew its food
From the maternal breast; then scruples rose;
Thoughts, which the rich are free from, came and cross'd
The sweet affection. She no more could bear
By her offence to lay a twofold weight
On a kind parent willing to forget
Their slender means; so, to that parent's care
Trusting her child, she left their common home
And with contented spirit undertook
A foster-mother's office.
'Tis, perchance,
Unknown to you that in these simple vales
The natural feeling of equality
Is by domestic service unimpair'd;
Yet, though such service be, with us, removed
From sense of degradation, not the less
Th' ungentle mind can easily find means
T' impose severe restraints and laws unjust,
Which hapless Ellen now was doom'd to feel;
For (blinded by an over-anxious dread
Of such excitement and divided thought
As with her office would but ill accord)
The pair, whose infant she was bound to nurse,
Forbad her all communion with her own;
Week after week, the mandate they enforced.
So near! yet not allow'd, upon that sight
To fix her eyes—alas! 'twas hard to bear!
But worse affliction must be borne—far worse;
For 'tis Heaven's will—that, after a disease
Begun and ended within three days' space,
Her child should die; as Ellen now exclaim'd,
Her own—deserted child! Once, only once,
She saw it in that mortal malady;
And, on the burial day, could scarcely gain
Permission to attend its obsequies.
She reach'd the house—last of the funeral train;
And some one, as she enter'd, having chanced
To urge unthinkingly their prompt departure,
'Nay,' said she, with commanding look, a spirit
Of anger never seen in her before,
'Nay, ye must wait my time!' and down she sate
And by the unclosed coffin kept her seat
Weeping and looking, looking on and weeping,
Upon the last sweet slumber of her child,
Until at length her soul was satisfied.
"You see the infant's grave; and to this spot,
The mother, oft as she was sent abroad,
And whatsoe'er the errand, urged her steps:
Hither she came; here stood, and sometimes knelt
In the broad day—a rueful Magdalene!
So call her; for not only she bewail'd
A mother's loss, but mourn'd in bitterness
Her own transgression, penitent sincere
As ever raised to heaven a streaming eye.
At length the parents of the foster child,
Noting that in despite of their commands
She still renew'd and could not but renew
Those visitations, ceased to send her forth;
Or, to the garden's narrow bounds, confined.
I fail'd not to remind them that they err'd;
For holy nature might not thus be cross'd,
Thus wrong'd in woman's breast: in vain I pleaded—
But the green stalk of Ellen's life was snapp'd,
And the flower droop'd; as every eye could see,
It hung its head in mortal languishment.
Aided by this appearance, I at length
Prevail'd; and from those bonds released, she went
Home to her mother's house. The youth was fled
The rash betrayer could not face the shame
Or sorrow which his senseless guilt had caused;
And little would his presence, or proof given

Of a relenting soul, have now avail'd;
For, like a shadow, he was pass'd away
From Ellen's thoughts; had perish'd to her mind
For all concerns of fear, or hope, or love,
Save only those which to their common shame,
And to his moral being appertain'd:
Hope from that quarter would, I know, have brought
A heavenly comfort: there she recognised
An unrelaxing bond, a mutual need:
There, and, as seem'd, there only. She had built,
Her fond maternal heart had built, a nest
In blindness all too near the river's edge;
That work a summer flood with hasty swell
Had swept away; and now her spirit long'd
For its last flight to heaven's security.
The bodily frame was wasted day by day;
Meanwhile, relinquishing all other cares,
Her mind she strictly tutor'd to find peace
And pleasure in endurance. Much she thought,
And much she read; and brooded feelingly
Upon her own unworthiness. To me,
As to a spiritual comforter and friend,
Her heart she open'd; and no pains were spared
To mitigate, as gently as I could,
The sting of self-reproach, with healing words.
Meek saint! through patience glorified on earth!
In whom, as by her lonely hearth she sate,
The ghastly face of cold decay put on
A sun-like beauty, and appear'd divine!
May I not mention—that, within those walls,
In due observance of her pious wish,
The congregation join'd with me in prayer
For her soul's good? Nor was that office vain.
Much did she suffer: but, if any friend,
Beholding her condition, at the sight
Gave way to words of pity or complaint,
She still'd them with a prompt reproof, and said,
He who afflicts me knows what I can bear;
And, when I fail, and can endure no more,
Will mercifully take me to himself.'
So, through the cloud of death, her spirit pass'd
Into that pure and unknown world of love
Where injury cannot come:—and here is laid
The mortal body by her infant's side."
The vicar ceased; and downcast looks made known
That each had listen'd with his inmost heart.
For me, th' emotion scarcely was less strong
Or less benign than that which I had felt
When, seated near my venerable friend,
Beneath those shady elms, from him I heard
The story that retraced the slow decline
Of Margaret sinking on the lonely heath,
With the neglected house to which she clung.
I noted that the solitary's cheek
Confess'd the power of nature. Pleased though sad,
More pleased than sad, the gray-hair'd wanderer sate;
Thanks to his pure imaginative soul
Capacious and serene, his blameless life,
His knowledge, wisdom, love of truth, and love
Of human kind! He was it who first broke
The pensive silence, saying, "Blest are they
Whose sorrow rather is to suffer wrong
Than to do wrong, although themselves have err'd.
This tale gives proof that Heaven most gently deals
With such, in their affliction. Ellen's fate,
Her tender spirit, and her contrite heart,
Call to my mind dark hints which I have heard
Of one who died within this vale, by doom
Heavier, as his offence was heavier far.
Where, sir, I pray you, where are laid the bones
Of Wilfred Armathwaite?" The vicar answer'd,
"In that green nook, close by the churchyard wall,
Beneath yon hawthorn, planted by myself
In memory and for warning, and in sign
Of sweetness where dire anguish had been known,
Of reconcilement after deep offence,
There doth he rest. No theme his fate supplies
For the smooth glozings of th' indulgent world;
Nor need the windings of his devious course
Be here retraced; enough that, by mishap
And venial error, robb'd of competence,
And her obsequious shadow, peace of mind,
He craved a substitute in troubled joy;
Against his conscience rose in arms, and, braving
Divine displeasure, broke the marriage vow.
That which he had been weak enough to do
Was misery in remembrance; he was stung,
Stung by his inward thoughts, and by the smiles
Of wife and children stung to agony.
Wretched at home, he gain'd no peace abroad;
Ranged through the mountains, slept upon the earth,
Ask'd comfort of the open air, and found
No quiet in the darkness of the night,
No pleasure in the beauty of the day.
His flock he slighted: his paternal fields
Became a clog to him, whose spirit wish'd
To fly, but whither! And this gracious church,
That wears a look so full of peace and hope
And love, benignant mother of the vale,
How fair amid her brood of cottages!
She was to him a sickness and reproach.
Much to the last remain'd unknown: but this
Is sure, that through remorse and grief he died;
Though pitied among men, absolved by God,
He could not find forgiveness in himself;
Nor could endure the weight of his own shame.
"Here rests a mother. But from her I turn,
And from her grave. Behold—upon that ridge,
That, stretching boldly from the mountain side,
Carries into the centre of the vale
Its rocks and woods—the cottage where she dwelt
And where yet dwells her faithful partner, left
(Full eight years past) the solitary prop
Of many helpless children. I begin
With words that might be prelude to a tale
Of sorrow and dejection; but I feel
No sadness, when I think of what mine eyes
See daily in that happy family.
Bright garland form they for the pensive brow
Of their undrooping father's widowhood.
Those six fair daughters, budding yet—not one
Not one of all the band, a full-blown flower!
Deprest, and desolate of soul, as once
That father was, and fill'd with anxious fear,
Now, by experience taught, he stands assured,
That God, who takes away, yet takes not half
Of what he seems to take; or gives it back,
Not to our prayer, but far beyond our prayer;
He gives it—the boon produce of a soil

Which our endeavours have refused to till,
And hope hath never water'd. The abode,
Whose grateful owner can attest these truths,
E'en were the object nearer to our sight,
Would seem in no distinction to surpass
The rudest habitations. Ye might think
That it had sprung self-raised from earth, or grown
Out of the living rock, to be adorn'd
By nature only; but, if thither led,
Ye would discover, then, a studious work
Of many fancies, prompting many hands.
Brought from the woods, the honeysuckle twines
Around the porch, and seems, in that trim place,
A plant no longer wild: the cultured rose
There blossoms, strong in health, and will be soon
Roof high; the wild pink crowns the garden wall,
And with the flowers are intermingled stones
Sparry and bright, rough scatterings of the hills.
These ornaments, that fade not with the year,
A hardy girl continues to provide;
Who, mounting fearlessly the rocky heights
Her father's prompt attendant, does for him
All that a boy could do, but with delight
More keen, and prouder daring: yet hath she
Within the garden, like the rest, a bed
For her own flowers and favourite herbs—a space,
By sacred charter, holden for her use.
These, and whatever else the garden bears
Of fruit or flower, permission ask'd or not,
I freely gather; and my leisure draws
A not unfrequent pastime from the sight
Of the bees murmuring round their shelter'd hives
In that enclosure; while the mountain rill,
That sparkling thrids the rocks, attunes his voice
To the pure course of human life, which there
Flows on in solitude. But, when the gloom
Of night is falling round my steps, then most
This dwelling charms me: often I stop short,
(Who could refrain?) and feed by stealth my sight
With prospect of the company within,
Laid open through the blazing window. There
I see the eldest daughter at her wheel
Spinning amain, as if to overtake
The never-halting time; or, in her turn,
Teaching some novice of the sisterhood
That skill in this or other household work,
Which, from her father's honour'd hand, herself
While she was yet a little one, had learn'd.
Mild man! he is not gay, but they are gay;
And the whole house seems fill'd with gayety.
Thrice happy, then, the mother may be deem'd,
The wife, from whose consolatory grave
I turn'd, that ye in mind might witness where
And how, her spirit yet survives on earth."

BOOK VII.

THE CHURCHYARD AMONG THE MOUNTAINS.

CONTINUED.

ARGUMENT.

Impression of these narratives upon the author's mind. Pastor invited to give account of certain graves that lie apart. Clergyman and his family. Fortunate influence of change of situation. Activity in extreme old age. Another clergyman, a character of resolute virtue. Lamentations over misdirected applause. Instance of less exalted excellence in a deaf man. Elevated character of a blind man. Reflection upon blindness. Interrupted by a peasant who passes; his animal cheerfulness and careless vivacity. He occasions a digression on the fall of beautiful and interesting trees. A female infant's grave. Joy at her birth. Sorrow at her departure. A youthful peasant; his patriotic enthusiasm, distinguished qualities, and untimely death. Exultation of the wanderer, as a patriot, in this picture. Solitary how affected. Monument of a knight. Traditions concerning him. Peroration of the wanderer on the transitoriness of things, and the revolutions of society Hints at his own past calling. Thanks the pastor.

While thus from theme to theme the historian pass'd,
The words he utter'd, and the scene that lay
Before our eyes, awaken'd in my mind
Vivid remembrance of those long-past hours,
When, in the hollow of some shadowy vale,
(What time the splendour of the setting sun
Lay beautiful on Snowdon's sovereign brow,
On Cader Idris, or huge Penmanmaur,)
A wandering youth, I listen'd with delight
To pastoral melody or warlike air,
Drawn from the chords of th' ancient British harp
By some accomplished master, while he sate
Amid the quiet of the green recess,
And there did inexhaustibly dispense
An interchange of soft or solemn tunes,
Tender or blithe; now, as the varying mood
Of his own spirit urged,—now, as a voice
From youth or maiden, or some honour'd chief
Of his compatriot villagers (that hung
Around him, drinking in the impassion'd notes
Of the time-hallow'd minstrelsy) required
For their heart's ease or pleasure. Strains of power
Were they, to seize and occupy the sense;
But to a higher mark than song can reach
Rose this pure eloquence. And, when the stream
Which overflow'd the soul was pass'd away,
A consciousness remain'd that it had left
Deposited upon the silent shore
Of memory, images and precious thoughts,
That shall not die, and cannot be destroy'd.
"These grassy heaps lie amicably close,"
Said I, "like surges heaving in the wind
Upon the surface of a mountain pool;
Whence comes it then, that yonder we behold
Five graves, and only five, that rise together
Unsociably sequester'd, and encroaching
On the smooth playground of the village school?"
The vicar answered: "No disdainful pride
In them who rest beneath, nor any course
Of strange or tragic accident, hath help'd
To place those hillocks in that lonely guise.
Once more look forth, and follow with your sight
The length of road that from yon mountain's base
Through bare enclosures stretches, till its line
Is lost within a little tuft of trees;
Then reappearing in a moment, quits
The cultured fields, and up the heathy waste,
Mounts, as you see, in mazes serpentine,
Towards an easy outlet of the vale.
That little shady spot, that sylvan tuft,
By which the road is hidden, also hides
A cottage from our view,—though I discern

'Ye scarcely can) amid its sheltering trees
The smokeless chimney-top. All unembower'd
And naked stood that lonely parsonage
(For such in truth it is, and appertains
To a small chapel in the vale beyond)
When hither came its last inhabitant.
"Rough and forbidding were the choicest roads
By which our northern wilds could then be cross'd;
And into most of these secluded vales
Was no access for wain, heavy or light.
So, at his dwelling-place the priest arrived,
With store of household goods, in panniers slung,
On sturdy horses graced with jingling bells,
And on the back of more ignoble beast;
That, with like burden of effects most prized
Or easiest carried, closed the motley train.
Young was I then, a schoolboy of eight years;
But still, methinks, I see them as they pass'd
In order, drawing toward their wish'd-for home.
Rock'd by the motion of a trusty ass,
Two ruddy children hung, a well-poised freight,
Each in his basket nodding drowsily;
Their bonnets, I remember, wreathed with flowers,
Which told it was the pleasant month of June;
And, close behind, the comely matron rode,
A woman of soft speech and gracious smile,
And with a lady's mien. From far they came,
E'en from Northumbrian hills; yet theirs had been
A merry journey, rich in pastime, cheer'd
By music, prank, and laughter-stirring jest;
And freak put on, and arch word dropp'd, to swell
The cloud of fancy and uncouth surmise
That gather'd round the slowly-moving train.
Whence do they come? and with what errand charged?
Belong they to the fortune-telling tribe
Who pitch their tents beneath the green-wood tree?
Or are they strollers, furnish'd to enact
Fair Rosamond, and the Children of the Wood,
And, by that whisker'd tabby's aid, set forth
The lucky venture of sage Whittington,
When the next village hears the show announced
By blast of trumpet?' Plenteous was the growth
Of such conjectures, overheard, or seen
On many a staring countenance portray'd
Of boor or burgher, as they march'd along.
And more than once their steadiness of face
Was put to proof, and exercise supplied
To their inventive humour, by stern looks,
And questions in authoritative tone,
From some staid guardian of the public peace,
Checking the sober steed on which he rode,
In his suspicious wisdom: oftener still,
By notice indirect, or blunt demand
From traveller halting in his own despite,
A simple curiosity to ease;
Of which adventures, that beguiled and cheer'd
Their grave migration, the good pair would tell,
With undiminish'd glee, in hoary age.
"A priest he was by function; but his course
From his youth up, and high as manhood's noon,
(The hour of life to which he then was brought,)
Had been irregular, I might say, wild;
By books unsteadied, by his pastoral care
Too little check'd. An active, ardent mind;
A fancy pregnant with resource and scheme
To cheat the sadness of a rainy day;
Hands apt for all ingenious arts and games;
A generous spirit, and a body strong
To cope with stoutest champions of the bowl;
Had earn'd for him sure welcome, and the rights
Of a prized visitant, in the jolly hall
Of country squire; or at the statelier board
Of duke or earl, from scenes of courtly pomp
Withdrawn, to while away the summer hours
In condescension among rural guests.
"With these high comrades he had revell'd long,
Frolick'd industriously, a simple clerk,
By hopes of coming patronage beguiled
Till the heart sicken'd. So each loftier aim
Abandoning, and all his showy friends,
For a life's stay, though slender yet assured,
He turn'd to this secluded chapelry
That had been offered to his doubtful choice
By an unthought-of patron. Bleak and bare
They found the cottage, their allotted home;
Naked without, and rude within; a spot
With which the scantily provided cure
Not long had been endowed: and far remote
The chapel stood, divided from that house
By an unpeopled tract of mountain waste.
Yet cause was none, whate'er regret might hang
On his own mind, to quarrel with the choice
Or the necessity that fix'd him here:
Apart from old temptations, and constrain'd
To punctual labour in his sacred charge.
See him a constant preacher to the poor!
And visiting, though not with saintly zeal,
Yet when need was, with no reluctant will,
The sick in body, or distrest in mind;
And, by his salutary change, compell'd
To rise from timely sleep, and meet the day
With no engagement, in his thoughts, more proud
Or splendid than his garden could afford,
His fields, or mountains by the heath-cock ranged,
Or the wild brooks; from which he now return'd
Contented to partake the quiet meal
Of his own board, where sate his gentle mate
And three fair children, plentifully fed
Though simply, from their little household farm;
With acceptable treat of fish or fowl
By nature yielded to his practised hand—
To help the small but certain comings-in
Of that spare benefice. Yet not the less
Theirs was a hospitable board, and theirs
A charitable door. So days and years
Pass'd on; the inside of that rugged house
Was trimm'd and brighten'd by the matron's care,
And gradually enrich'd with things of price,
Which might be lack'd for use or ornament.
What though no soft and costly sofa there
Insidiously stretch'd out its lazy length,
And no vain mirror glitter'd on the walls,
Yet were the windows of the low abode
By shutters weather-fended, which at once
Repell'd the storm and deaden'd its loud roar.
There snow-white curtains hung in decent folds;
Tough moss, and long-enduring mountain plants,
That creep along the ground with sinuous trail,
Were nicely braided, and composed a work
Like Indian mats, that with appropriate grace
Lay at the threshold and the inner doors;

And a fair carpet, woven of homespun wool,
But tinctured daintily with florid hues,
For seemliness and warmth, on festal days,
Cover'd the smooth blue slabs of mountain stone
With which the parlour floor, in simplest guise
Of pastoral homesteads, had been long inlaid.
These pleasing works the housewife's skill produced:
Meanwhile the unsedentary master's hand
Was busier with his task—to rid, to plant,
To rear for food, for shelter, and delight;
A thriving covert! And when wishes, form'd
In youth, and sanction'd by the riper mind,
Restored me to my native valley, here
To end my days; well pleased was I to see
The once bare cottage, on the mountain side,
Screen'd from assault of every bitter blast;
While the dark shadows of the summer leaves
Danced in the breeze, upon its mossy roof.
Time, which had thus afforded willing help
To beautify with nature's fairest growth
This rustic tenement, had gently shed,
Upon its master's frame, a wintry grace;
The comeliness of unenfeebled age.
But how could I say, gently? for he still
Retain'd a flashing eye, a burning palm,
A stirring foot, a head which beat at nights
Upon its pillow with a thousand schemes.
Few likings had he dropp'd, few pleasures lost;
Generous and charitable, prompt to serve;
And still his harsher passions kept their hold,
Anger and indignation: still he loved
The sound of titled names, and talk'd in glee
Of long past banquetings with high-born friends:
Then, from those lulling fits of vain delight
Uproused by recollected injury, rail'd
At their false ways disdainfully,—and oft
In bitterness, and with a threatening eye
Of fire, incensed beneath its hoary brow.
These transports, with staid looks of pure good will
And with soft smile, his consort would reprove.
She far behind him in the race of years,
Yet keeping her first mildness, was advanced
Far nearer, in the habit of her soul,
To that still region whither all are bound.
Him might we liken to the setting sun
As seen not seldom on some gusty day,
Struggling and bold, and shining from the west
With an inconstant and unmellow'd light;
She was a soft attendant cloud, that hung
As if with wish to veil the restless orb;
From which it did itself imbibe a ray
Of pleasing lustre. But no more of this;
I better love to sprinkle on the sod
That now divides the pair, or rather say
That still unites them, praises, like heaven's dew,
Without reserve descending upon both.
"Our very first in eminence of years
This old man stood, the patriarch of the vale!
And, to his unmolested mansion, death
Had never come, through space of forty years;
Sparing both old and young in that abode.
Suddenly then they disappear'd: not twice
Had summer scorch'd the fields: not twice had fall'n
On those high peaks, the first autumnal snow,
Before the greedy visiting was closed,
And the lone privileged house left empty—swept
As by a plague: yet no rapacious plague
Had been among them; all was gentle death,
One after one, with intervals of peace.
A happy consummation! an accord
Sweet, perfect—to be wish'd for! save that here
Was something which to mortal sense might sound
Like harshness,—that the old gray-headed sire,
The oldest, he was taken last,—survived
When the meek partner of his age, his son,
His daughter, and that late and high-prized gift,
His little smiling grandchild, were no more.
"'All gone, all vanish'd! he deprived and bare
How will he face the remnant of his life?
What will become of him?" we said, and mused
In sad conjectures—'Shall we meet him now
Haunting with rod and line the craggy brooks?
Or shall we overhear him, as we pass,
Striving to entertain the lonely hours
With music?'(for he had not ceased to touch
The harp or viol which himself had framed,
For their sweet purposes, with perfect skill.)
'What titles will he keep? will he remain
Musician, gardener, builder, mechanist,
A planter, and a rearer from the seed?
A man of hope and forward looking mind
E'en to the last!' Such was he, unsubdued.
But Heaven was gracious: yet a little while,
And this survivor, with his cheerful throng
Of open schemes, and all his inward hoard
Of unsunn'd griefs, too many and too keen,
Was overcome by unexpected sleep,
In one blest moment. Like a shadow thrown
Softly and lightly from a passing cloud,
Death fell upon him, while reclined he lay
For noontide solace on the summer grass,
The warm lap of his mother earth: and so,
Their lenient term of separation past,
That family (whose graves you there behold)
By yet a higher privilege once more
Were gather'd to each other."
Calm of mind
And silence waited on these closing words;
Until the wanderer (whether moved by fear
Lest in those passages of life were some
That might have touch'd the sick heart of his friend
Too nearly, or intent to reinforce
His own firm spirit in degree deprest
By tender sorrow for our mortal state)
Thus silence broke: "Behold a thoughtless man
From vice and premature decay preserved
By useful habits, to a fitter soil
Transplanted ere too late. The hermit, lodged
In the untrodden desert, tells his beads,
With each repeating its allotted prayer,
And thus divides and thus relieves the time;
Smooth task, with his compared, whose mind could string,
Not scantily, bright minutes on the thread
A keen domestic anguish,—and beguile
Of solitude, unchosen, unprofess'd;
Till gentlest death released him. Far from us
Be the desire—too curiously to ask
How much of this is but the blind result
Of cordial spirits and vital temperament,
And what to higher powers is justly due.

But you, sir, know that in a neighbouring vale
A priest abides before whose life such doubts
Fall to the ground: whose gifts of nature lie
Retired from notice, lost in attributes
Of reason, honourably effaced by debts
Which her poor treasure house is content to owe,
And conquest over her dominion gain'd,
To which her frowardness must needs submit.
In this one man is shown a temperance—proof
Against all trials; industry severe
And constant as the motion of the day;
Stern self-denial round him spread, with shade
That might be deem'd forbidding, did not there
All generous feelings flourish and rejoice;
Forbearance, charity in deed and thought,
And resolution competent to take
Out of the bosom of simplicity
All that her holy customs recommend,
And the best ages of the world prescribe.
Preaching, administering, in every work
Of his sublime vocation, in the walks
Of worldly intercourse 'twixt man and man,
And in his humble dwelling, he appears
A labourer, with moral virtue girt,
With spiritual graces, like a glory, crown'd."
"Doubt can be none," the pastor said, "for whom
This portraiture is sketch'd. The great, the good,
The well beloved, the fortunate, the wise,
These titles emperors and chiefs have borne,
Honour assumed or given: and him, the Wonderful,
Our simple shepherds, speaking from the heart,
Deservedly have styled. From his abode
In a dependent chapelry, that lies
Behind yon hill, a poor and rugged wild,
Which in his soul he lovingly embraced,—
And, having once espoused, would never quit;
Hither, ere long, that lowly, great, good man
Will be convey'd. An unelaborate stone
May cover him; and by its help, perchance,
A century shall hear his name pronounced,
With images attendant on the sound:
Then, shall the slowly gathering twilight close
In utter night; and of his course remain
No cognizable vestiges, no more
Than of this breath, which shapes itself in words
To speak of him, and instantly dissolves.
Noise is there not enough in doleful war,
But that the heaven-born poet must stand forth,
And lend the echoes of his sacred shell,
To multiply and aggravate the din?
Pangs are mere not enough in hopeless love—
And, in requited passion, all too much
Of turbulence, anxiety, and fear—
But that the minstrel of the rural shade
Must tune his pipe, insidiously to nurse
The perturbation in the suffering breast,
And propagate its kind, far as he may?
Ah who (and with such rapture as befits
The hallow'd theme) will rise and celebrate
The good man's deeds and purposes; retrace
His struggles, his discomfiture deplore,
His triumphs hail, and glorify his end?
That virtue, like the fumes and vapory clouds
Through fancy's heat redounding in the brain,
And like the soft infections of the heart,
By charm of measured words may spread o'er field,
Hamlet, and town; and piety survive
Upon the lips of men in hall or bower;
Not for reproof, but high and warm delight,
And grave encouragement, by song inspired.
Vain thought! but wherefore murmur or repine?
The memory of the just survives in heaven:
And, without sorrow, will this ground receive
That venerable clay. Meanwhile the best
Of what it holds confines us to degrees
In excellence less difficult to reach,
And milder worth: nor need we travel far
From those to whom our last regards were paid,
For such example.
Almost at the root
Of that tall pine, the shadow of whose bare
And slender stem, while here I sit at eve,
Oft stretches towards me, like a long straight path
Traced faintly in the greensward; there, beneath
A plain blue stone, a gentle dalesman lies,
From whom, in early childhood, was withdrawn
The precious gift of hearing. He grew up
From year to year in loneliness of soul;
And this deep mountain valley was to him
Soundless, with all its streams. The bird of dawn
Did never rouse this cottager from sleep
With startling summons: not for his delight
The vernal cuckoo shouted; not for him
Murmur'd the labouring bee. When stormy winds
Were working the broad bosom of the lake
Into a thousand thousand sparkling waves,
Rocking the trees, or driving cloud on cloud
Along the sharp edge of yon lofty crags,
The agitated scene before his eye
Was silent as a picture: evermore
Were all things silent, wheresoe'er he moved.
Yet, by the solace of his own pure thoughts
Upheld, he duteously pursued the round
Of rural labours; the steep mountain side
Ascended with his staff and faithful dog;
The plough he guided, and the scythe he sway'd;
And the ripe corn before his sickle fell
Among the jocund reapers. For himself,
All watchful and industrious as he was,
He wrought not; neither field nor flock he own'd:
No wish for wealth had place within his mind;
Nor husband's love, nor father's hope or care.
Though born a younger brother, need was none
That from the floor of his paternal home
He should depart, to plant himself anew.
And when, mature in manhood, he beheld
His parents laid in earth, no loss ensued
Of rights to him; but he remain'd well pleased,
By the pure bond of independent love
An inmate of a second family,
The fellow labourer and friend of him
To whom the small inheritance had fall'n.
Nor deem that his mild presence was a weight
That press'd upon his brother's house, for books
Were ready comrades whom he could not tire,—
Of whose society the blameless man
Was never satiate. Their familiar voice,
E'en to old age, with unabated charm
Beguiled his leisure hours; refresh'd his thoughts;
Beyond its natural elevation raised
His introverted spirit: and bestow'd
Upon his life an outward dignity

Which all acknowledged. The dark winter night,
The stormy day, had each its own resource;
Song of the muses, sage historic tale,
Science severe, or word of holy writ
Announcing immortality and joy
To the assembled spirits of the just,
From imperfection and decay secure.
Thus soothed at home, thus busy in the field,
To no perverse suspicion he gave way,
No languor, peevishness, nor vain complaint:
And they who were about him did not fail
In reverence, or in courtesy; they prized
His gentle manners; and his peaceful smiles,
The gleams of his slow-varying countenance,
Were met with answering sympathy and love.
"At length, when sixty years and five were told,
A slow disease insensibly consumed
The powers of nature; and a few short steps
Of friends and kindred bore him from his home
(Yon cottage shaded by the woody crags)
To the profounder stillness of the grave.
Nor was his funeral denied the grace
Of many tears, virtuous and thoughtful grief;
Heart sorrow rendered sweet by gratitude.
And now that monumental stone preserves
His name, and unambitiously relates
How long, and by what kindly outward aids,
And in what pure contentedness of mind,
The sad privation was by him endured.
And yon tall pine tree, whose composing sound
Was wasted on the good man's living ear,
Hath now its own peculiar sanctity;
And, at the touch of every wandering breeze,
Murmurs, not idly, o'er his peaceful grave.
"Soul-cheering light, most bountiful of things!
Guide of our way, mysterious comforter!
Whose sacred influence, spread through earth and heaven,
We all too thanklessly participate,
Thy gifts were utterly withheld from him
Whose place of rest is near yon ivied porch.
Yet, of the wild brooks ask if he complained;
Ask of the channell'd rivers if they held
A safer, easier, more determined course.
What terror doth it strike into the mind
To think of one who cannot see, advancing
Toward some precipice's airy brink!
But, timely warn'd, *he* would have stay'd his steps,
Protected, say enlighten'd, by his ear,
And on the very edge of vacancy
Not more endanger'd than a man whose eye
Beholds the gulf beneath. No floweret blooms
Throughout the lofty range of these rough hills,
Or in the woods, that could from him conceal
Its birthplace; none whose figure did not live
Upon his touch. The bowels of the earth
Enrich'd with knowledge his industrious mind;
The ocean paid him tribute from the stores
Lodged in her bosom; and, by science led,
His genius mounted to the plains of heaven.
Methinks I see him; how his eyeballs roll'd
Beneath his ample brow, in darkness pair'd,
But each instinct with spirit; and the frame
Of the whole countenance alive with thought,
Fancy, and understanding; while the voice
Discoursed of natural or moral truth
With eloquence, and such authentic power,
That, in his presence, humbler knowledge stood
Abash'd, and tender pity overawed."
"A noble, and, to unreflecting minds,
A marvellous spectacle," the wanderer said,
"Beings like these present! But proof abounds
Upon the earth that faculties which seem
Extinguish'd, do not, *therefore*, cease to be.
And to the mind among her powers of sense
This transfer is permitted, not alone
That the bereft their recompense may win,
But for remoter purposes of love
And charity; nor last nor least for this,
That to th' imagination may be given
A type and shadow of an awful truth;
How, likewise, under sufferance divine,
Darkness is banish'd from the realms of death,
By man's imperishable spirit quell'd.
Unto the men who see not as we see,
Futurity was thought, in ancient times,
To be laid open, and they prophesied.
And know we not that from the blind have flow'd
The highest, holiest raptures of the lyre;
And wisdom married to immortal verse?"
Among the humbler worthies, at our feet
Living insensible to human praise,
Love, or regret, *whose* lineaments would next
Have been portray'd, I guess not; but it chanced
That, near the quiet churchyard where we sate,
A team of horses, with a ponderous freight
Pressing behind, adown a rugged slope,
Whose sharp descent confounded their array
Came at that moment, ringing noisily.
"Here," said the pastor, "do we muse, and mourn
The waste of death: and lo! the giant oak
Stretch'd on his bier, that massy timber wain;
Nor fail to note the man who guides the team."
He was a peasant of the lowest class:
Gray locks profusely round his temples hung
In clustering curls, like ivy, which the bite
Of winter cannot thin; the fresh air lodged
Within his cheek, as light within a cloud;
And he returned our greeting with a smile.
When he had pass'd, the solitary spake:
"A man he seems of cheerful yesterdays
And confident to-morrows; with a face
Not worldly-minded, for it bears too much
Of nature's impress—gayety and health,
Freedom and hope; but keen withal, and shrewd.
His gestures note; and hark! his tones of voice
Are all vivacious as his mien and looks."
The pastor answered: "You have read him well.
Year after year is added to his store
With *silent* increase; summers, winters—past,
Past or to come; yea, boldly might I say,
Ten summers and ten winters of a space
That lies beyond life's ordinary bounds,
Upon his sprightly vigour cannot fix
The obligation of an anxious mind,
A pride in having, or a fear to lose;
Possess'd like outskirts of some large domain,
By any one more thought of than by him
Who holds the land in fee, its careless lord!
Yet is the creature rational, endow'd
With foresight; hears, too, every Sabbath-day

The Christian promise with attentive ear;
Nor will, I trust, the Majesty of heaven
Reject the incense offered up by him,
Though of the kind which beasts and birds present
In grove or pasture—cheerfulness of soul,
From trepidation and repining free.
How many scrupulous worshippers fall down
Upon their knees, and daily homage pay
Less worthy, less religious even, than his!
"This qualified respect, the old man's due,
Is paid without reluctance; but in truth"
(Said the good vicar with a fond half-smile)
"I feel at times a motion of despite
Towards one, whose bold contrivances and skill,
As you have seen, bear such conspicuous part
In works of havoc; taking from these vales,
One after one, their proudest ornaments.
Full oft his doings leave me to deplore
Tall ash tree, sown by winds, by vapours nursed,
In the dry crannies of the pendant rocks;
Light birch, aloft upon the horizon's edge,
A veil of glory for th' ascending moon;
And oak whose roots by noontide dew were damp'd,
And on whose forehead inaccessible
The raven lodged in safety. Many a ship
Launch'd into Morecamb Bay, to *him* hath owed
Her strong knee-timbers, and the mast that bears
The loftiest of her pendants. He, from park
Or forest, fetch'd the enormous axletree
That whirls (how slow itself!) ten thousand spindles:
And the vast engine labouring in the mine,
Content with meaner prowess, must have lack'd
The trunk and body of its marvellous strength,
If his undaunted enterprise had fail'd
Among the mountain coves.
Yon household fir,
A guardian planted to fence off the blast.
But towering high the roof above, as if
Its humble destination were forgot;
That sycamore, which annually holds
Within its shade, as in a stately tent
On all sides open to the fanning breeze,
A grave assemblage, seated while they shear
The fleece-encumber'd flock; the joyful elm,
Around whose trunk the maidens dance in May;
And the lord's oak,—would plead their several rights
In vain, if he were master of their fate:
His sentence to the axe would doom them all.
But, green in age and lusty as he is,
And promising to keep his hold on earth
Less, as might seem, in rivalship with men
Than with the forest's more enduring growth,
His own appointed hour will come at last;
And, like the haughty spoilers of the world,
This keen destroyer in his turn must fall.
"Now from the living pass we once again;
From age," the priest continued, "turn your thoughts;
From age, that often unlamented drops,
And mark that daisied hillock, three spans long!
Seven lusty sons sate daily round the board
Of Gold-rill side; and, when the hope had ceased
Of other progeny, a daughter then
Was given, the crowning bounty of the whole;
And so acknowledged with a tremulous joy
Felt to the centre of that heavenly calm
With which by nature every mother's soul
Is stricken, in the moment when her throes
Are ended, and her ears have heard the cry
Which tells her that a living child is born,
And she lies conscious, in a blissful rest,
That the dread storm is weather'd by them both.
"The father—him at this unlook'd-for gift
A bolder transport seizes. From the side
Of his bright hearth, and from his open door,
Day after day the gladness is diffused
To all that come, and almost all that pass;
Invited, summon'd, to partake the cheer
Spread on the never-empty board, and drink
Health and good wishes to his new-born girl,
From cups replenish'd by his joyous hand.
Those seven fair brothers variously were moved
Each by the thoughts best suited to his years
But most of all and with most thankful mind
The hoary grandsire felt himself enrich'd;
A happiness that ebb'd not, but remain'd
To fill the total measure of the soul!
From the low tenement, his own abode,
Whither, as to a little private cell,
He had withdrawn from bustle, care, and noise,
To spend the Sabbath of old age in peace,
Once every day he duteously repair'd
To rock the cradle of the slumbering babe:
For in that female infant's name he heard
The silent name of his departed wife;
Heart-stirring music! hourly heard that name;
Full blest he was, 'Another Margaret Green,'
Oft did he say, 'was come to Gold-rill side.'
Oh! pang unthought of, as the precious boon
Itself had been unlook'd for; oh! dire stroke
Of desolating anguish for them all!
Just as the child could totter on the floor,
And, by some friendly finger's help upstay'd,
Range round the garden walk, while she perchance
Was catching at some novelty of spring,
Ground-flower, or glossy insect from its cell
Drawn by the sunshine—at that hopeful season
The winds of March, smiting insidiously,
Raised in the tender passage of the throat
Viewless obstruction; whence, all unforewarn'd,
The household lost their pride and soul's delight.
But time hath power to soften all regrets,
And prayer and thought can bring to worst distress
Due resignation. Therefore, though some tears
Fail not to spring from either parent's eye
Oft as they hear of sorrow like their own,
Yet this departed little one, too long
The innocent troubler of their quiet, sleeps
In what may now be call'd a peaceful grave.
"On a bright day, the brightest of the year,
These mountains echo'd with an unknown sound
A volley, thrice repeated o'er the corse
Let down into the hollow of that grave,
Whose shelving sides are red with naked mould.
Ye rains of April, duly wet this earth!
Spare, burning sun of midsummer, these sods,
That they may knit together, and therewith
Our thoughts unite in kindred quietness!
Nor so the valley shall forget her loss.
Dear youth, by young and old alike beloved,
To me as precious as my own! Green herbs

May creep (I wish that they would softly creep)
Over thy last abode, and we may pass
Reminded less imperiously of thee;
The ridge itself may sink into the breast
Of earth, the great abyss, and be no more;
Yet shall not thy remembrance leave our hearts,
Thy image disappear!

"The mountain ash
No eye can overlook, when 'mid a grove
Of yet unfaded trees she lifts her head,
Deck'd with autumnal berries, that outshine
Spring's richest blossoms; and ye may have mark'd,
By a brook side or solitary tarn,
How she her station doth adorn; the pool
Glows at her feet, and all the gloomy rocks
Are brighten'd round her. In his native vale
Such and so glorious did this youth appear;
A sight that kindled pleasure in all hearts
By his ingenuous beauty, by the gleam
Of his fair eyes, by his capacious brow,
By all the graces with which nature's hand
Had lavishly array'd him. As old bards
Tell in their idle songs of wandering gods,
Pan or Apollo, veil'd in human form;
Yet, like the sweet-breath'd violet of the shade,
Discover'd in their own despite to sense
Of mortals, (if such fables without blame
May find chance mention on this sacred ground,)
So, through a simple rustic garb's disguise,
And through th' impediment of rural cares,
In him reveal'd a scholar's genius shone;
And so, not wholly hidden from men's sight,
In him the spirit of a hero walk'd
Our unpretending valley. How the colt
Whizz'd from the stripling's arm! If touch'd by him,
Th' inglorious football mounted to the pitch
Of the lark's flight, or shaped a rainbow curve,
Aloft, in prospect of the shouting field!
The indefatigable fox had learn'd
To dread his perseverance in the chase.
With admiration would he lift his eyes
To the wide-ruling eagle, and his hand
Was loath to assault the majesty he loved;
Else had the strongest fastnesses proved weak
To guard the royal brood. The sailing glead,
The wheeling swallow, and the darting snipe,
The sportive sea-gull dancing with the waves,
And cautious water-fowl from distant climes,
Fix'd at their seat, the centre of the mere,
Were subject to young Oswald's steady aim.

"From Gallia's coast a tyrant hurl'd his threats;
Our country mark'd the preparation vast
Of hostile forces; and she call'd, with voice
That fill'd her plains, that reach'd her utmost shores,
And in remotest vales was heard,—To arms!
Then, for the first time, here you might have seen
The shepherd's gray to martial scarlet changed,
That flash'd uncouthly through the woods and fields.
Ten hardy striplings, all in bright attire,
And graced with shining weapons, weekly march'd
From this lone valley, to a central spot,
Where, in assemblage with the flower and choice
Of the surrounding district, they might learn
The rudiments of war; ten—hardy, strong,
And valiant; but young Oswald, like a chief,
And yet a modest comrade, led them forth
From their shy solitude, to face the world
With a gay confidence and seemly pride;
Measuring the soil beneath their happy feet,
Like youths released from labour, and yet bound
To most laborious service, though to them
A festival of unencumber'd ease;
The inner spirit keeping holyday,
Like vernal ground to sabbath sunshine left.

"Oft have I mark'd him at some leisure hour,
Stretch'd on the grass or seated in the shade
Among his fellows, while an ample map
Before their eyes lay carefully outspread,
From which the gallant teacher would discourse,
Now pointing this way and now that. 'Here flows,
Thus would he say, 'the Rhine, that famous stream
Eastward, the Danube toward this inland sea,
A mightier river, winds from realm to realm,
And, like a serpent, shows his glittering back
Bespotted with innumerable isles:
Here reigns the Russian, there the Turk; observe
His capital city!' Thence, along a tract
Of livelier interest to his hopes and fears
His finger moved, distinguishing the spots
Where wide-spread conflict then most fiercely raged;
Nor left unstigmatized those fatal fields
On which the sons of mighty Germany
Were taught a base submission. 'Here behold
A nobler race, the Switzers, and their land;
Vales deeper far than these of ours, huge woods
And mountains white with everlasting snow!'
And, surely, he, that spake with kindling brow,
Was a true patriot, hopeful as the best
Of that young peasantry, who, in our days,
Have fought and perish'd for Helvetia's rights,—
Ah, not in vain!—or those who, in old time,
For work of happier issue to the side
Of Tell came trooping from a thousand huts,
When he had risen alone! No braver youth
Descended from Judean heights, to march
With righteous Joshua; or appear'd in arms
When grove was fell'd, and altar was cast down,
And Gideon blew the trumpet, soul-inflamed,
And strong in hatred of idolatry."

This spoken, from his seat the pastor rose,
And moved towards the grave. Instinctively
His steps we follow'd; and my voice exclaim'd,
"Power to th' oppressors of the world is given,
A might of which they dream not. O! the curse,
To be th' awakener of divinest thoughts,
Father and Founder of exalted deeds,
And to whole nations bound in servile straits
The liberal donor of capacities
More than heroic! this to be, nor yet
Have sense of one connatural wish, nor yet
Deserve the least return of human thanks;
Winning no recompense but deadly hate
With pity mix'd, astonishment with scorn!"

When these involuntary words had ceased,
The pastor said, "So Providence is served;
The forked weapon of the skies can send
Illumination into deep, dark holds,
Which the mild sunbeam hath not power to pierce.
Why do ye quake, intimidated thrones?
For, not unconscious of the mighty debt
Which to outrageous wrong the sufferer owes,

Europe, through all her habitable seats,
Is thirsting for *their* overthrow, who still
Exist, as pagan temples stood of old,
By very horror of their impious rites
Preserved; are suffer'd to extend their pride,
Like cedars on the top of Lebanon
Darkening the sun. But less impatient thoughts,
And love 'all hoping and expecting all,'
This hallow'd grave demands, where rests in peace
A humble champion of the better cause;
A peasant youth, so call him, for he ask'd
No higher name; in whom our country show'd,
As in a favourite son, most beautiful.
In spite of vice, and misery, and disease,
Spread with the spreading of her wealthy arts,
England, the ancient and the free, appear'd
In him to stand before my swimming eyes,
Unconquerably virtuous and secure.
No more of this, lest I offend his dust:
Short was his life, and a brief tale remains.

"One summer's day—a day of annual pomp
And solemn chase—from morn to sultry noon
His steps had follow'd, fleetest of the fleet,
The red deer, driven along its native heights
With cry of hound and horn; and, from that toil
Return'd with sinews weaken'd and relax'd,
This generous youth, too negligent of self,
Plunged—'mid a gay and busy throng convened
To wash the fleeces of his father's flock—
Into the chilling flood.

"Convulsions dire
Seized him that selfsame night; and through the space
Of twelve ensuing days his frame was wrench'd,
Till nature rested from her work in death.
To him, thus snatch'd away, his comrades paid
A soldier's honours. At his funeral hour
Bright was the sun, the sky a cloudless blue;
A golden lustre slept upon the hills;
And if by chance a stranger, wandering there,
From some commanding eminence had look'd
Down on this spot, well pleased would he have seen
A glittering spectacle; but every face
Was pallid; seldom hath that eye been moist
With tears, that wept not then; nor were the few
Who from their dwellings came not forth to join
In this sad service, less disturb'd than we.
They started at the tributary peal
Of instantaneous thunder, which announced
Through the still air the closing of the grave;
And distant mountains echo'd with a sound
Of lamentation never heard before!"

The pastor ceased. My venerable friend
Victoriously upraised his clear bright eye;
And, when that eulogy was ended, stood
Enrapt, as if his inward sense perceived
The prolongation of some still response,
Sent by the ancient soul of this wide land,
The spirit of its mountains and its seas,
Its cities, temples, fields, its awful power,
Its rights and virtues—by that Deity
Descending, and supporting his pure heart
With patriotic confidence and joy.
And, at the last of those memorial words,
The pining solitary turn'd aside,
Whether through manly instinct to conceal
Tender emotions spreading from the heart
To his worn cheek; or with uneasy shame
For those cold humours of habitual spleen,
That fondly seeking in dispraise of man
Solace and self-excuse, had sometimes urged
To self-abuse a not ineloquent tongue.
Right toward the sacred edifice his steps
Had been directed; and we saw him now
Intent upon a monumental stone,
Whose uncouth form was grafted on the wall,
Or rather seem'd to have grown into the side
Of the rude pile; as ofttimes trunks of trees,
Where nature works in wild and craggy spots,
Are seen incorporate with the living rock,
To endure for aye. The vicar, taking note
Of his employment, with a courteous smile
Exclaim'd, "The sagest antiquarian's eye
That task would foil;" then, letting fall his voice
While he advanced, thus spake: "Tradition tells
That, in Eliza's golden days, a knight
Came on a war-horse sumptuously attired,
And fix'd his home in this sequester'd vale.
'Tis left untold if here he first drew breath,
Or as a stranger reach'd this deep recess,
Unknowing and unknown. A pleasing thought
I sometimes entertain, that, haply bound
To Scotland's court in service of his queen,
Or sent on mission to some northern chief
Of England's realm, this vale he might have seen,
With transient observation; and thence caught
An image fair, which brightening in his soul
When joy of war and pride of chivalry
Languish'd beneath accumulated years,
Had power to draw him from the world, resolved
To make that paradise his chosen home
To which his peaceful fancy oft had turn'd.
Vague thoughts are these; but, if belief may rest
Upon unwritten story fondly traced
From sire to son, in this obscure retreat
The knight arrived, with pomp of spear and shield
And borne upon a charger cover'd o'er
With gilded housings. And the lofty steed,
His sole companion, and his faithful friend,
Whom he, in gratitude, let loose to range
In fertile pastures, was beheld with eyes
Of admiration, and delightful awe,
By those untravell'd dalesmen. With less pride,
Yet free from touch of envious discontent,
They saw a mansion at his bidding rise,
Like a bright star amid the lowly band
Of their rude homesteads. Here the warrior dwelt;
And, in that mansion, children of his own,
Or kindred, gather'd round him. As a tree
That falls and disappears, the house is gone;
And, through improvidence or want of love
For ancient worth and honourable things,
The spear and shield are vanish'd, which the knight
Hung in his rustic hall. One ivied arch
Myself have seen, a gateway, last remains
Of that foundation in domestic care
Raised by his hands. And now no trace is left
Of the mild-hearted champion, save this stone,
Faithless memorial! and his family name
Borne by yon clustering cottages, that sprang
From out the ruins of his stately lodge:
These, and the name and title at full length—

Sir Alfred Irthing, with appropriate words
Accompanied, still extant, in a wreath
Or posy, girding round the several fronts
Of three clear-sounding and harmonious bells
That in the steeple hang, his pious gift."
"So fails, so languishes, grows dim, and dies,"
The gray-hair'd wanderer pensively exclaim'd,
"All that this world is proud of. From their spheres
The stars of human glory are cast down;
Perish the roses and the flowers of kings,*
Princes, and emperors, and the crowns and palms
Of all the mighty, wither'd and consumed!
Nor is power given to lowliest innocence
Long to protect her own. The man himself
Departs; and soon is spent the line of those
Who, in the bodily image, in the mind,
In heart or soul, in station or pursuit,
Did most resemble him. Degrees and ranks,
Fraternities and orders—heaping high
New wealth upon the burden of the old,
And placing trust in privilege confirm'd
And reconfirm'd—are scoff'd at with a smile
Of greedy foretaste, from the secret stand
Of desolation, aim'd: to slow decline
These yield, and these to sudden overthrow;
Their virtue, service, happiness, and state
Expire; and nature's pleasant robe of green,
Humanity's appointed shroud, inwraps
Their monuments and their memory. The vast frame
Of social nature changes evermore
Her organs and her members with decay
Restless, and restless generation, powers
And functions dying and produced at need;
And by this law the mighty whole subsists:
With an ascent and progress in the main,
Yet, O! how disproportion'd to the hopes
And expectations of self-flattering minds!
The courteous knight whose bones are here interr'd,
Lived in an age conspicuous as our own
For strife and ferment in the minds of men;
Whence alteration, in the forms of things,
Various and vast. A memorable age!
Which did to him assign a pensive lot—
To linger 'mid the last of those bright clouds,
That, on the steady breeze of honour, sail'd
In long procession, calm and beautiful.
He who had seen his own bright order fade,
And its devotion gradually decline,
(While war, relinquishing the lance and shield,
Her temper changed, and bow'd to other laws,)
Had also witnessed, in his morn of life,
That violent commotion which o'erthrew,
In town, and city, and sequester'd glen,
Altar, and cross, and church of solemn roof,
And old religious house—pile after pile;
And shook the tenants out into the fields,
Like wild beasts without home! Their hour was come;
But why no softening thought of gratitude,
No just remembrance, scruple, or wise doubt?
Benevolence is mild; nor borrows help,
Save at worst need, from bold impetuous force,
Fitliest allied to anger and revenge.
But human kind rejoices in the might
Of mutability, and airy hopes,
Dancing around her, hinder and disturb
Those meditations of the soul that feed
The retrospective virtues. Festive songs
Break from the madden'd nations at the sight
Of sudden overthrow; and cold neglect
Is the sure consequence of slow decay.
Even," said the wanderer, "as that courteous knight,
Bound by his vow to labour for redress
Of all who suffer wrong, and to enact
By sword and lance the law of gentleness,
(*if* I may venture of myself to speak,
Trusting that not incongruously I blend
Low things with lofty,) I too shall be doom'd
To outlive the kindly use and fair esteem
Of the poor calling which my youth embraced
With no unworthy prospect. But enough;
Thoughts crowd upon me, and 'twere seemlier now
To stop, and yield our gracious teacher thanks
For the pathetic records which his voice
Hath here delivered; words of heartfelt truth,
Tending to patience when affliction strikes;
To hope and love; to confident repose
In God; and reverence for the dust of man."

* The "transit gloria mundi" is finely expressed in the introduction to the foundation charters of some of the ancient abbeys. Some expressions here used are taken from that of the abbey of St. Mary's Furness, the translation of which is as follows:

"Considering every day the uncertainty of life, that the roses and flowers of kings, emperors, and dukes, and the crowns and palms of all the great wither and decay; and that all things, with an uninterrupted course, tend to dissolution and death: I therefore," &c.

BOOK VIII.

THE PARSONAGE.

ARGUMENT.

Pastor's apprehensions that he might have detained his auditors too long. Invitation to his house. Solitary disinclined to comply, rallies the wanderer; and somewhat playfully draws a comparison between his itinerant profession and that of the knight-errant; which leads to wanderer's giving an account of changes in the country from the manufacturing spirit. Favourable effects. The other side of the picture, and chiefly as it has affected the humbler classes. Wanderer asserts the hollowness of all national grandeur if unsupported by moral worth; gives instances. Physical science unable to support itself. Lamentations over an excess of manufacturing industry among the humbler classes of society. Picture of a child employed in a cotton-mill. Ignorance and degradation of children among the agricultural population reviewed. Conversation broken off by a renewed invitation from the pastor. Path leading to his house. Its appearance described. His daughter. His wife. His son (a boy) enters with his companion. Their happy appearance. The wanderer, how affected by the sight of them.

The pensive skeptic of the lonely vale
To those acknowledgments subscribed his own,
With a sedate compliance, which the priest
Fail'd not to notice, inly pleased, and said,
"If ye, by whom invited I commenced
These narratives of calm and humble life,
Be satisfied, 'tis well; the end is gain'd;
And in return for sympathy bestow'd

And patient listening, thanks accept from me.
Life, death, eternity! momentous themes
Are they, and might demand a seraph's tongue,
Were they not equal to their own support;
And therefore no incompetence of mine
Could do them wrong. The universal forms
Of human nature, in a spot like this,
Present themselves at once to all men's view:
Ye wish'd for act and circumstance, that make
The individual known and understood:
And such as my best judgment could select
From what the place afforded have been given;
Though apprehensions cross'd me that my zeal
To his might well be liken'd, who unlocks
A cabinet with gems or pictures stored,
And draws them forth—soliciting regard
To this, and this, as worthier than the last,
Till the spectator who a while was pleased
More than the exhibiter himself, becomes
Weary and faint, and longs to be released.
But let us hence! my dwelling is in sight,
And there—"
At this the solitary shrunk
With backward will: but, wanting not address
That inward motion to disguise, he said
To his compatriot, smiling as he spake;
"The peaceable remains of this good knight
Would be disturbed, I fear, with wrathful scorn,
If consciousness could reach him where he lies
That one, albeit of these degenerate times,
Deploring changes past, or dreading change
Foreseen, had dared to couple, e'en in thought,
The fine vocation of the sword and lance
With the gross aims and body-bending toil
Of a poor brotherhood who walk the earth
Pitied, and where they are not known, despised.
Yet, by the good knight's leave, the two estates
Are traced with some resemblance. Errant those,
Exiles and wanderers—and the like are these;
Who with their burden, traverse hill and dale,
Carrying relief for nature's simple wants.
What though no higher recompense they seek
Than honest maintenance, by irksome toil
Full oft procured, yet such may claim respect,
Among th' intelligent, for what this course
Enables them to be, and to perform.
Their tardy steps give leisure to observe,
While solitude permits the mind to feel;
Instructs and prompts her to supply defects
By the division of her inward self,
For grateful converse; and to these poor men
As I have heard you boast with honest pride)
Nature is bountiful, where'er they go;
Kind nature's various wealth is all their own.
Versed in the characters of men: and bound,
By ties of daily interest, to maintain
Conciliatory manners and smooth speech;
Such have been, and still are in their degree,
Examples efficacious to refine
Rude intercourse: apt agents to expel,
By importation of unlook'd-for arts,
Barbarian torpor, and blind prejudice;
Raising, through just gradation, savage life
To rustic, and the rustic to urbane.
Within their moving magazines is lodged
Power that comes forth to quicken and exalt
Affections seated in the mother's breast,
And in the lover's fancy; and to feed
The sober sympathies of long-tried friends.
By these itinerants, as experienced men,
Counsel is given; contention they appease
With gentle language; in remotest wilds,
Tears wipe away, and pleasant tidings bring;
Could the proud quest of chivalry do more?"
"Happy," rejoined the wanderer, "they who gain
A panegyric from your generous tongue!
But, if to these wayfarers once pertained
Aught of romantic interest, 'tis gone;
Their purer service, in this realm at least,
Is past for ever. An inventive age
Has wrought, if not with speed of magic, yet
To most strange issues. I have lived to mark
A new and unforeseen creation rise
From out the labours of a peaceful land,
Wielding her potent enginery to frame
And to produce, with appetite as keen
As that of war, which rests not night or day,
Industrious to destroy! With fruitless pains
Might one like me *now* visit many a tract
Which, in his youth, he trod, and trod again,
A lone pedestrian with a scanty freight,
Wish'd for, or welcome, wheresoe'er he came,
Among the tenantry of Thorpe and Ville;
Or straggling burgh, of ancient charter proud,
And dignified by battlements and towers
Of some stern castle, mouldering on the brow
Of a green hill or bank of rugged stream.
The footpath faintly mark'd, the horse-track wild
And formidable length of plashy lane,
(Prized avenues ere others had been shaped
Or easier links connecting place with place)
Have vanished,—swallow'd up by stately roads
Easy and bold, that penetrate the gloom
Of Britain's farthest glens. The earth has lent
Her waters, air her breezes;* and the sail
Of traffic glides with ceaseless interchange,
Glistening along the low and woody dale,
Or on the naked mountain's lofty side.
Meanwhile, at social industry's command,
How quick, how vast an increase! From the germ
Of some poor hamlet, rapidly produced
Here a huge town, continuous and compact,
Hiding the face of earth for leagues—and there,
Where not a habitation stood before,
Abodes of men irregularly mass'd
Like trees in forest,—spread through spacious tracts
O'er which the smoke of unremitting fires
Hangs permanent, and plentiful as wreaths
Of vapour glittering in the morning sun.
And wheresoe'er the traveller turns his steps,
He sees the barren wilderness erased,

* In treating this subject, it was impossible not to recollect, with gratitude, the pleasing picture, which, in his poem of the Fleece, the excellent and amiable Dyer has given of the influences of manufacturing industry upon the face of this island. He wrote at a time when machinery was first beginning to be introduced, and his benevolent heart prompted him to augur from it nothing but good. Truth has compelled me to dwell upon the baneful effects arising out of an ill-regulated and excessive application of powers so admirable in themselves.

Or disappearing; triumph that proclaims
How much the mild directress of the plough
Owes to alliance with these new-born arts!
Hence is the wide sea peopled,—hence the shores
Of Britain are resorted to by ships
Freighted from every climate of the world
With the world's choicest produce. Hence that sum
Of keels that rest within her crowded ports,
Or ride at anchor in her sounds and bays;
That animating spectacle of sails
Which, through her inland regions, to and fro
Pass with the respirations of the tide,
Perpetual, multitudinous! Finally,
Hence a dread arm of floating power, a voice
Of thunder daunting those who would approach
With hostile purposes, the blessed isle,
Truth's consecrated residence, the seat
Impregnable of liberty and peace.
"And yet, O happy pastor of a flock
Faithfully watch'd, and, by that loving care
And Heaven's good providence, preserved from taint!
With you I grieve, when on the darker side
Of this great change I look; and there behold
Such outrage done to nature as compels
Th' indignant power to justify herself;
Yea, to avenge her violated rights,
For England's bane. When soothing darkness spreads
O'er hill and vale," the wanderer thus express'd
His recollections, "and the punctual stars,
While all things else are gathering to their homes,
Advance, and in the firmament of heaven
Glitter—but undisturbing, undisturb'd;
As if their silent company were charged
With peaceful admonitions for the heart
Of all beholding man, earth's thoughtful lord;
Then, in full many a region, once like this
Th' assured domain of calm simplicity
And pensive quiet, an unnatural light
Prepared for never-resting labour's eyes,
Breaks from a many-window'd fabric huge;
And at the appointed hour a bell is heard,
Of harsher import than the curfew-knoll
That spake the Norman conqueror's stern behest—
A local summons to unceasing toil!
Disgorged are now the ministers of day:
And, as they issue from th' illumined pile,
A fresh band meets them, at the crowded door,
And in the courts—and where the rumbling stream,
That turns the multitude of dizzy wheels,
Glares, like a troubled spirit, in its bed
Among the rocks below. Men, maidens, youths,
Mother and little children, boys and girls,
Enter, and each the wonted task resumes
Within this temple, where is offer'd up
To gain—the master idol of the realm—
Perpetual sacrifice. E'en thus of old
Our ancestors within the still domain
Of vast cathedral or conventual church,
Their vigils kept: where tapers day and night
On the dim altar burn'd continually,
In token that the house was evermore
Watching to God. Religious men were they;
Nor would their reason, tutor'd to aspire
Above this transitory world, allow
That there should pass a moment of the year,
When in their land th' Almighty's service ceased.
"Triumph who will in these profaner rites
Which we, a generation self-extoll'd,
As zealously perform! I cannot share
His proud complacency; yet I exult,
Casting reserve away, exult to see
An intellectual mastery exercised
O'er the blind elements; a purpose given
A perseverance fed; almost a soul
Imparted—to brute matter. I rejoice,
Measuring the force of those gigantic powers,
That by the thinking mind have been compell'd
To serve the will of feeble-bodied man.
For with the sense of admiration blends
The animating hope that time may come
When strengthen'd, yet not dazzled, by the might
Of this dominion over nature gain'd,
Men of all lands shall exercise the same
In due proportion to their country's need;
Learning, though late, that all true glory rests,
All praise, all safety, and all happiness,
Upon the moral law. Egyptian Thebes,
Tyre by the margin of the sounding waves,
Palmyra, central in the desert, fell;
And the arts died by which they had been raised.
Call Archimedes from his buried tomb
Upon the plain of vanish'd Syracuse,
And feelingly the sage shall make report
How insecure, how baseless in itself,
Is the philosophy, whose sway depends
On mere material instruments; how weak
Those arts, and high inventions, if unpropp'd
By virtue. He with sighs of pensive grief,
Amid his calm abstractions, would admit
That not the slender privilege is theirs
To save themselves from blank forgetfulness!"
When from the wanderer's lips these words had fall'n,
I said, "And, did in truth these vaunted arts
Possess such privilege, how could we escape
Regret and painful sadness, who revere,
And would preserve as things above all price,
The old domestic morals of the land,
Her simple manners, and the stable worth
That dignified and cheer'd a low estate?
O! where is now the character of peace,
Sobriety, and order, and chaste love,
And honest dealing, and untainted speech,
And pure good-will, and hospitable cheer;
That made the very thought of country life
A thought of refuge, for a mind detain'd
Reluctantly amid the bustling crowd?
Where now the beauty of the Sabbath kept
With conscientious reverence, as a day
By the almighty Lawgiver pronounced
Holy and blest? and where the winning grace
Of all the lighter ornaments attach'd
To time and season, as the year roll'd round?"
"Fled!" was the wanderer's passionate response,
"Fled utterly! or only to be traced
In a few fortunate retreats like this;
Which I behold with trembling, when I think
What lamentable change, a year—a month—
May bring; that brook converting as it runs

Into an instrument of deadly bane
For those, who, yet untempted to forsake
The simple occupations of their sires,
Drink the pure water of its innocent stream
With lip almost as pure. Domestic bliss,
(Or call it comfort, by a humbler name,)
How art thou blighted for the poor man's heart;
Lo! in such neighbourhood, from morn to eve,
The habitations empty! or perchance
The mother left alone, no helping hand
To rock the cradle of her peevish babe;
No daughters round her busy at the wheel,
Or in despatch of each day's little growth
Of household occupation; no nice arts
Of needle-work; no bustle at the fire,
Where once the dinner was prepared with pride;
Nothing to speed the day, or cheer the mind;
Nothing to praise, to teach, or to command;
The father, if perchance he still retain
His old employments, goes to field or wood,
No longer led or followed by the sons;
Idlers perchance they were, but in *his* sight;
Breathing fresh air, and treading the green earth;
Till their short holyday of childhood ceased,
Ne'er to return! That birthright now is lost.
Economists will tell you that the state
Thrives by the forfeiture,—unfeeling thought,
And false as monstrous! Can the mother thrive
By the destruction of her innocent sons?
In whom a premature necessity
Blocks out the forms of nature, preconsumes
The reason, famishes the heart, shuts up
The infant being in itself, and makes
Its very spring a season of decay!
The lot is wretched, the condition sad,
Whether a pining discontent survive,
And thirst for change; or habit hath subdued
The soul deprest, dejected—even to love
Of her dull tasks, and close captivity.
O, banish far such wisdom as condemns
A native Briton to these inward chains,
Fix'd in his soul, so early and so deep,
Without his own consent, or knowledge, fix'd!
He is a slave to whom release comes not,
And cannot come. The boy, where'er he turns,
Is still a prisoner; when the wind is up
Among the clouds and in the ancient woods;
Or when the sun is shining in the east,
Quiet and calm. Behold him, in the school
Of his attainments? no; but with the air
Fanning his temples under heaven's blue arch.
His raiment whiten'd o'er with cotton flakes,
Or locks of wool, announces whence he comes.
Creeping his gait and cowering, his lip pale,
His respiration quick and audible;
And scarcely could you fancy that a gleam
From out those languid eyes could break, or blush
Mantle upon his cheek. Is this the form,
Is that the countenance, and such the port,
Of no mean being? One who should be clothed
With dignity befitting his proud hope;
Who, in his very childhood, should appear
Sublime, from present purity and joy?
The limbs increase, but liberty of mind
Is gone for ever; this organic frame,
So joyful in her motions, is become
Dull, to the joy of her own motions dead;
And e'en the touch, so exquisitely pour'd
Through the whole body, with a languid will
Performs her functions; rarely competent
T' impress a vivid feeling on the mind
Of what there is delightful in the breeze,
The gentle visitations of the sun,
Or lapse of liquid element, by hand,
Or foot, or lip, in summer's warmth, perceived.
Can hope look forward to a manhood raised
On such foundations?"
"Hope is none for him!"
The pale recluse indignantly exclaim'd,
"And tens of thousands suffer wrong as deep.
Yet be it ask'd, in justice to our age,
If there were not, before those arts appear'd,
These structures rose, commingling old and young,
And unripe sex with sex, for mutual taint;
Then, if there were not in our far-famed isle,
Multitudes, who from infancy had breathed
Air unimprisoned, and had lived at large;
Yet walk'd beneath the sun, in human shape,
As abject, as degraded? At this day,
Who shall enumerate the crazy huts
And tottering hovels, whence do issue forth
A ragged offspring, with their own blanch'd hair
Crown'd like the image of fantastic fear;
Or wearing, we might say, in that white growth
An ill-adjusted turban, for defence
Or fierceness, wreathed around their sunburnt brows,
By savage nature's unassisted care.
Naked, and coloured like the soil, the feet
On which they stand; as if thereby they drew
Some nourishment, as trees do by their roots,
From earth the common mother of us all.
Figure and mien, complexion and attire,
Are leagued to strike dismay, but outstretch'd hand
And whining voice denote them supplicants
For the least boon that pity can bestow.
Such on the breast of darksome heaths are found;
And with their parents dwell upon the skirts
Of furze-clad commons; such are born and rear'd
At the mine's mouth, beneath impending rocks,
Or in the chambers of some natural cave;
And where their ancestors erected huts,
For the convenience of unlawful gain,
In forest purlieus; and the like are bred,
All England through, where nooks and slips of ground,
Purloin'd, in times less jealous than our own,
From the green margin of the public way,
A residence afford them, 'mid the bloom
And gayety of cultivated fields.
Such (we will hope the lowest in the scale)
Do I remember oft-times to have seen
'Mid Buxton's dreary heights. Upon the watch,
Till the swift vehicle approach, they stand;
Then, following closely with the cloud of dust,
An uncouth feat exhibit, and are gone
Heels over head, like tumblers on a stage.
Up from the ground they snatch the copper coin
And, on the freight of merry passengers
Fixing a steady eye, maintain their speed;
And spin—and pant—and overhead again,
Wild pursuivants! until their breath is lost,

Or bounty tires, and every face that smiled
Encouragement, hath ceased to look that way.
But, like the vagrants of the gipsy tribe,
These, bred to little pleasure in themselves,
Are profitless to others. Turn we then
To Britons born and bred within the pale
Of civil polity, and early train'd
To earn, by wholesome labour in the field,
The bread they eat. A sample should I give
Of what this stock produces to enrich
The tender age of life, ye would exclaim,
'Is this the whistling ploughboy whose shrill notes
Impart new gladness to the morning air!'
Forgive me if I venture to suspect
That many, sweet to hear of in soft verse,
Are of no finer frame: his joints are stiff;
Beneath a cumbrous frock, that to the knees
Invests the thriving churl, his legs appear,
Fellows to those that lustily upheld
The wooden stools for everlasting use,
Whereon our fathers sate. And mark his brow!
Under whose shaggy canopy are set
Two eyes, not dim, but of a healthy stare;
Wide, sluggish, blank, and ignorant, and strange;
Proclaiming boldly that they never drew
A look or motion of intelligence
From infant conning of the Christ-cross-row,
Or puzzling through a primer, line by line,
Till perfect mastery crown the pains at last.
What kindly warmth from touch of fostering hand,
What penetrating power of sun or breeze,
Shall e'er dissolve the crust wherein his soul
Sleeps, like a caterpillar sheath'd in ice?
This torpor is no pitiable work
Of modern ingenuity; no town
Nor crowded city may be tax'd with aught
Of sottish vice or desperate breach of law
To which in after years he may be roused.
This boy the fields produce: his spade and hoe—
The carter's whip that on his shoulder rests
In air high-towering with a boorish pomp,
The sceptre of his sway; his country's name,
Her equal rights, her churches and her schools—
What have they done for him? And let me ask,
For tens of thousands uninform'd as he?
In brief, what liberty of mind is here?"

This ardent sally pleased the mild, good man,
To whom the appeal couched in its closing words
Was pointedly address'd: and to the thoughts
That, in assent or opposition, rose
Within his mind, he seem'd prepared to give
Prompt utterance; but, rising from our seat,
The hospitable vicar interposed
With invitation urgently renew'd.
We followed, taking as he led, a path
Along a hedge of hollies, dark and tall,
Whose flexile boughs, descending with a weight
Of leafy spray, conceal'd the stems and roots
That gave them nourishment. When frosty winds
Howl from the north, what kindly warmth, methought,
Is here, how grateful this impervious screen;
Not shaped by simple wearing of the foot
On rural business passing to and fro
Was the commodious walk; a careful hand
Had mark'd the line, and strewn the surface o'er
With pure cerulean gravel from the heights
Fetch'd by the neighbouring brook. Across the vale
The stately fence accompanied our steps;
And thus the pathway, by perennial green
Guarded and graced, seemed fashion'd to unite,
As by a beautiful yet solemn chain,
The pastor's mansion with the house of prayer.
Like image of solemnity, conjoin'd
With feminine allurement soft and fair,
The mansion's self display'd; a reverend pile
With bold projections and recesses deep;
Shadowy, yet gay and lightsome as it stood
Fronting the noontide sun. We paused t' admire
The pillar'd porch, elaborately emboss'd;
The low wide windows with their mullions old;
The cornice richly fretted, of grey stone;
And that smooth slope from which the dwelling rose,
By beds and banks Arcadian of gay flowers
And flowering shrubs, protected and adorn'd;
Profusion bright! and every flower assuming
A more than natural vividness of hue,
From unaffected contrast with the gloom
Of sober cypress, and the darker foil
Of yew, in which survived some traces, here
Not unbecoming, of grotesque device
And uncouth fancy. From behind the roof
Rose the slim ash and massy sycamore,
Blending their diverse foliage with the green
Of ivy, flourishing and thick, that clasp'd
The huge round chimneys, harbour of delight
For wren and redbreast, where they sit and sing
Their slender ditties when the trees are bare.
Nor must I leave untouch'd (the picture else
Were incomplete) a relique of old times
Happily spared, a little gothic niche
Of nicest workmanship: that once had held
The sculptured image of some patron saint,
Or of the blessed virgin, looking down
On all who entered those religious doors.
But lo! where from the rocky garden mount
Crown'd by its antique summer house, descends,
Light as the silver fawn, a radiant girl;
For she hath recognised her honour'd friend,
The wanderer ever welcome! A prompt kiss
The gladsome child bestows at his request;
And, up the flowery lawn as we advance,
Hangs on the old man with a happy look,
And with a pretty, restless hand of love.
We enter, by the lady of the place
Cordially greeted. Graceful was her port:
A lofty stature undepress'd by time,
Whose visitation had not wholly spared
The finer lineaments of form and face;
To that complexion brought which prudence trusts in
And wisdom loves. But when a stately ship
Sails in smooth weather by the placid coast
On homeward voyage, what, if wind and wave,
And hardship undergone in various climes,
Have caused her to abate the virgin pride,
And that full trim of inexperienced hope
With which she left her haven, not for this,
Should the sun strike her, and the impartial breeze
Play on her streamers, fails she to assume
Brightness and touching beauty of her own,

That charm all eyes. So bright, so fair, appear'd
This goodly matron, shining in the beams
Of unexpected pleasure. Soon the board
Was spread, and we partook a plain repast.
Here, resting in cool shelter, we beguiled
The midday hours with desultory talk;
From trivial themes to general argument
Passing, as accident or fancy led,
Or courtesy prescribed. While question rose
And answer flow'd, the fetters of reserve
Dropping from every mind, the solitary
Resumed the manners of his happier days;
And, in the various conversation, bore
A willing, nay, at times, a forward part:
Yet with the grace of one who in the world
Had learn'd the art of pleasing, and had now
Occasion given him to display his skill,
Upon the steadfast vantage-ground of truth.
He gazed with admiration unsuppress'd
Upon the landscape of the sunbright vale,
Seen, from the shady room in which we sate,
In soften'd perspective; and more than once
Praised the consummate harmony serene
Of gravity and elegance—diffused
Around the mansion and its whole domain;
Not, doubtless, without help of female taste
And female care. "A blessed lot is yours!"
The words escaped his lip with a tender sigh
Breathed over them; but suddenly the door
Flew open, and a pair of lusty boys
Appear'd, confusion checking their delight.
Not brothers they in feature or attire,
But fond companions, so I guess'd, in field,
And by the river's margin, whence they come,
Anglers elated with unusual spoil.
One bears a willow pannier on his back,
The boy of plainer garb, whose blush survives
More deeply tinged. Twin might the other be
To that fair girl who from the garden mount
Bounded—triumphant entry this for him!
Between his hands he holds a smooth blue stone,
On whose capacious surface see outspread
Large store of gleaming crimson-spotted trouts;
Ranged side by side, and lessening by degrees
Up to the dwarf that tops the pinnacle.
Upon the board he lays the sky-blue stone
With its rich freight:—their number he proclaims;
Tells from what pool the noblest had been dragg'd;
And where the very monarch of the brook,
After long struggle, had escaped at last—
Stealing alternately at them and us
(As doth his comrade too) a look of pride;
And, verily, the silent creatures made
A splendid sight, together thus exposed;
Dead—but not sullied or deform'd by death,
That seem'd to pity what he could not spare.
But O, the animation in the mien
Of those two boys! yea, in the very words
With which the young narrator was inspired,
When, as our questions led, he told at large
Of that day's prowess. Him might I compare,
His look, tones, gestures, eager eloquence,
To a bold brook that splits for better speed,
And, at the selfsame moment, works its way
Through many channels, ever and anon
Parted and reunited: his compeer
To the still lake, whose stillness is to sight
As beautiful, as grateful to the mind.
But to what object shall the lovely girl
Be liken'd? She, whose countenance and air
Unite the graceful qualities of both,
E'en as she shares the pride and joy of both.
My gray-hair'd friend was moved: his vivid eye
Glisten'd with tenderness; his mind, I knew,
Was full; and had, I doubted not, return'd,
Upon this impulse, to the theme—erewhile
Abruptly broken off. The ruddy boys
Withdrew, on summons, to their well-earn'd meal
And he, (to whom all tongues resign'd their right
With willingness, to whom the general ear
Listen'd with readier patience than to strain
Of music, lute or harp,—a long delight
That ceased not when his voice had ceased,) as one
Who from truth's central point serenely views
The compass of his argument—began
Mildly, and with a clear and steady tone.

BOOK IX.

DISCOURSE OF THE WANDERER, AND AN EVENING VISIT TO THE LAKE.

ARGUMENT.

Wanderer asserts that an active principle pervades the universe. Its noblest seat the human soul. How lively this principle is in childhood. Hence the delight in old age of looking back upon childhood. The dignity, powers, and privileges of age asserted. These not to be looked for generally but under a just government. Right of a human creature to be exempt from being considered as a mere instrument. Vicious inclinations are best kept under by giving good ones an opportunity to show themselves. The condition of multitudes deplored, from want of due respect to this truth on the part of their superiors in society. Former conversation recurred to, and the wanderer's opinions set in a clearer light. Genuine principles of equality. Truth placed within reach of the humblest. Happy state of the two boys again adverted to. Earnest wish expressed for a system of national education established universally by government. Glorious effects of this foretold. Wanderer breaks off. Walk to the lake. Embark. Description of scenery and amusements. Grand spectacle from the side of a hill. Address of priest to the Supreme Being; in the course of which he contrasts with ancient barbarism the present appearance of the scene before him. The change ascribed to Christianity. Apostrophe to his flock, living and dead. Gratitude to the Almighty. Return over the lake. Parting with the solitary. Under what circumstances.

"To every form of being is assign'd,"
Thus calmly spake the venerable sage,
"An *active* principle:—howe'er removed
From sense and observation, it subsists
In all things, in all natures, in the stars
Of azure heaven, the unenduring clouds,
In flower and tree, in every pebbly stone
That paves the brooks, the stationary rocks,
The moving waters, and th' invisible air.
Whate'er exists hath properties that spread
Beyond itself, communicating good
A simple blessing, or with evil mix'd;
Spirit that knows no insulated spot,
No chasm, no solitude; from link to link
It circulates, the soul of all the worlds.

This is the freedom of the universe;
Unfolded still the more, more visible,
The more we know; and yet is reverenced least,
And least respected, in the human mind,
Its most apparent home. The food of hope
Is meditated action; robb'd of this
Her sole support, she languishes and dies.
We perish also; for we live by hope
And by desire; we see by the glad light,
And breathe the sweet air of futurity,
And so we live, or else we have no life.
To-morrow—nay, perchance this very hour,—
(For every moment hath its own to-morrow!)
Those blooming boys, whose hearts are almost sick
With present triumph, will be sure to find
A field before them freshen'd with the dew
Of other expectations;—in which course
Their happy year spins round. The youth obeys
A like glad impulse; and so moves the man
'Mid all his apprehensions, cares, and fears;
Or so he ought to move. Ah! why in age
Do we revert so fondly to the walks
Of childhood, but that there the soul discerns
The dear memorial footsteps unimpair'd
Of her own native vigour, thence can hear
Reverberations, and a choral song,
Commingling with the incense that ascends
Undaunted, toward the imperishable heavens,
From her own lonely altar? Do not think
That good and wise ever will be allow'd,
Though strength decay, to breathe in such estate
As shall divide them wholly from the stir
Of hopeful nature. Rightly is it said
That man descends into the VALE of years;
Yet have I thought that we might also speak,
And not presumptuously, I trust, of age,
As of a final EMINENCE, though bare
In aspect and forbidding, yet a point
On which 'tis not impossible to sit
In awful sovereignty—a place of power—
A throne, that may be liken'd unto his,
Who, in some placid day of summer, looks
Down from a mountain top,—say one of those
High peaks that bound the vale where now we are,
Faint, and diminish'd to the gazing eye,
Forest and field, and hill and dale appear,
With all the shapes upon their surface spread:
But, while the gross and visible frame of things
Relinquishes its hold upon the sense,
Yea almost on the mind herself, and seems
All unsubstantialized, how loud the voice
Of waters, with invigorated peal
From the full river in the vale below,
Ascending! For on that superior height
Who sits, is disencumber'd from the press
Of near obstructions, and is privileged
To breathe in solitude above the host
Of ever-humming insects, 'mid thin air
That suits not them. The murmur of the leaves,
Many and idle, visits not his ear;
This ne is freed from, and from thousand notes
Not less unceasing, not less vain than these,—
By which the finer passages of sense
Are occupied; and the soul, that would incline
To listen, is prevented or deterr'd.
"And may it not be hoped, that, placed by age
In like removal tranquil though severe,
We are not so removed for utter loss;
But for some favour, suited to our need?
What more than that the severing should confer
Fresh power t' commune with the invisible world
And hear the mighty stream of tendency
Uttering, for elevation of our thought,
A clear sonorous voice, inaudible
To the vast multitude: whose doom it is
To run the giddy round of vain delight,
Or fret and labour on the plain below.
"But, if to such sublime ascent the hopes
Of man may rise, as to a welcome close
And termination of his mortal course,
Them only can such hope inspire whose minds
Have not been starved by absolute neglect;
Nor bodies crush'd by unremitting toil;
To whom kind nature, therefore, may afford
Proof of the sacred love she bears for all;
Whose birthright reason, therefore, may ensure.
For me, consulting what I feel within
In times when most existence with herself
Is satisfied, I cannot but believe,
That, far as kindly nature hath free scope
And reason's sway predominates, e'en so far,
Country, society, and time itself,
That saps the individual's bodily frame,
And lays the generations low in dust,
Do, by the Almighty Ruler's grace, partake
Of one maternal spirit, bringing forth
And cherishing with ever-constant love,
That tires not, nor betrays. Our life is turn'd
Out of her course, wherever man is made
An offering or a sacrifice, a tool
Or implement, a passive thing employ'd
As a brute mean, without acknowledgment
Of common right or interest in the end;
Used or abused, as selfishness may prompt.
Say, what can follow for a rational soul
Perverted thus, but weakness in all good,
And strength in evil? Hence an after call
For chastisement, and custody, and bonds,
And oft-times death, avenger of the past,
And the sole guardian in whose hands we dare
Intrust the future. Not for these sad issues
Was man created; but t' obey the law
Of life, and hope, and action. And 'tis known
That when we stand upon our native soil,
Unelbow'd by such objects as oppress
Our active powers, those powers themselves become
Strong to subvert our noxious qualities:
They sweep distemper from the busy day,
And make the chalice of the big round year
Run o'er with gladness; whence the being moves
In beauty through the world; and all who see
Bless him, rejoicing in his neighbourhood."
"Then," said the solitary, "by what force
Of language shall a feeling heart express
Her sorrow for that multitude in whom
We look for health from seeds that have been sown
In sickness, and for increase in a power
That works but by extinction? On themselves
They cannot lean, nor turn to their own hearts
To know what they must do: their wisdom is
To look into the eyes of others, thence
To be instructed what they must avoid:

Or rather, let us say, how least observed,
How with most quiet and most silent death,
With the least taint and injury to the air
Th' oppressor breathes, their human form divine
And their immortal soul may waste away."
The sage rejoin'd, "I thank you; you have spared
My voice the utterance of a keen regret,
A wide compassion which with you I share.
When, heretofore, I placed before your sight
A little one, subjected to the arts
Of modern ingenuity, and made
The senseless member of a vast machine,
Serving as doth a spindle or a wheel;
Think not, that, pitying him, I could forget
The rustic boy, who walks the fields, untaught
The slave of ignorance, and oft of want
And miserable hunger. Much, too much
Of this unhappy lot, in early youth
We both have witness'd, lot which I myself
Shared, though in mild and merciful degree;
Yet was the mind to hinderances exposed,
Through which I struggled, not without distress
And sometimes injury, like a lamb enthrall'd
'Mid thorns and brambles; or a bird that breaks
Through a strong net, and mounts upon the wind,
Though with her plumes impair'd. If they, whose souls
Should open while they range the richer fields
Of merry England, are obstructed less
By indigence, their ignorance is not less,
Nor less to be deplored. For who can doubt
That tens of thousands at this day exist
Such as the boy you painted, lineal heirs
Of those who once were vassals of her soil,
Following its fortunes like the beast or trees
Which it sustain'd. But no one takes delight
In this oppression; none are proud of it;
It bears no sounding name, nor ever bore;
A standing grievance, an indigenous vice
Of every country under heaven. My thoughts
Were turn'd to evils that are new and chosen,
A bondage lurking under shape of good,—
Arts in themselves beneficent and kind,
But all too fondly follow'd and too far;
To victims, which the merciful can see
Nor think that they are victims; turn'd to wrongs?
By women, who have children of their own,
Beheld without compassion, yea with praise!
I spake of mischief by the wise diffused
With gladness, thinking that the more it spreads
The healthier, the securer we become;
Delusion which a moment may destroy!
Lastly, I mourn'd for those whom I had seen
Corrupted and cast down, on favour'd ground,
Where circumstance and nature had combined
To shelter innocence, and cherish love;
Who, but for this intrusion, would have lived,
Possess'd of health, and strength, and peace of mind,
Thus would have lived, or never have been born.
"Alas! what differs more than man from man!
And whence that difference? whence but from himself?
For see the universal race endow'd
With the same upright form! The sun is fix'd,
And th' infinite magnificence of heaven,
Fix'd within the reach of every human eye;
The sleepless ocean murmurs for all ears;
The vernal field infuses fresh delight
Into all hearts. Throughout the world of sense,
E'en as an object is sublime or fair,
That object is laid open to the view
Without reserve or veil; and as a power
Is salutary, or an influence sweet,
Are each and all enabled to perceive
That power, that influence, by impartial law.
Gifts nobler are vouchsafed alike to all;
Reason,—and, with that reason, smiles and tears;
Imagination, freedom in the will,
Conscience to guide and check; and death to be
Foretasted, immortality presumed.
Strange, then, nor less than monstrous might be deem'd
The failure, if th' Almighty, to this point
Liberal and undistinguishing, should hide
The excellence of moral qualities
From common understanding; leaving truth
And virtue difficult, abstruse, and dark;
Hard to be won, and only by a few;
Strange, should he deal herein with nice respects,
And frustrate all the rest! Believe it not:
The primal duties shine aloft, like stars;
The charities that soothe, and heal, and bless,
Are scatter'd at the feet of man, like flowers;
The generous inclination, the just rule,
Kind wishes, and good actions, and pure thoughts
No mystery is here; no special boon
For high and not for low, for proudly graced
And not for meek of heart. The smoke ascends
To heaven as lightly from the cottage hearth
As from the haughty palace. He, whose soul
Ponders this true equality, may walk
The fields of earth with gratitude and hope;
Yet, in that meditation, will he find
Motive to sadder grief, as we have found,—
Lamenting ancient virtues overthrown,
And for th' injustice grieving, that hath made
So wide a difference betwixt man and man.
"But let us rather turn our gladden'd thoughts
Upon the brighter scene. How blest the pair
Of blooming boys (whom we beheld e'en now)
Blest in their several and their common lot!
A few short hours of each returning day
The thriving prisoners of their village school:
And thence let loose, to seek their pleasant homes
Or range the grassy lawn in vacancy,
To breathe and to be happy, run and shout
Idle,—but no delay, no harm, no loss:
For every genial power of heaven and earth,
Though all the seasons of the changeful year,
Obsequiously doth take upon herself
To labour for them; bringing each in turn
The tribute of enjoyment, knowledge, health,
Beauty, or strength! Such privilege is theirs
Granted alike in th' outset of their course
To both; and, if that partnership must cease,
I grieve not," to the pastor here he turn'd,
"Much as I glory in that child of yours,
Repine not, for his cottage comrade, whom
Belike no higher destiny awaits
Than the old hereditary wish fulfill'd,
The wish for liberty to live, content

With what Heaven grants, and die, in peace of mind,
Within the bosom of his native vale.
At least, whatever fate the noon of life
Reserves for either, this is sure, that both
Have been permitted to enjoy the dawn;
Whether regarded as a jocund time,
That in itself may terminate, or lead
In course of nature to a sober eve.
Both have been fairly dealt with; looking back,
They will allow that justice has in them
Been shown, alike to body and to mind."
He paused, as if revolving in his soul
Some weighty matter, then, with fervent voice
And an impassioned majesty, exclaim'd,
" O for the coming of that glorious time
When, prizing knowledge as her noblest wealth
And best protection, this imperial realm,
While she exacts allegiance, shall admit
An obligation, on her part, to *teach*
Them who are born to serve her and obey;
Binding herself by statute* to secure
For all the children whom her soil maintains
The rudiments of letters, and inform
The mind with moral and religious truth,
Both understood and practised,—so that none,
However destitute, be left to droop
By timely culture unsustain'd, or run
Into a wild disorder; or be forced
To drudge through weary life without the aid
Of intellectual implements and tools;
A savage horde among the civilized,
A servile band among the lordly free!
This sacred right, the lisping babe proclaims
To be inherent in him, by Heaven's will,
For the protection of his innocence:
And the rude boy—who having overpast
The sinless age, by conscience is enroll'd,
Yet mutinously knits his angry brow,
And lifts his wilful hand on mischief bent,
Or turns the godlike faculty of speech
To impious use—by process indirect
Declares his due, while he makes known his need.
This sacred right is fruitlessly announced,
This universal plea in vain address'd,
To eyes and ears of parents who themselves
Did, in the time of their necessity,
Urge it in vain; and, therefore, like a prayer
That from the humblest floor ascends to heaven,
It mounts to reach the state's parental ear;
Who, if indeed she own a mother's heart,
And be not most unfeelingly devoid
Of gratitude to Providence, will grant
Th' unquestionable good; which England, safe
From interference of external force,
May grant at leisure; without risk incurr'd
That what in wisdom for herself she doth,
Others shall e'er be able to undo.
" Look! and behold, from Calpe's sunburnt cliffs
To the flat margin of the Baltic sea,
Long-reverenced titles cast away as weeds;
Laws overturn'd; and territory split,
Like fields of ice rent by the polar wind,
And forced to join in less obnoxious shapes,
Which, ere they gain consistence, by a gust
Of the same breath are shatter'd and destroy'd.
Meantime the sovereignty of these fair isles
Remains entire and indivisible:
And, if that ignorance were removed, which breeds
Within the compass of their several shores
Dark discontent, or loud commotion, each
Might still preserve the beautiful repose
Of heavenly bodies shining in their spheres.—
The discipline of slavery is unknown
Amongst us,—hence the more do we require
The discipline of virtue; order else
Cannot subsist, nor confidence, nor peace.
Thus, duties rising out of good possess'd,
And prudent caution needful to avert
Impending evil, equally require
That the whole people should be taught and train'd.
So shall licentiousness and black resolve
Be rooted out, and virtuous habits take
Their place; and genuine piety descend,
Like an inheritance, from age to age.
" With such foundations laid, avaunt the fear
Of numbers crowded on their native soil,
To the prevention of all healthful growth
Through mutual injury! Rather in the law
Of increase and the mandate from above
Rejoice!—and ye have special cause for joy.
For as the element of air affords
An easy passage to th' industrious bees
Fraught with their burdens; and a way as smooth
For those ordain'd to take their sounding flight
From the throng'd hive, and settle where they list:
In fresh abodes, their labour to renew;
So the wide waters, open to the power,
The will, the instincts, and appointed needs
Of Britain, do invite her to cast off
Her swarms, and in succession send them forth;
Bound to establish new communities
On every shore whose aspect favours hope
Or bold adventure; promising to skill
And perseverance their deserved reward.
Yes," he continued, kindling as he spake,
" Change wide, and deep, and silently perform'd,
This land shall witness; and as days roll on,
Earth's universal frame shall feel th' effect,
E'en till the smallest habitable rock,
Beaten by lonely billows, hear the songs
Of humanized society; and bloom
With civil arts, that send their fragrance forth,
A grateful tribute to all-ruling Heaven.
From culture, unexclusively bestow'd
On Albion's noble race in freedom born,
Expect these mighty issues: from the pains
And faithful care of unambitious schools
Instructing simple childhood's ready ear:
Thence look for these magnificent results!
Vast the circumference of hope; and ye
Are at its centre, British lawgivers;
Ah! sleep not there in shame! Shall wisdom's voice
From out the bosom of these troubled times
Repeat the dictates of her calmer mind,

* The discovery of Dr. Bell affords marvellous facilities for carrying this into effect; and it is impossible to overrate the benefits which might accrue to humanity from the universal application of this simple engine under an enlightened and conscientious government.

And shall the venerable halls ye fill
Refuse to echo the sublime decree?
Trust not to partial care a general good;
Transfer not to futurity a work
Of urgent need. Your country must complete
Her glorious destiny. Begin e'en now,
Now, when oppression, like th' Egyptian plague
Of darkness, stretch'd o'er guilty Europe, makes
The brightness more conspicuous that invests
The happy island where ye think and act;
Now, when destruction is a prime pursuit,
Show to the wretched nations for what end
The powers of civil polity were given!"
Abruptly here, but with a graceful air,
The sage broke off. No sooner had he ceased
Than, looking forth, the gentle lady said,
"Behold the shades of afternoon have fallen
Upon this flowery slope; and see—beyond—
The lake, though bright, is of a placid blue;
As if preparing for the peace of evening.
How temptingly the landscape shines! The air
Breathes invitation; easy is the walk
To the lake's margin, where a boat lies moor'd
Beneath her sheltering tree." Upon this hint
We rose together: all were pleased, but most
The beauteous girl, whose cheek was flush'd with joy.
Light as a sunbeam glides along the hills
She vanished, eager to impart the scheme
To her beloved brother and his shy compeer.
Now was there bustle in the vicar's house
And earnest preparation. Forth we went,
And down the vale along the streamlet's edge
Pursued our way, a broken company,
Mute or conversing, single or in pairs.
Thus having reach'd a bridge, that overarch'd
The hasty rivulet where it lay becalm'd
In a deep pool, by happy chance we saw
A twofold image; on a grassy bank
A snow-white ram, and in the crystal flood
Another and the same! Most beautiful,
On the green turf, with his imperial front
Shaggy and bold, and wreathèd horns superb,
The breathing creature stood; as beautiful,
Beneath him, show'd his shadowy counterpart.
Each had his glowing mountains, each his sky,
And each seem'd centre of his own fair world:
Antipodes unconscious of each other,
Yet, in partition, with their several spheres,
Blended in perfect stillness, to our sight!
"Ah! what a pity were it to disperse,
Or to disturb, so fair a spectacle
And yet a breath can do it!"
These few words
The lady whisper'd, while we stood and gazed
Gather'd together, all, in still delight,
Not without awe. Thence passing on, she said
In like low voice to my particular ear,
"I love to hear that eloquent old man
Pour forth his meditations, and descant
On human life from infancy to age.
How pure his spirit! in what vivid hues
His mind gives back the various forms of things,
Caught in their fairest, happiest attitude!
While he is speaking, I have power to see
E'en as he sees; but when his voice hath ceased,
Then, with a sigh, sometimes I feel, as now,
That combinations so serene and bright,
Like those reflected in yon quiet pool,
Cannot be lasting in a world like ours,
To great and small disturbances exposed."
More had she said, but sportive shouts were heard
Sent from the jocund hearts of those two boys,
Who, bearing each a basket on his arm,
Down the green field came tripping after us.—
When we had cautiously embark'd, the pair
Now for a prouder service were address.
But an inexorable law forbade,
And each resign'd the oar which he had seized.
Whereat, with willing hand I undertook
The needful labour; grateful task!—to me
Pregnant with recollections of the time
When, on thy bosom, spacious Windermere!
A youth, I practised this delightful art;
Toss'd on the waves alone, or 'mid a crew
Of joyous comrades. Now, the reedy marge
Clear'd, with a strenuous arm I dipp'd the oar,
Free from obstruction, and the boat advanced
Through crystal water smoothly as a hawk,
That, disentangled from the shady boughs
Of some thick wood, her place of covert, cleaves
With correspondent wings th' abyss of air.
"Observe," the vicar said, "yon rocky isle
With birch trees fringed; my hand shall guide the helm,
While thitherward we bend our course; or while
We seek that other, on the western shore,—
Where the bare columns of those lofty firs,
Supporting gracefully a massy dome
Of sombre foliage, seem to imitate
A Grecian temple rising from the deep."
"Turn where we may," said I, "we cannot err
In this delicious region." Cultured slopes,
Wild tracts of forest ground, and scatter'd groves,
And mountains bare or clothed with ancient woods
Surrounded us; and, as we held our way
Along the level of the glassy flood,
They ceased not to surround us: change of place,
From kindred features diversely combined,
Producing change of beauty ever new.
Ah! that such beauty, varying in the light
Of living nature, cannot be portray'd
By words, nor by the pencil's silent skill;
But is the property of him alone
Who hath beheld it, noted it with care,
And in his mind recorded it with love!
Suffice it, therefore, if the rural muse
Vouchsafe sweet influence, while her poet speaks
Of trivial occupations well devised,
And unsought pleasures springing up by chance;
As if some friendly genius had ordain'd
That, as the day thus far had been enrich'd
By acquisition of sincere delight,
The same should be continued to its close.
One spirit animating old and young,
A gipsy fire we kindled on the shore
Of the fair isle with birch trees fringed; and there
Merrily seated in a ring, partook
The beverage drawn from China's fragrant herb.
Launch'd from our hand, the smooth stone skimm'd the lake;
With shouts we roused the echoes: stiller sounds

The lovely girl supplied, a simple song,
Whose low tones reach'd not to the distant rocks
To be repeated thence, but gently sank
Into our hearts, and charm'd the peaceful flood.
Rapaciously we gather'd flowery spoils
From land and water; lilies of each hue—
Golden and white, that float upon the waves,
And court the wind; and leaves of that shy plant,
(Her flowers were shed,) the lily of the vale,
That loves the ground, and from the sun withholds
Her pensive beauty, from the breeze her sweets.
Such product and such pastime did the place
And season yield; but, as we re-embarked,
Leaving, in quest of other scenes, the shore
Of that wild spot, the solitary said
In a low voice, yet careless who might hear,
"The fire, that burned so brightly to our wish,
Where is it now? Deserted on the beach,
It seems extinct; nor shall the fanning breeze
Revive its ashes. What care we for this,
Whose ends are gain'd? Behold an emblem here
Of one day's pleasure, and all mortal joys!
And, in this unpremeditated slight
Of that which is no longer needed, see
The common course of human gratitude!"
This plaintive note disturb'd not the repose
Of the still evening. Right across the lake
Our pinnace moves: then, coasting creek and bay,
Glades we behold, and into thickets peep,
Where couch the spotted deer; or raised our eyes
To shaggy steeps on which the careless goat
Browsed by the side of dashing waterfalls.
Thus did the bark, meandering with the shore,
Pursue her voyage, till a natural pier
Of jutting rock invited us to land.
Alert to follow as the pastor led,
We clomb a green hill's side; and as we clomb,
The valley, opening out her bosom, gave
Fair prospect, intercepted less and less,
Of the flat meadows and indented coast
Of the smooth lake, in compass seen, far off.
And yet conspicuous stood the old church tower
In majesty presiding over fields
And habitations, seemingly preserved
From the intrusion of a restless world,
By rocks impassable and mountains huge.
Soft heath this elevated spot supplied,
And choice of moss-clad stones, whereon we couch'd
Or sate reclined—admiring quietly
The general aspect of the scene; but each
Not seldom over-anxious to make known
His own discoveries; or to favourite points
Directing notice, merely from a wish
T' impart a joy, imperfect while unshared.
That rapturous moment ne'er shall I forget,
When these particular interests were effaced
From every mind! Already had the sun,
Sinking with less than ordinary state,
Attain'd his western bound; but rays of light—
Now suddenly diverging from the orb
Retired behind the mountain tops or veil'd
By the dense air—shot upwards to the crown
Of the blue firmament—aloft and wide:
And multitudes of little floating clouds,
Ere we, who saw, of change were conscious, pierced
Through their ethereal texture, had become
Vivid as fire—clouds separately poised,
Innumerable multitudes of forms
Scatter'd through half the circle of the sky;
And giving back, and shedding each on each
With prodigal communion, the bright hues
Which from the unapparent fount of glory
They had imbibed, and ceased not to receive.
That which the heavens display'd, the liquid deep
Repeated; but with unity sublime!
While from the grassy mountain's open side
We gazed, in silence hush'd, with eyes intent
On the refulgent spectacle,—diffused
Through earth, sky, water, and all visible space,—
The priest in holy transport thus exclaim'd:
"Eternal Spirit! universal God!
Power inaccessible to human thought,
Save by degrees and steps which thou hast deign'd
To furnish; for this effluence of thyself,
To the infirmity of mortal sense
Vouchsafed; this local transitory type
Of thy paternal splendours, and the pomp
Of those who fill thy courts in highest heaven,
The radiant cherubim;—accept the thanks
Which we, thy humble creatures, here convened,
Presume to offer; we, who from the breast
Of the frail earth, permitted to behold
The faint reflections only of thy face,
Are yet exalted, and in soul adore!
Such as they are who in thy presence stand
Unsullied, incorruptible, and drink
Imperishable majesty stream'd forth
From thy empyreal throne, th' elect of earth
Shall be—divested at th' appointed hour
Of all dishonour—cleansed from mortal stain.
Accomplish, then, their number; and conclude
Time's weary course! Or if, by thy decree,
The consummation that will come by stealth
Be yet far distant, let thy word prevail,
O! let thy word prevail, to take away
The sting of human nature. Spread the law,
As it is written in thy holy book,
Throughout all lands: let every nation hear
The high behest, and every heart obey;
Both for the love of purity, and hope
Which it affords, to such as do thy will
And persevere in good, that they shall rise,
To have a nearer view of thee, in heaven.
Father of good! this prayer in bounty grant,
In mercy grant it to thy wretched sons.
Then, nor till then, shall persecution cease,
And cruel wars expire. The way is mark'd,
The guide appointed, and the ransom paid.
Alas! the nations, who of yore received
These tidings, and in Christian temples meet
The sacred truth t' acknowledge, linger still;
Preferring bonds and darkness to a state
Of holy freedom, by redeeming love
Proffer'd to all, while yet on earth detain'd.
"So fare the many; and the thoughtful few,
Who in the anguish of their souls bewail
This dire perverseness, cannot choose but ask,
Shall it endure? Shall enmity and strife,
Falsehood and guile, be left to sow their seed
And the kind never perish? Is the hope
Fallacious, or shall righteousness obtain
A peaceable dominion, wide as earth,

And ne'er to fail? Shall that blest day arrive
When they, whose choice or lot it is to dwell
In crowded cities, without fear shall live
Studious of mutual benefit; and he,
Whom morning wakes, among sweet dews and flowers
Of every clime, to till the lonely field,
Be happy in himself? The law of faith,
Working through love, such conquest shall it gain,
Such triumph over sin and guilt achieve?
Almighty Lord, thy further grace impart!
And with that help the wonder shall be seen
Fulfill'd, the hope accomplish'd: and thy praise
Be sung with transport and unceasing joy.
"Once," and with mild demeanour, as he spake,
On us the venerable pastor turn'd
His beaming eye that had been raised to heaven,
"Once, while the name, Jehovah, was a sound
Within the circuit of the seagirt isle
Unheard, the savage nations bow'd the head
To gods delighting in remorseless deeds;
Gods which themselves had fashion'd, to promote
Ill purposes, and flatter foul desires.
Then, in the bosom of yon mountain cove,
To those inventions of corrupted man
Mysterious rites were solemnized: and there,
Amid impending rocks and gloomy woods,
Of those terrific idols, some received
Such dismal service, that the loudest voice
Of the swoln cataracts (which now are heard
Soft murmuring) was too weak to overcome,
Though aided by wild winds, the groans and shrieks
Of human victims, offer'd up t' appease
Or to propitiate. And, if living eyes
Had visionary faculties to see
The thing that hath been as the thing that is,
Aghast we might behold this crystal mere
Bedimm'd with smoke, in wreaths voluminous,
Flung from the body of devouring fires,
To Taranis erected on the heights
By priestly hands, for sacrifice perform'd
Exultingly, in view of open day
And full assemblage of a barbarous host;
Or to Andate, female power! who gave
(For so they fancied) glorious victory.
A few rude monuments of mountain stone
Survive; all else is swept away. How bright
Th' appearances of things! From such, how changed
Th' existing worship! and with those compared,
The worshippers how innocent and blest!
So wide the difference, a willing mind,
At this affecting hour, might almost think
That Paradise, the lost abode of man,
Was raised again: and to a happy few,
In its original beauty, here restored.
Whence but from Thee, the true and only God,
And from the faith derived through Him who bled
Upon the cross, this marvellous advance
Of good from evil; as if one extreme
Were left—the other gain'd?—O ye, who come
To kneel devoutly in yon reverend pile,
Call'd to such office by the peaceful sound
Of Sabbath bells; and ye, who sleep in earth,
All cares forgotten, round its hallow'd walls.
For you, in presence of this little band
Gather'd together on the green hill side,
Your pastor is imbolden'd to prefer
Vocal thanksgivings to th' Eternal King;
Whose love, whose counsel, whose commands have made
Your very poorest rich in peace of thought
And in good works; and him, who is endow'd
With scantiest knowledge, master of all truth
Which the salvation of his soul requires.
Conscious of that abundant favour shower'd
On you, the children of my humble care,
And this dear land, our country while on earth
We sojourn, have I lifted up my soul,
Joy giving voice to fervent gratitude.
These barren rocks, your stern inheritance;
These fertile fields, that recompense your pains;
The shadowy vale, the sunny mountain top;
Woods waving in the wind their lofty heads,
Or hush'd; the roaring waters, and the still;
They see the offering of my lifted hands—
They hear my lips present their sacrifice—
They know if I be silent, morn or even:
For, though in whispers speaking, the full heart
Will find a vent; and thought is praise to Him,
Audible praise, to Thee, Omniscient Mind,
From whom all gifts descend, all blessings flow!"
This vesper service closed, without delay,
From that exalted station to the plain
Descending, we pursued our homeward course,
In mute composure, o'er the shadowy lake,
Beneath a faded sky. No trace remain'd
Of those celestial splendours; gray the vault,
Pure, cloudless ether; and the star of eve
Was wanting; but inferior lights appear'd
Faintly, too faint almost for sight; and some
Above the darken'd hills stood boldly forth
In twinkling lustre, ere the boat attain'd
Her mooring place; where to the sheltering tree
Our youthful voyagers bound fast her prow,
With prompt yet careful hands. This done, we paced
The dewy fields; but ere the vicar's door
Was reach'd, the solitary check'd his steps;
Then, intermingling thanks, on each bestow'd
A farewell salutation,—and, the like
Receiving, took the slender path that leads
To the one cottage in the lonely dell;
But turn'd not without welcome promise given,
That he would share the pleasures and pursuits
Of yet another summer's day, consumed
In wandering with us through the valleys fair,
And o'er the mountain wastes. "Another sun,"
Said he, "shall shine upon us ere we part,—
Another sun, and peradventure more;
If time, with free consent, is yours to give,—
And season favours."
To enfeebled power,
From this communion with uninjured minds,
What renovation had been brought; and what
Degree of healing to a wounded spirit,
Dejected, and habitually disposed
To seek, in degradation of the kind,
Excuse and solace for her own defects;
How far those erring notions were reform'd;
And whether aught, of tendency as good

And pure, from further intercourse ensued;
This—(if delightful hopes, as heretofore,
Inspire the serious song, and gentle hearts
Cherish, and lofty minds approve the past)—
My future labours may not leave untold.

THE ARMENIAN LADY'S LOVE.

The subject of the following poem is from the Orlandus of the author's friend, Kenelm Henry Digby; and the liberty is taken of inscribing it to him as an acknowledgement, however unworthy, of pleasure and instruction derived from his numerous and valuable writings, illustrative of the piety and chivalry of the olden time.

You have heard "a Spanish lady
How she wooed an English man;"*
Hear now of a fair Armenian,
Daughter of the proud soldàn;
How she loved a Christian slave, and told her pain
By word, look, deed, with hope that he might love again.

"Pluck that rose, it moves my liking,"
Said she, lifting up her veil;
"Pluck it for me, gentle gardener,
Ere it wither and grow pale."
"Princess fair, I till the ground, but may not take
From twig or bed an humbler flower, e'en for your sake."

"Grieved am I, submissive Christian!
To behold thy captive state;
Women in your land may pity
(May they not?) th' unfortunate."
"Yes, kind lady! otherwise man could not bear
Life, which to every one that breathes is full of care."

"Worse than idle is compassion,
If it end in tears and sighs;
Thee from bondage would I rescue
And from vile indignities;
Nurtured, as thy mien bespeaks, in high degree,
Look up—and help a hand that longs to set thee free."

"Lady, dread the wish, nor venture
In such peril to engage;
Think how it would stir against you
Your most loving father's rage;
Sad deliverance would it be, and yoked with shame,
Should troubles overflow on her from whom it came."

"Generous Frank! the just in effort
Are of inward peace secure;
Hardships for the brave encounter'd,
E'en the feeblest may endure:
If Almighty Grace through me thy chains unbind,
My father for slave's work may seek a slave in mind."

"Princess, at this burst of goodness,
My long frozen heart grows warm!"
"Yet you make all courage fruitless,
Me to save from chance of harm;
Leading such companion, I that gilded dome,
Yon minarets, would gladly leave for his worst home."

"Feeling tunes your voice, fair princess!
And your brow is free from scorn,
Else these words would come like mockery
Sharper than the pointed thorn."
"Whence the undeserved mistrust? Too wide apart
Our faith hath been,—O, would that eyes could see the heart!"

"Tempt me not, I pray; my doom is
These base implements to wield;
Rusty lance, I ne'er shall grasp thee,
Ne'er assoil my cobwebb'd shield!
Never see my native land, nor castle towers,
Nor her who thinking of me there counts widow'd hours."

"Prisoner! pardon youthful fancies;
Wedded? If you *can*, say no!—
Blessed is and be your consort;
Hopes I cherished let them go!
Handmaid's privilege would leave my purpose free,
Without another link to my felicity."

"Wedded love with loyal Christians,
Lady, is a mystery rare;
Body, heart, and soul in union,
Make one being of a pair."
"Humble love in me would look for no return,
Soft as a guiding star that cheers, but cannot burn."

"Gracious Allah! by such title
Do I dare to thank the God,
Him, who thus exalts thy spirit,
Flower of an unchristian sod!
Or hast thou put off wings which thou in heaven dost wear?
What have I seen, and heard, or dreamt? where am I? where?"

Here broke off the dangerous converse:
Less impassion'd words might tell
How the pair escaped together,
Tears not wanting, nor a knell
Of sorrow in her heart while through her father's door,
And from her narrow world, she pass'd for evermore.

But affections higher, holier,
Urged her steps; she shrunk from trust
In a sensual creed that trampled
Woman's birthright into dust.
Little be the wonder then, the blame be none,
If she, a timid maid, hath put such boldness on.

Judge both fugitives with knowledge:
In those old romantic days
Mighty were the soul's commandments
To support, restrain, or raise.
Foes might hang upon their path, snakes rustle near,
But nothing from their inward selves had they to fear.

Thought infirm ne'er came between them,
Whether printing desert sands

* See, in Percy's Reliques, that fine old ballad, "The Spanish Lady's Love;" from which poem the form of stanza, as suitable to dialogue, is adopted.

With accordant steps, or gathering
Forest fruit with social hands;
Or whispering like two reeds that in the cold moon-beam
Bend with the breeze their heads, beside a crystal stream.

On a friendly deck reposing,
They at length for Venice steer;
There, when they had closed their voyage,
One, who daily on the pier
Watch'd for tidings from the east, beheld his lord,
Fell down and clasp'd his knees for joy, not uttering word.

Mutual was the sudden transport;
Breathless questions follow'd fast,
Years contracting to a moment,
Each word greedier than the last;
'Hie thee to the countess, friend! return with speed,
And of this stranger speak by whom her lord was freed.

"Say that I, who might have languish'd,
Droop'd, and pined till life was spent,
Now before the gates of Stolberg
My deliverer would present
For a crowning recompense, the precious grace
Of her who in my heart still holds her ancient place.

"Make it known that my companion
Is of royal Eastern blood,
Thirsting after all perfection,
Innocent, and meek, and good,
Though with misbelievers bred; but that dark night
Will Holy Church disperse by beams of gospel light."

Swiftly went that gray-hair'd servant,
Soon return'd a trusty page
Charged with greetings, benedictions,
Thanks and praises, each a gage
For a sunny thought to cheer the stranger's way,
Her virtuous scruples to remove, her fears allay.

Fancy (while, to banners floating
High on Stolberg's castle walls,
Deafening noise of welcome mounted,
Trumpets, drums, and atabols)
The devout embraces still, while such tears fell
As made a meeting seem most like a dear farewell.

Through a haze of human nature,
Glorified by heavenly light,
Look'd the beautiful deliverer
On that overpowering sight,
While across her virgin cheek pure blushes stray'd,
For every tender sacrifice her heart had made.

On the ground the weeping countess
Knelt, and kiss'd the stranger's hand;
Act of soul-devoted homage,
Pledge of an eternal band:
Nor did aught of future days that kiss belie,
Which, with a generous shout, the crowd did ratify.

Constant to the fair Armenian,
Gentle pleasures round her moved,
Like a tutelary spirit
Reverenced, like a sister loved.
Christian meekness smooth'd for all the path of life,
Who loving most, should wiseliest love, their only strife.

Mute memento of that union
In a Saxon church survives,
Where a cross-legg'd knight lies sculptured
As between two wedded wives—
Figures with armorial signs of race and birth,
And the vain rank the pilgrims bore while yet on earth.

THE SOMNAMBULIST.

List, ye who pass by Lyulph's tower*
At eve; how softly then
Doth Aira force, that torrent hoarse,
Speak from the woody glen!
Fit music for a solemn vale!
And holier seems the ground
To him who catches on the gale
The spirit of a mournful tale,
Embodied in the sound.

Not far from that fair site whereon
The pleasure house is rear'd,
As story says, in antique days,
A stern-brow'd house appear'd;
Foil to a jewel rich in light,
There set, and guarded well;
Cage for a bird of plumage bright,
Sweet-voiced, nor wishing for a flight
Beyond her native dell.

To win this bright bird from her cage,
To make this gem their own,
Came barons bold, with store of gold,
And knights of high renown;
But one she prized, and only one;
Sir Eglamore was he;
Full happy season, when was known,
Ye dales and hills! to you alone
Their mutual loyalty—

Known chiefly, Aira! to thy glen,
Thy brook, and bowers of holly;
Where passion caught what nature taught,
That all but love is folly;
Where fact with fancy stoop'd to play,
Doubt came not, nor regret;
To trouble hours that wing'd their way,
As if through an immortal day
Whose sun could never set.

But in old times love dwelt not long
Sequester'd with repose;
Best throve the fire of chaste desire,
Fann'd by the breath of foes.
"A conquering lance is beauty's test,
And proves the lover true;"
So spake Sir Eglamore, and press'd
The drooping Emma to his breast,
And look'd a blind adieu.

* A pleasure house built by the late Duke of Norfolk upon the banks of Ullswater. *Force* is the word used in the Lake District for waterfall.

They parted. Well with him it fared
Through wide-spread regions errant;
A knight of proof in love's behoof,
The thirst of fame his warrant:
And she her happiness can build
On woman's quiet hours;
Though faint, compared with spear and shield,
The solace beads and masses yield,
And needle-work and flowers.

Yet blest was Emma when she heard
Her champion's praise recounted;
Though brain would swim, and eyes grows dim,
And high her blushes mounted;
Or when a bold heroic lay
She warbled from full heart;
Delightful blossoms for the *May*
Of absence! but they will not stay,
Born only to depart.

Hope wanes with her, while lustre fills
Whatever path he chooses;
As if his orb, that owns no curb,
Received the light hers loses.
He comes not back; an ampler space
Requires for nobler deeds;
He ranges on from place to place,
Till of his doings is no trace
But what her fancy breeds.

His fame may spread, but in the past
Her spirit finds its centre;
Clear sight she has of what he was,
And that would now content her.
"Still is he my devoted knight?"
The tear in answer flows;
Month falls on month with heavier weight;
Day sickens round her, and the night
Is empty of repose.

In sleep she sometimes walk'd abroad,
Deep sighs with quick words blending,
Like that pale queen whose hands are seen
With fancied spots contending;
But *she* is innocent of blood,—
The moon is not more pure
That shines aloft, while through the wood
She thrids her way, the sounding flood
Her melancholy lure!

While 'mid the fern-brake sleeps the doe,
All owls alone are waking,
In white array'd, glides on the maid,
The downward pathway taking,
That leads her to the torrent's side
And to a holly bower;
By whom on this still night descried?
By whom in that lone place espied?
By thee, Sir Eglamore!

A wandering ghost, so thinks the knight,
His coming step has thwarted,
Beneath the boughs that heard their vows,
Within whose shade they parted.

Hush, hush, the busy sleeper see!
Perplex'd her fingers seem,
As if they from the holly tree
Green twigs would pluck, as rapidly
Flung from her to the stream.

What means the spectre? Why intent
To violate the tree,
Thought Eglamore, by which I swore
Unfading constancy?
Here am I, and to-morrow's sun,
To her I left, shall prove
That bliss is ne'er so surely won
As when a circuit has been run
Of valour, truth, and love.

So from the spot whereon he stood,
He moved with stealthy pace;
And, drawing nigh, with his living eye,
He recognised the face;
And whispers caught, and speeches small,
Some to the green-leaved tree,
Some mutter'd to the torrent-fall,—
"Roar on, and bring him with thy call;
I heard, and so may he!"

Soul-shatter'd was the knight, nor knew
If Emma's ghost it were,
Or boding shade, or if the maid
Her very self stood there.
He touch'd, what follow'd who shall tell?
The soft touch snapp'd the thread
Of slumber—shrieking, back she fell,
And the stream whirl'd her down the dell
Along its foaming bed.

In plunged the knight! when on firm ground
The rescued maiden lay,
Her eyes grew bright with blissful light,
Confusion pass'd away;
She heard, ere to the throne of grace
Her faithful spirit flew,
His voice; beheld his speaking face,
And, dying, from his own embrace,
She felt that he was true.

So was he reconciled to life;
Brief words may speak the rest;
Within the dell he built a cell,
And there was sorrow's guest;
In hermit's weeds repose he found.
From vain temptations free;
Beside the torrent dwelling—bound
By one deep heart-controlling sound,
And awed to piety.

Wild stream of Aira, hold thy course,
Nor fear memorial lays,
Where clouds that spread in solemn shade
Are edged with golden rays!
Dear art thou to the light of heaven,
Though minister of sorrow;
Sweet is thy voice at pensive even;
And thou, in lover's hearts forgiven,
Shall take thy place with Yarrow!

WILLIAM LISLE BOWLES.

William Lisle Bowles, of an ancient family in the county of Wilts, was born in the village of King's-Sutton, Northamptonshire — a parish of which his father was vicar—on the 24th of September, 1762. His mother was the daughter of Dr. Richard Grey, chaplain to Nathaniel Crew, Bishop of Durham. The poet received his early education at Winchester school; and he rose to be the senior boy. He was entered at Trinity College, Oxford, where he obtained the Chancellor's prize for a Latin poem, and where, in 1792, he took his degree. On quitting the university he entered into holy orders, and was appointed to a curacy in Wiltshire; soon afterwards he was preferred to a living in Gloucestershire; in 1803 he became a prebend of Salisbury; and the Archbishop Moore presented him with the rectory of Bremhill, Wilts, where he has since constantly resided,—only now and then visiting the metropolis,—enjoying the country and its peculiar sources of profitable delight; performing with zeal and industry his parochial duties; and beloved by all who dwell within or approach the happy neighbourhood of his residence.

The Sonnets of Bowles (his first publication) appeared in 1793. They were received with considerable applause; and the writer, if he had obtained no other reward for his labours, would have found ample recompense in the fact that they contributed to form the taste and call forth the genius of Coleridge, whom they "delighted and inspired." The author of "Christabel" speaks of himself as having been withdrawn from several perilous errors "by the genial influence of a style of poetry, so tender, and yet so manly,—so natural and real, and yet so dignified and harmonious, as the Sonnets of Mr. Bowles." He was not, however, satisfied with expressing in prose his sense of obligation, but in poetry poured out his gratitude to his first master in minstrel lore:

"My heart has thank'd thee, Bowles, for those soft strains,
Whose sadness soothes me, like the murmuring
Of wild bees in the sunny showers of spring."

In 1805 he published the "Spirit of Discovery by Sea." It is the longest of his productions, and is by some considered his best. The more recent of his works is the "Little Villagers' Verse Book;" a collection of hymns that will scarcely suffer by comparison with those of Dr. Watts, and which are admirably calculated to answer the benevolent purpose for which they are designed.

Mr. Bowles some years ago attracted considerable attention by his controversy with Byron on the subject of the writings of Pope. He advanced certain opinions which went to show that he considered him "no poet," and that, according to the "invariable principles" of poetry, the century of fame which had been accorded to the "Essay on Man" was unmerited. Campbell opened the defence; and Byron stepped forward as a warm and somewhat angry advocate. A sort of literary warfare followed; and a host of pamphlets on both sides were rapidly issued. As in all such cases, the question remains precisely where it did. Bowles, however, though he failed in obtaining a victory, and made, we imagine, few converts to his "invariable principles," manifested during the contest so much judgment and ability, that his reputation as a critic was considerably enhanced.

The poetry of Bowles has not attained a high degree of popularity. He is appreciated more for the purity of his sentiments than for any loftiness of thought or richness of fancy. He has never dealt with themes that "stir men's minds;" but has satisfied himself with inculcating lessons of sound morality, and has considered that to lead the heart to virtue is the chiefest duty of the Muse. His style is, as Coleridge described it nearly fifty years ago, "tender yet manly;" and he has undoubtedly brought the accessories of harmonious versification and graceful language to the aid of "right thinking" and sound judgment. His poems seldom startle or astonish the reader: he does not labour to probe the heart, and depict the more violent passions of human kind; but he keeps an "even tenor," and never disappoints or dissatisfies by attempting a higher flight than that which he may safely venture.

The main point of his argument against Pope will best exhibit his own character. He considers that from objects sublime or beautiful in themselves, genius will produce more admirable creations than it can from those which are comparatively poor and insignificant. The topics upon which Mr. Bowles has employed his pen are such only as are naturally excellent.

THE MISSIONARY.

SCENE.—*South America.*

Characters.—VALDIVIA, commander of the Spanish armies—LAUTARO, his page, a native of Chili—ANSELMO, the missionary—INDIANA, his adopted daughter, wife of Lautaro—ZARINEL, the wandering minstrel.

Indians.—ATTACAPAC, father of Lautaro—OLOLA, his daughter, sister of Lautaro—CAUPOLICAN, chief of the Indians—INDIAN WARRIORS.

The chief event of the poem turns upon the conduct of Lautaro; but as the Missionary acts so distinguished a part, and as the whole of the moral depends upon him, it was thought better to retain the title which was originally given to the poem.

INTRODUCTION.

WHEN o'er th' Atlantic wild, rock'd by the blast,
Sad Lusitania's exiled sovereign pass'd,
Reft of her pomp, from her paternal throne
Cast forth, and wandering to a clime unknown,
To seek a refuge on that distant shore,
That once her country's legions dyed with gore;—
Sudden, methought, high-towering o'er the flood,
Hesperian world! thy mighty Genius stood;
Where spread, from cape to cape, from bay to bay,
Serenely blue, the vast Pacific lay;
And the huge Cordilleras, to the skies,
With all their burning summits* seem'd to rise.
Then the stern spirit spoke, and to his voice
The waves and woods replied—"Mountains, rejoice!
Thou solitary sea, whose billows sweep
The margin of my forests, dark and deep,
Rejoice! the hour is come: the mortal blow,
That smote the golden shrines of Mexico,
In Europe is avenged! and thou, proud Spain,
Now hostile hosts insult thy own domain;
Now fate, vindictive, rolls, with refluent flood,
Back on thy shores the tide of human blood.
Think of my murder'd millions! of the cries
That once I heard from all my kingdoms rise;
Of famine's feeble plaint, of slavery's tear;
Think, too, if valour, freedom, fame, be dear,—
How my Antaretic sons,† undaunted, stood,
Exacting groan for groan, and blood for blood;
And shouted, (may the sounds be hail'd by thee!)
TYRANTS, THE VIRTUOUS AND THE BRAVE ARE FREE!"

CANTO I.

ARGUMENT.

One day and part of night.

Valley in the Andes—Old Indian warrior—Loss of his son and daughter.

BENEATH aërial cliffs and glittering snows,
The rush-roof of an aged warrior rose,
Chief of the mountain tribes: high overhead
The Andes, wild and desolate, were spread,
Where cold Sierras shot their icy spires,
And Chillan‡ trail'd its smoke and smouldering fires.
A glen beneath—a lonely spot of rest—
Hung, scarce discover'd, like an eagle's nest.
Summer was in its prime: the parrot-flocks
Darken'd the passing sunshine on the rocks;
The chrysomel* and purple butterfly,†
Amid the clear blue light, are wandering by;
The humming-bird, along the myrtle bowers,
With twinkling wing, is spinning o'er the flowers,
The woodpecker is heard with busy bill,
The mock-bird sings—and all beside is still.
And look! the cataract that bursts so high,
As not to mar the deep tranquillity,
The tumult of its dashing fall suspends,
And, stealing drop by drop, in mist descends;
Through whose illumined spray and sprinkling dews,
Shine to the adverse sun the broken rainbow hues.
Checkering with partial shade the beams of noon,
And arching the gray rock with wild festoon,
Here, its gay net-work and fantastic twine,
The purple cogul‡ threads from pine to pine,
And oft, as the fresh airs of morning breathe,
Dips its long tendrils in the stream beneath.
There, through the trunks, with moss and lichens white,
The sunshine darts its interrupted light,
And, 'mid the cedar's darksome boughs, illumes,
With instant touch, the Lori's scarlet plumes.
So smiles the scene;—but can its smiles impart
Aught to console yon mourning warrior's heart?
He heeds not now, when beautifully bright,
The humming-bird is circling in his sight;
Nor e'en, above his head, when air is still,
Hears the green woodpecker's resounding bill
But gazing on the rocks and mountain wild,
Rock after rock, in glittering masses piled
To the volcano's cone, that shoots so high
Gray smoke whose column stains the cloudless sky,
He cries, "O! if thy spirit yet be fled
To the pale kingdoms of the shadowy dead,—
In yonder tract of purest light above,
Dear long-lost object of a father's love,
Dost thou abide? or like a shadow come,
Circling the scenes of thy remember'd home,
And passing with the breeze? or, in the beam
Of evening, light the desert mountain stream?
Or at deep midnight are thine accents heard,
In the sad notes of that melodious bird,§
Which, as we listen with mysterious dread,
Brings tidings from our friends and fathers dead?

* Range of volcanoes on the summits of the Andes.
† The natives of Chili, who were never subdued.
‡ A volcano in Chili.

* The crysomela is a beautiful insect, of which the young women of Chili make necklaces.
† The parrot butterfly, peculiar to this part of America, the largest and most brilliant of its kind—*Papilio psittacus.*
‡ A most beautiful climbing plant. The vine is of the size of packthread: it climbs on the trees without attaching itself to them: when it reaches the top, it descends perpendicularly; and as it continues to grow, it extends itself from tree to tree, until it offers to the eye a confused tissue, exhibiting some resemblance to the rigging of a ship.—*Molina.*
§ "But because I cannot describe all the American birds, which differ not a little from ours, not only in kind, but also in variety of colour, as rose-colour, red, violet, white, ash-colour, purple, &c.; I will at length describe one, which the barbarians so observe and esteem, that

"Perhaps, beyond those summits, far away,
Thine eyes yet view the living light of day;
Sad in the stranger's land, thou mayst sustain
A weary life of servitude and pain,
With wasted eye gaze on the orient beam,
And think of these white rocks and torrent stream,
Never to hear the summer cocos wave,
Or weep upon thy father's distant grave."
Ye, who have waked, and listen'd with a tear,
When cries confused, and clangours roll'd more near;
With murmur'd prayer, when mercy stood aghast,
As war's black trump peal'd its terrific blast,
And o'er the wither'd earth the armed giant pass'd!
Ye, who his track with terror have pursued,
When some delightful land, all blood-imbrued,
He swept; where silent is the champaign wide,
That echoed to the pipe of yester-tide,
Save, when far off, the moonlight hills prolong
The last deep echoes of his parting gong;
Nor aught is seen, in the deserted spot
Where trailed the smoke of many a peaceful cot,
Save livid corpses that unburied lie,
And conflagrations, reeking to the sky;—
Come listen, whilst the causes I relate
That bow'd the warrior to the storms of fate,
And left these smiling scenes forlorn and desolate.
In other days, when in his manly pride,
Two children for a father's fondness vied,—
Oft they essay'd, in mimic strife, to wield
His lance, or laughing peep'd behind his shield.
Oft in the sun, or the magnolia's shade,
Lightsome of heart as gay of look, they play'd,
Brother and sister: she, along the dew,
Blithe as the squirrel of the forest, flew;
Blue rushes wreath'd her head; her dark brown hair
Fell, gently lifted, on her bosom bare;
Her necklace shone, of sparkling insects made,
That flit, like specks of fire, from sun to shade:
Light was her form; a clasp of silver braced
The azure-dyed ichella* round her waist;
Her ankles rung with shells, as unconfined,
She danced, and sung wild carols to the wind.
With snow-white teeth, and laughter in her eye,—
So beautiful in youth, she bounded by.
Yet kindness sat upon her aspect bland,—
The tame alpaca* stood and lick'd her hand;
She brought him gather'd moss, and loved to deck
With flowery twine his tall and stately neck;
Whilst he with silent gratitude replies,
And bends to her caress his large blue eyes.
These children danced together in the shade,
Or stretch'd their hands to see the rainbow fade;
Or sat and mock'd, with imitative glee,
The paroquet, that laugh'd from tree to tree;
Or through the forest's wildest solitude,
From glen to glen, the marmozet pursued;
And thought the light of parting day too short,
That call'd them, lingering, from their daily sport.
In that fair season of awakening life,
When dawning youth and childhood are at strife;
When on the verge of thought gay boyhood stands
Tiptoe, with glistening eye and outspread hands;
With airy look, and form and footsteps light,
And glossy locks, and features berry-bright,
And eye like the young eaglet's, to the ray
Of noon, unblenching, as he sails away;
A brede of sea-shells on his bosom strung,
A small stone hatchet o'er his shoulders slung,
With slender lance, and feathers, blue and red,
That, like the heron's† crest, waved on his head,—
Buoyant with hope, and airiness, and joy
Lautaro was the loveliest Indian boy:
Taught by his sire, e'en now he drew the bow
Or track'd the jaguar on the morning snow;
Startled the condor, on the craggy height;
Then silent sat, and mark'd its upward flight,
Lessening in ether to a speck of white.
But when th' impassion'd chieftain spoke of war
Smote his broad breast, or pointed to a scar,—
Spoke of the strangers of the distant main,
And the proud banners of insulting Spain,—
Of the barb'd horse and iron horseman spoke,
And his red gods, that wrapt in rolling smoke,
Roar'd from the guns,—the boy, with still-drawn breath,
Hung on the wondrous tale, as mute as death;
Then raised his animated eyes, and cried,
"O let me perish by my father's side!"
Once, when the moon, o'er Chilian's cloudless height,
Pour'd, far and wide, its soft and mildest light,
A predatory band of mailed men
Burst on the stillness of the shelter'd glen,
They shouted "death," and shook their sabres high,
That shone terrific to the moonlight sky:
Where'er they rode, the valley and the hill
Echoed the shrieks of death, till all again was still.
The warrior, ere he sunk in slumber deep,
Had kiss'd his son, soft-breathing in his sleep,
Where on a llama's skin he lay, and said,
Placing his hand, with tears, upon his head,

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they will not only not hurt them, but suffer them not to escape unrevenged who do them any wrong. It is of the bigness of a pigeon, and of an ash-colour. The Tuoupinambaltii hear her more often in the night than in the day, with a mournful voice; and believe that it is *sent from their friends and kindred unto them*, and also declareth good luck; and especially, that it encourageth and admonisheth them to behave themselves valiantly in the wars against their enemies. Besides, they verily think, that if they rightly observe these divinations, it shall come to pass that they should vanquish their enemies even in this life, and after death their souls should fly beyond the mountains to their ancestors, perpetually to dance there.

"I chanced once to lodge in a village, named Upec by the Frenchmen: there, in the night, I heard *these birds, not singing*, but making a lamentable noise. I saw the barbarians most attentive, and being ignorant of the whole matter, reproved their folly. But when I smiled a little upon a Frenchman standing by me, a certain old man, severely enough, restrained me with these words: 'Hold your peace, lest you hinder us who attentively hearken to *the happy tidings of our ancestors*. For as often as we hear these birds, so often also are we cheered, and our strength receiveth increase.'"—*Callender's Voyage.*

* The ichella is a short cloak, of a greenish blue colour, of wool, fastened before with a silver buckle.—*Molina.*

* The alpaca is perhaps the most beautiful, gentle, and interesting of living animals: one was to be seen in London in 1812.

† *Ardea cristata.*

"Aërial nymphs!* that in the moonlight stray,
O, gentle spirits! here a while delay;
Bless, as ye pass unseen, my sleeping boy,
Till blithe he wakes to daylight and to joy.
If the Great Spirit will, in future days
O'er the fall'n foe his hatchet he shall raise,
And, 'mid a grateful nation's high applause,
Avenge his violated country's cause!"

Now, nearer points of spears, and many a cone
Of moving helmets, in the moonlight shone,
As, clanking through the pass, the band of blood
Sprung, like hyenas, from the secret wood.
They rush—they seize their unresisting prey—
Ruthless they tear the shrieking boy away;
But not till, gash'd by many a sabre wound,
The father sunk, expiring, on the ground.
He waked, from the dark trance, to life and pain,
But never saw his darling child again.

Seven snows had fall'n, and seven green summers pass'd,
Since here he heard that son's loved accents last.
Still his beloved daughter soothed his cares,
While time began to strew with white his hairs
Oft as his painted feathers he unbound,
Or gazed upon his hatchet on the ground,
Musing with deep despair, nor strove to speak,
Light she approach'd, and climb'd to reach his cheek,
Held with both hands his forehead, then her head
Drew smiling back, and kiss'd the tear he shed.

But late, to grief and hopeless love a prey,
She left his side, and wander'd far away.
Now in this still and shelter'd glen, that smiled
Beneath the crags of precipices wild,
Wrapt in a stern yet sorrowful repose,
The warrior had forgot his country's woes,—
Forgot how many, impotent to save,
Shed their best blood upon a father's grave;
How many, torn from wife and children, pine
In the dark caverns of the hopeless mine,
Never to see again the blessed morn—
Slaves in the lovely land where they were born;
How many, at sad sunset, with a tear,
The distant roar of sullen cannons hear,
Whilst evening seems, as dies the sound, to throw
A deadlier stillness on a nation's wo!

So the dark warrior, day succeeding day,
Wore in distemper'd thought the noons away;
And still, when weary evening came, he sigh'd,
"My son, my son!" or, with emotion, cried,
"When I descend to the cold grave alone,
Who shall be there to mourn for me?—Not one!"†

The crimson orb of day, now westering, flung
His beams, and o'er the vast Pacific hung;
When from afar a shrilling sound was heard,
And, hurrying o'er the dews, a scout appear'd.
The starting warrior knew the piercing tones,
The signal call of war, from human bones.—

"What tidings?" with impatient look, he cried.
"Tidings of war," the hurrying scout replied;
Then the sharp pipe* with shriller summons blew
And held the blood-red arrow high in view.†

CHIEF.

"Where speed the foes?"

INDIAN.

"Along the southern main,
"Have pass'd the vultures of accursed Spain."

CHIEF.

"Ruin pursue them on the distant flood,
And be their deadly portion—blood for blood!"

INDIAN.

"When, round and red, the moon shall next arise
The chiefs attend the midnight sacrifice
In Encol's wood, where the great wizard dwells,
Who wakes the dead man with his thrilling spells;
Thee,‡ Ulmen of the mountains, they command
To lift the hatchet, for thy native land;
Whilst in dread circle, round the sere-wood smoke,
The mighty gods of vengeance they invoke;
And call the spirits of their father's slain,
To nerve their lifted arm, and curse devoted Spain."
So spoke the scout of war;—and o'er the dew
Onward, along the craggy valley, flew.

Then the stern warrior sung his song of death—
And blew his conch, that all the glens beneath
Echoed, and rushing from the hollow wood,
Soon at his side three hundred warriors stood.

WARRIOR.

"Children, who for his country dares to die?"
Three hundred brandish'd spears shone to the sky.
"We perish, or we leave our country free;
Father, our blood for Chili and for thee!"
Their long lank hair hung wild: with clashing sound,
They smote their shields, and stamp'd upon the ground!
The eagle, from his unapproach'd retreat,
Scared at their cries, has left his craggy seat.
"Enough!" the warrior cried, "retire to-night:—
Let the same spirit fire us in the fight,
That the proud Spaniard, 'mid his guards, may know
How dire it is to have one race his foe,
One poor, brave race, to their loved country true,
Which all his glittering hosts shall ne'er subdue!"

The mountain chief essay'd his club to wield,
And shook the dust indignant from the shield.
Then spoke:—

"O Thou! that with thy lingering light
Dost warm the world, till all is hush'd in night;
I look upon thy parting beams, O sun!
And say, 'E'en thus my course is almost run.'

* Every warrior of Chili, according to Molina, has his attendant "nymph" or fairy—the belief of which is nearly similar to the popular and poetical idea of those beings in Europe.—Meulen is the benevolent spirit.

† I have taken this line from the conclusion of the celebrated speech of the old North American warrior, Logan. 'Who is there to mourn for Logan? not one!"

* Their pipes of war are made of the bones of their enemies, who have been sacrificed.

† The way in which the warriors are summoned is something like the "running the cross" in Scotland, which is so beautifully described by Walter Scott. The scouts on this occasion bear an arrow bound with red fillets

‡ Ulmen is the same as casique, or chief.

"When thou dost hide thy head, as in the grave,
And sink to glorious rest beneath the wave,
Dost thou, majestic in repose, retire,
Below the deep, to unknown worlds of fire?
Yet though thou sinkest, awful, in the main,
The shadowy moon comes forth, and all the train
Of stars, that shine with soft and silent light,
Making so beautiful the brow of night.
Thus, when I sleep within the narrow bed,
The light of after-fame around shall spread;
The sons of distant ocean, when they see
The grass-green heap beneath the mountain tree,
And hear the leafy boughs at evening wave,
Shall pause and say, 'There sleep in dust the brave!'
"All earthly hopes my lonely heart have fled!
Stern Guecubu,* angel of the dead,
Who laughest when the brave in pangs expire,
Whose dwelling is beneath the central fire
Of yonder burning mountain; who hast pass'd
O'er my poor dwelling, and with one fell blast
Scatter'd my summer leaves that cluster'd round,
And swept my fairest blossoms to the ground;
Angel of dire despair, O come not nigh,
Nor wave thy red wings o'er me where I lie;
But thou, O mild and gentle spirit, stand,
Angel* of hope and peace, at my right hand,
(When blood-drops stagnate on my brow) and guide
My pathless voyage o'er the unknown tide,
To scenes of endless joy—to that fair isle,
Where bowers of bliss and soft savannahs smile;
Where my forefathers oft the fight renew,
And Spain's black visionary steeds pursue;
Where, ceased the struggles of all human pain,
I may behold thee—thee—my son, again."
He spoke, and whilst at evening's glimmering close
The distant mist, like the gray ocean, rose,
With patriot sorrows swelling at his breast,
He sunk upon a jaguar's hide to rest.
'Twas night. Remote on Caracalla's bay,
Valdivia's army, hush'd in slumber, lay.
Around the limits of the silent camp,
Alone was heard the steed's patrolling tramp
From line to line, whilst the fix'd centinel
Proclaim'd the watch of midnight—"All is well!"
Valdivia dreamt of millions yet untold,
Villrica's gems, and El Dorado's gold!—
What different feelings, by the scene impress'd,
Rose, in sad tumult, o'er Lautaro's breast!
On the broad ocean, where the moonlight slept,
Thoughtful he turn'd his waking eyes, and wept,
And whilst the thronging forms of memory start,
Thus holds communion with his lonely heart:—
'Land of my fathers, still I tread your shore,
And mourn the shade of hours that are no more;
Whilst night-airs, like remember'd voices, sweep,
And murmur from the undulating deep.
Was it thy voice, my father?—thou art dead—
The green rush waves on thy forsaken bed.
Was it thy voice, my sister?—gentle maid,
Thou too, perhaps, in the dark cave art laid;
Perhaps, e'en now thy spirit sees me stand
A homeless stranger in my native land;
Perhaps, e'en now, along the moonlight sea,
It bends from the blue cloud, remembering me.
"Land of my fathers, yet—O yet forgive,
That with thy deadly enemies I live.
The tenderest ties (it boots not to relate)
Have bound me to their service, and their fate;
Yet, whether on Peru's war-wasted plain,
Or visiting these sacred shores again,
Whate'er the struggles of this heart may be,
Land of my fathers, it shall beat for thee!"

* They have their evil and good spirits. Guecubu is the evil spirit of the Chilians.

Canto II.

ARGUMENT.

The second day.

Night—Spirit of the Andes—Valdivia—Lautaro—Missionary—The hermitage.

The night was still, and clear—when, o'er the snows,
Andes! thy melancholy spirit rose,—
A shadow stern and sad: He stood alone,
Upon the topmost mountain's burning cone;
And whilst his eyes shone dim, through surging smoke,
Thus to the spirits of the fire he spoke:—
"Ye, who tread the hidden deeps,
Where the silent earthquake sleeps;
Ye, who track the sulphurous tide,
Or on hissing vapours ride,—
Spirits, come!
From worlds of subterraneous night;
From fiery realms of lurid light;
From the ore's unfathom'd bed;
From the lava's whirlpools red,—
Spirits, come!
On Chili's foes rush with vindictive sway,
And sweep them from the light of living day!
Hark! heard ye not the ravenous brood?
They flap their wings; they scream for blood:—
On Peru's devoted shore
Their murderous beaks are red with gore:
Hither, impatient for new prey,
Th' insatiate vultures track their way!
Rise, Chili, rise! scatter the bands
That swept remote and peaceful lands!—
Let them perish! Vengeance cries—
Let them perish! Death replies.
Spirits, now your caves forsake!—
Hark! ten thousand warriors wake!—
Spirits, their high cause defend!—
From your caves ascend! ascend!"—
As thus the vast, terrific phantom spoke,
The trembling mountain heaved with darker smoke;
Flashes of red and angry light appear'd,
And moans and momentary shrieks were heard;
The cavern'd deeps shook through their vast profound,
And Chimborago's height roll'd back the sound.
With lifted arm, and towering stature high,
And aspect frowning to the middle sky,
(Its misty form dilated in the wind,)
The phantom stood,—till, less and less defined,
Into thin air it faded from the sight,
Lost in the ambient haze of slow-returning light.

Its feathery-seeming crown,—its giant spear,—
Its limbs of huge proportion, disappear;
And the bare mountains, to the dawn, disclose
The same long line of solitary snows.
The morning shines,—the military train,
In warlike muster on the tented plain,
Glitter, and cuirasses, and helms of steel,
Throw back the sunbeams, as the horsemen wheel:
Thus, with arms glancing to the eastern light,
Pass, in review, proud steeds and cohorts bright;
For all the host, by break of morrow gray,
Wind back their march to Penco's northern bay.
Valdivia, fearful lest confederate foes,
Ambush'd and dark, his progress might oppose,
Marshals, to-day, the whole collected force,—
File and artillery, cuirassier and horse:
Himself yet lingers ere he joins the train,
That move, in order'd march, along the plain,
While troops, and Indian slaves beneath his eye
The labours of the rising city* ply:
Wide glows the general toil—the mole extends,
The watch-tower o'er the desert surge ascends;
And battlements, and rising ramparts, shine
Above the ocean's blue and level line.
The sun ascended to meridian height,
And all the northern bastions shone in light;
With hoarse acclaim, the gong and trumpet rung,—
The Moorish slaves aloft their cymbals swung,—
When the proud victor, in triumphant state,
Rode forth, in arms, through the portcullis gate.
With neck high arching, as he smote the ground,—
And restless pawing to the trumpets' sound,—
With mantling mane, o'er his broad shoulders spread,—
And nostrils blowing, and dilated red,—
The coal-black steed, in rich caparison
Far trailing to the ground, went proudly on:
Proudly he tramp'd as conscious of his charge,
And turn'd around his eyeballs, bright and large,
And shook the frothy boss, as in disdain;
And toss'd the flakes, indignant, of his mane;
And, with high swelling veins, exulting press'd
Proudly against the barb, his heaving breast.
The fate of empires glowing in his thought,—
Thus arm'd, the tented field Valdivia sought.
On the left side his poised shield he bore,
With quaint devices richly blazon'd o'er;
Above the plumes, upon his helmet's cone,
Castile's imperial crest illustrious shone;
Blue in the wind th' escutcheon'd mantle flow'd,
O'er the chain'd mail, which tinkled as he rode.
The barred visor raised, you might discern
His† clime-changed countenance, though pale, yet stern,
And resolute as death,—whilst in his eye
Sat proud assurance, fame, and victory.
Lautaro, now in manhood's rising pride,
Rode, with a lance, attendant, at his side,
In Spanish mantle gracefully array'd:
Upon his brow a tuft of feathers play'd:
His glossy locks, with dark and mantling grace,
Shaded the noonday sunbeams on his face.

* The city Baldivia.
† He had served in the wars of Italy.

Though pass'd in tears the dayspring of his youth,
Valdivia loved his gratitude and truth:
He, in Valdivia, own'd a nobler friend;
Kind to protect, and mighty to defend.
So, on he rode: upon his youthful mien
A mild but sad intelligence was seen:
Courage was on his open brow, yet care
Seem'd, like a wandering shade, to linger there;
And though his eye shone, as the eagle's, bright,
It beam'd with humid, melancholy light.
When now Valdivia saw th' embattled line,
Helmets, and swords, and shields, and matchlocks, shine,
Now the long phalanx still and steady stand,
Fix'd every eye, and motionless each hand,—
Then slowly clustering, into columns wheel,
Each with the red-cross banners of Castile;—
While trumps, and drums, and cymbals, to his ear,
Made music such as soldiers love to hear,
While horsemen check'd their steeds,—or, bending low,
With levell'd lances, o'er the saddle-bow,
Rode gallantly at tilt,—and thunders broke,
Instant involving van and rear in smoke,
Till winds th' obscuring volume roll'd away,
And the red file, stretch'd out in long array,
More radiant moved beneath the beams of day,
While ensigns, arms, and crosses, glitter'd bright,—
"Philip!"* he cried, "seest thou the glorious sight,
And dost thou deem the tribes of this poor land
Can men, and arms, and steeds, like these, withstand?"
"Forgive!" the youth replied, and check'd a tear,—
"The land where my forefathers sleep is dear!—
My native land! this spot of blessed earth,
The scene where I, and all I love, had birth!
What gratitude, fidelity can give,
Is yours, my lord! You shielded—bade me live,
When, in the circuit of the world so wide
I had but one, one only friend beside.
I bow'd—resign'd to fate; I kiss'd the hand,
Red with the best blood of my father's land!†
But mighty as thou art, Valdivia, know,
Though Cortez' desolating march laid low
The shrines of rich, voluptuous Mexico,—
With carcasses, though proud Pizarro strew
The sun's imperial temple in Peru,—
Yet the rude dwellers of this land are brave,
And the last spot they lose will be their grave!"
A moment's crimson cross'd Valdivia's cheek—
Then o'er the plain he spurr'd, nor deign'd to speak,
Waving the youth, at distance, to retire:
None saw the eye that shot terrific fire:
As their commander sternly rode along,
Troop after troop, halted the martial throng;
And all the pennon'd trumps a louder blast
Blew, as the southern world's great victor pass'd.
Lautaro turn'd, scarce heeding, from the view,
And from the noise of trumps and drums withdrew
And now, while troubled thoughts his bosom swell
Seeks the gray Missionary's humble cell.

* Lautaro had been baptized by that name.
† Valdivia had before been in Chili.

Fronting the ocean, but beyond the ken
Of public view, and sounds of murmuring men,
Of unhewn roots composed, and gnarled wood,
A small and rustic oratory stood:
Upon its roof of reeds appear'd a cross,
The porch within was lined with mantling moss;
A crucifix and hourglass, on each side—
One to admonish seem'd and one to guide;
This, to impress how soon life's race is o'er;
And that, to lift our hopes where time shall be no more.
O'er the rude porch, with wild and gadding stray,
The clustering copu weaved its trellis gay:
Two mossy pines, high bending, interwove
Their aged and fantastic arms above.
In front, amid the gay surrounding flowers,
A dial counted the departing hours,
On which the sweetest light of summer shone,—
A rude and brief inscription mark'd the stone:—
"To count, with passing shade, the hours,
I placed the dial 'mid the flowers;
That, one by one, came forth, and died,
Blooming, and withering, round its side.
Mortal, let the sight impart
Its pensive moral to thy heart!"
Just heard to trickle through a covert near,
And soothing, with perpetual lapse, the ear,
A fount, like rain-drops, filter'd through the stone,—
And, bright as amber, on the shallows shone.
Intent his fairy pastime to pursue,
And, gem-like, hovering o'er the violets blue,
The humming-bird, here, its unceasing song
Heedlessly murmur'd, all the summer long,
And when the winter came, retired to rest,
And from the myrtles hung its trembling nest.
No sounds of a conflicting world were near;
The noise of ocean faintly met the ear,
That seem'd, as sunk to rest the noontide blast,
But dying sounds of passions that were past;
Or closing anthems, when, far off, expire
The lessening echoes of the distant choir.
Here, every human sorrow hush'd to rest,
His pale hands meekly cross'd upon his breast,
Anselmo sat: the sun, with westering ray,
Just touch'd his temples and his locks of gray.
There was no worldly feeling in his eye;—
The world to him "was as a thing gone by."
Now, all his features lit, he raised his look,
Then bent it thoughtful, and unclasp'd the book;
And whilst the hourglass shed 'a silent sand,
A tame opossum* lick'd his wither'd hand.
That sweetest light of slow declining day,
Which through the trellis pour'd its slanting ray,
Resting a moment on his few gray hairs,
Seem'd light from heaven sent down to bless his prayers.
When the trump echoed to the quiet spot,
He thought upon the world, but mourn'd it not;
Enough if his meek wisdom could control,
And bend to mercy, one proud soldier's soul;
Enough, if while these distant scenes he trod,
He led one erring Indian to his God.

"Whence comes my son?" with kind complacent look
He ask'd, and closed again th' embossed book.
"I come to thee for peace!" the youth replied:
"O, there is strife, and cruelty, and pride,
In this sad Christian world; my native land
Was happy, ere the soldier, with his band
Of fell destroyers, like a vulture, came,
And gave the peaceful scenes to blood and flame.
When will the turmoil of earth's tempests cease?
Father, I come to thee for peace—for peace!"
"Seek peace," the father cried, "with God above:
In his good time, all will be peace and love.
"We mourn, indeed, that grief, and toil, and strife,
Send one deep murmur from the walks of life,
That yonder sun, when evening paints the sky,
Sinks, beauteous, on a world of misery;
The course of wide destruction to withstand,
We lift our feeble voice—our trembling hand;
But still, bow'd low, or smitten to the dust,
Father of mercy! still in thee we trust!
Through good or ill, in poverty or wealth,
In joy or wo, in sickness or in health,—
Meek piety thy awful hand surveys,
And the faint murmur turns to prayer and praise!
We know—whatever evils we deplore—
Thou hast permitted, and we know no more!
Behold, illustrious on the subject plain,
Some tower'd city of imperial Spain!*
Hark! 'twas the earthquake! clouds of dust alone
Ascend from earth, where tower and temple shone.
"Such is the conqueror's dread path: the grave
Yawns for its millions where his banners wave;
But shall vain man, whose life is but a sigh,
With sullen acquiescence, gaze and die?
Alas, how little of the mighty maze
Of providence, our mortal ken surveys!
Heaven's awful Lord, pavilion'd in the clouds,
Looks through the darkness that all nature shrouds;
And, far beyond the tempest and the night,
Bids man his course hold on to scenes of endless light."

Canto III.

ARGUMENT.

Evening and night of the same day.

Anselmo's story—Converted Indians—Confession of the wandering minstrel—Night scene.

ANSELMO'S TALE.

"Come,—for the sun yet hangs above the bay,—
And whilst our time may brook a brief delay
With other thoughts,—and, haply, with a tear,
An old man's tale of sorrow thou shalt hear.
I wish'd not to reveal it—thoughts that dwell
Deep in the lonely bosom's inmost cell
Unnoticed, and unknown—too painful wake,
And like a tempest, the dark spirit shake,
When starting, from our slumberous apathy,
We gaze upon the scenes of days gone by.
Yet, if a moment's irritating flush
Darkens† thy cheek, as thoughts conflicting rush,

* A small and beautiful species, which is domesticated.

* No part of the world is so subject to earthquakes as Peru.

† Indians of Chili are of the lightest class, called by some "white Indians."

When I disclose my hidden griefs, the tale
May more than wisdom or reproof prevail.
O, may it teach thee, till all trials cease,
To hold thy course, though sorrowing, yet in peace:
Still looking up to Him, the soul's best stay,
Who faith and hope shall crown, when worlds are swept away!

"Where fair Seville's Morisco turrets* gleam
On Guadilquiver's gently-stealing stream,
Whose silent waters, seaward as they glide,
Reflect the wild-rose thickets on its side,
My youth was pass'd. O, days for ever gone!
How touch'd with heaven's own light your mornings shone!

"E'en now, when lonely and forlorn I bend,—
My weary journey hastening to its end,
A drooping exile on a distant shore,—
I mourn the hours of youth that are no more.
The tender thought amid my prayers has part,
And steals, at times, from heaven my aged heart.

"Forgive the cause, O God!—forgive the tear,
That flows, e'en now, o'er Leonora's bier;
For, midst the innocent and lovely, none
More beautiful than Leonora shone.

"As by her widow'd mother's side she knelt,
A sad and sacred sympathy I felt.
At Easter-tide, when the high mass was sung,
And, fuming high, the silver censer swung,
When rich-hued windows, from the arches' height,
Pour'd o'er the shrines a soft and yellow light,
From aisle to aisle, amid the service clear,
When 'Adoremus' swell'd upon the ear,
(Such as to heaven thy rapt attention drew
First in the Christian churches of Peru)
She seem'd, methought, some spirit of the sky,
Descending to that holy harmony.

"Boots not to say, when life and hope were new,
How by degrees the soul's first passion grew:
I loved her, and I won her virgin heart,
But fortune whisper'd, We, a while, must part.

"The minster toll'd the middle hour of night,
When waked to agony and wild affright,
I heard the words, words of appalling dread—
'The holy Inquisition!'—from the bed
I started; snatch'd my dagger, and my cloak—
'Who dare accuse me?'—none, in answer, spoke.
The demons seized, in silence, on their prey,
And tore me from my dreams of bliss away.

"How frightful was their silence, and their shade,
In torch-light, as their victim they convey'd,
By dark-inscribed and massy-window'd walls,
Through the dim twilight of terrific halls;
(For thou hast heard me speak of that foul stain
Of pure religion, and the rites of Spain)—
Whilst the high windows shook to night's cold blast,
And echoed to the foot-fall as we pass'd!

"They left me, faint and breathless with affright,
In a cold cell, to solitude and night;
O! think, what horror through the heart must thrill
When the last bolt was barr'd, and all at once was still.

"Nor day nor night was here, but a deep gloom,
Sadder than darkness, wrapt the living tomb.
Some bread and water, nature to sustain,
Duly was brought when eve return'd again;
And thus I knew, hoping it were the last,
Another day of lingering life was pass'd.

"Five years immured in the deep den of night,
I never saw the sweet sun's blessed light.
Once as the grate, with sullen sound, was barr'd,
And to the bolts the inmost cavern jarr'd,
Methought I heard, as clang'd the iron door,
A dull and hollow echo from the floor:
I stamp'd: the vault and winding caves around
Return'd a long and melancholy sound.
With patient toil, I raised a massy stone,
And look'd into a depth of shade unknown;
The murky twilight of the lurid place
Served me, at length, a secret way to trace.
I enter'd, step by step; explored the road,
In darkness, from my desolate abode;
Till, winding through long passages of night,
I saw, at distance, a dim streak of light:—
It was the sun—the bright, the blessed beam
Of day! I knelt—I wept—the glittering stream
Roll'd soft beneath me, as I left the cave,
Conceal'd in woods above the winding wave.

"I rested on a verdant bank a while,
I saw around the summer landscape smile.
I gain'd a peasant's hut; nor dared to leave,
Till, with slow step, advanced the glimmering eve.
Remembering still affection's fondest hours,
I turn'd my footsteps to the city towers;
In pilgrim's dress, I traced the streets unknown:
No light in Leonora's lattice shone.

"The morning came; the busy tumult swells;
Knolling to church, I heard the minster bells:
Involuntary to that scene I stray'd,
Disguised, where first I saw my faithful maid.
I saw her, pallid, at the altar stand,
And yield, half shrinking, her reluctant hand:
She turn'd her look—she saw my hollow eyes,
And knew me,—wasted, wan, and in disguise;
She shriek'd, and fell—breathless, I left the fane
In agony—nor saw her form again;
And from that day, her voice, her look, was given
Her name, her memory, to the winds of heaven.

"Far off I bent my melancholy way,
Heart-sick and faint, and, in this gown of gray,
From every human eye my sorrows hid,
Unknown, amidst the tumult of Madrid.
Grief in my heart, despair upon my look,
With no companion save my beads and book,
My morsel with affliction's sons to share,
To tend the sick and poor, my only care—
Forgotten, thus I lived, till day by day
Had worn nigh thirteen years of grief away.

"One winter's night, when I had closed my cell
And bid the labours of the day farewell,
An aged crone approach'd, with panting breath—
She bade me hasten to the house of death.

"I came—with moving lips intent to pray,
A dying woman on a pallet lay;
Her lifted hands were wasted to the bone,
And ghastly on her look the lamp-light shone;
Beside the bed a pious daughter stands
Silent, and weeping, kisses her pale hands.

"Feebly she spoke, and raised her languid head:
'Forgive, forgive! they told me he was dead!

* Of Moorish architecture.

But in the sunshine of that dreadful day,
That gave me to another's arms away,
I saw him—like a ghost, with deadly stare;
I saw his wasted eyeballs' ghastly glare;
I saw his lips—(O hide them, God of love!)
I saw his livid lips, half muttering, move,
To curse the maid, forgetful of her vow;
Perhaps he lives to curse—to curse me now!'

"'He lives to bless!' I cried; and drawing nigh,
Held up the crucifix: her heavy eye
She raised, and scarce pronounced—'Does he yet live?
Can he his lost, his dying child forgive?—
Will God forgive—the Lord who bled—will He?
Ah, no! there is no mercy left for me!'

"Words were in vain, and colours all too faint,
The awful moment of despair to paint.
She knew me—her exhausted breath, with pain,
Drawing, she press'd my hand, and spoke again.

"'By a false guardian's cruel wiles deceived,
The tale of fraudful falsehood I believed;
And thought thee dead! he gave the stern command,
And bade me take the rich Antonio's hand.
I knelt, implored, embraced my guardian's knees—
Ruthless inquisitor! he held the keys
Of the dark torture-house.* Trembling for life,
Yes—I became a sad, heart-broken—wife!
Yet curse me not! of every human care
Already my full heart has had its share.
Abandon'd—left in youth to want and wo!
O! let these tears, that agonizing flow,
Witness how deep e'en now my heart is rent:
Yet one is lovely—one is innocent!
Protect—protect'—(and faint in death she smiled)—
When I am dead—protect my orphan child!'

"The dreadful prison, that so long detain'd
My wasting life, her dying words explain'd.
The wretched priest, who wounded me by stealth,
Barter'd her love, her innocence, for wealth.

"I laid her bones in earth: the chanted hymn
Echoed along the hollow cloister dim:
I heard, far off, the bell funereal toll,
And, sorrowing, said, 'Now peace be with her soul!'

Far o'er the western ocean I convey'd,
And Indiana call'd—the orphan maid:
Beneath my eye she grew—and, day by day,
Seem'd, grateful, every kindness to repay.

"Renouncing Spain, her cruelties and crimes,
Amid untutor'd tribes, in distant climes,
'Twas mine to spread the light of truth, or save
From stripes and torture the poor Indian slave.
I saw thee, young and innocent—alone,
Cast on the mercies of a race unknown;
I saw, in dark adversity's cold hour,
Thy virtues blooming, like a winter's flower;
From chains and slavery I redeem'd thy youth,
Pour'd on thy sight the beams of heavenly truth;
By thy warm heart and mild demeanour won,
Call'd thee my other child—my age's son.

I need not say the sequel—not unmoved
Poor Indiana heard thy tale, and loved—
Some sympathy a kindred fate might claim;
Your years, your fortunes, and your friend the same:
Both early of a parent's care bereft,
Both strangers in a world of sadness left,
I mark'd each slowly struggling thought—I shed
A tear of love paternal on each head,
And, while I saw her timid eyes incline,
Bless'd the affection that has made her thine!

"Here let the murmurs of despondence cease:
There is a God—believe—and part in peace!'"

Rich hues illumed the track of parting day
As the great sun sunk in the western bay,
And only its last light yet lingering shone,
Upon the highest palm tree's feathery cone;
When at a distance, on the dewy plain,
In mingled group appear'd an Indian train,—
Men, women, children, round Anselmo press,—
"Farewell!" they cried. He raised his hand to bless,
And said, "My children, may the God above
Still lead you in the paths of peace and love:
To-morrow, and we part; when I am gone,
Raise on this spot a cross, and place a stone,
That tribes unborn may some memorial have
(When I far off am mouldering in the grave)
Of that poor messenger, who tidings bore,
Of gospel mercy, to your distant shore."

The crowd retired—along the twilight gray,
The condor swept its solitary way;
The fire-flies shone, when to the hermit's cell
Who hastens but the minstrel, Zarinel?
In foreign lands, far from his native home,
'Twas his, a gay romantic youth to roam
With a light cittern o'er his shoulders slung,
Where'er he pass'd he play'd, and loved, and sung
And thus accomplish'd, late had join'd the train
Of gallant soldiers on the southern plain.
"Father," he cried, "uncertain of the fate
That may to-morrow's toilsome march await,
For long will be the road, I would confess
Some secret thoughts that on my bosom press!
They are of one I left, an Indian maid,
Whose trusting love my careless heart betray'd,
Say, may I speak?"

"Say on," the father cried;
"Nor be to penitence all hope denied."

"Then hear, Anselmo! From a very child
I loved all fancies, marvellous and wild;
I turn'd from truth, to listen to the lore
Of many an old and fabling troubadour.
Thus, with impassion'd heart and wayward mind,
To dreams and shapes of shadowy things resign'd,
I left my native vales and village home,
Wide o'er the world a minstrel boy to roam.

"I never shall forget the day—the hour,
When, all my soul resign'd to fancy's power,
First, from the snowy Pyrenees, I cast
My labouring vision o'er the landscape vast,
And saw beneath my feet long vapours float,
Streams, mountains, woods, and ocean's mist remote.
My mountain guide, a soldier, poor and old,
Who tales of Cortez and Balboa told,

* Perhaps it may not be improper to mention, that Seville was the first place in Spain in which the Inquisition was established in 1481.

Won my young ear, when pausing to survey
Th' Atlantic, white in sunshine far away,
He spoke of this new world,—rivers like seas,
Mountains, to which the mighty Pyrenees
Were but as sand-hills—ancient forests rude,
In measureless extent of solitude,
Stretching their wild and unknown world of shade!
Full blithe he then described the Indian maid—
Graceful and agile as the marmozet,
Whose eyes of radiance and whose locks of jet,
Though bow'd by want and age, he never could forget.

"My ardent fancy follow'd while he spoke
Of lakes, savannahs, or the cataract's smoke,
Or some strange tale of perilous wandering told,
By waters, through remotest regions roll'd:
How shone the woods with pomp of plumage gay,
And how the green bird mock'd and talk'd all day!

"Imagination thus, in colours new,
This distant world presented to my view;
Young, and enchanted with the fancied scene,
I cross'd the toiling seas that roar'd between,
And, with ideal images impress'd,
Stood on these unknown shores, a wondering guest.

"Still to romantic fantasies resign'd,
I left Callao's crowded port behind,
And climb'd the mountains, which their shadow threw
Upon the lessening summits of Peru.
Some sheep, the armed peasants drove before,
That all our food through the wild passes bore,
Had wander'd in the frost smoke of the morn,
Far from the tract—I blew the signal horn—
But echo only answer'd. 'Mid the snows,
Wilder'd and lost, I saw the evening close.
The sun was setting in the crimson west;
In all the earth I had no home of rest;
The last sad light upon the ice-hills shone;
I seem'd forsaken in a world unknown;
How did my cold and sinking heart rejoice,
When! hark! methought I heard a human voice.
It might be some wild Indian's roving troop;
Or the dread echo of their distant whoop—
Still it was human, and I seem'd to find
Again some commerce with remote mankind.
The voice is nearer, rising through the shade—
Is it the song of a rude mountain maid?
And now I heard the tread of hastening feet,
And, in the western glen, a llama bleat.
I listen'd—all is still—but hark! again
Near and more near is heard the welcome strain:
It is a wild maid's carolling, who seeks
Her wandering llama midst the snowy peaks.
'Truant,' she cried, 'thy lurking place is found.'
With languid touch I waked the cittern's sound,
And soon a maid, by the pale light, I saw
Gaze breathless with astonishment and awe:
What instant terrors to her fancy rose!
Ha! is it not the spirit of the snows?
But when she saw me, weary, cold, and weak,
Stretch forth my hand, (for now I could not speak,)
She pitied, raised me from the snows, and led
My faltering footsteps to her father's shed;
The llama follow'd with her tinkling bell:
The dwelling rose within a craggy dell,
O'erhung with icy summits:—to be brief,
She was the daughter of an aged chief;
He, by her gentle voice to pity won,
Show'd mercy, for himself had lost a son.
The father spoke not:—by the pine wood blaze,
The daughter stood, and turn'd a cake of maize.
And then, as sudden shone the light, I saw
Such features as no artist hand might draw.
Her form, her face, her symmetry, her air—
Father! thy age must this recital spare—
She saved my life—and kindness, if not love,
Might sure in time the coldest bosom move.
Mine was not cold—she loved to hear me sing,
And sometimes touch'd with playful hand the string:
And when I waked some melancholy strain,
She wept, and smiled, and bade me sing again:
And sometimes on the turf reclined, I tried
Her erring hand along the wires to guide;
Then chiding, with a kiss, the rude essay,
Taught her some broken saraband to play;
Whilst the loud parrot, from the neighbouring tree
On laughing echo call'd to join our glee.

"I built our hut of the wild-orange boughs,
And pledged—oh! perjury—eternal vows!
She raised her eyes with tenderness, and cried,
'Shall poor Olola be the white man's bride?
Yes! we will live—live and be happy here—
When thou art sad, I will kiss off the tear:
Thou shalt forget thy father's land, and see
A friend, a sister, and a child, in me.'
So many a happy day in this deep glen,
Far from the noise of life, and sounds of men,
Was pass'd! Nay! father, the sad sequel hear
'Twas now the leafy spring-time of the year—
Ambition call'd me: True, I knew, to part,
Would break her generous and her trusting heart—
True, I had vow'd—but now estranged and cold,
She saw my look, and shudder'd to behold—
She would go with me—leave the lonely glade
Where she grew up, but my stern voice forbade.
She hid her face and wept,—'Go then away,'
(Father, methinks e'en now I hear her say,)
'Go to thy distant land—forget this tear—
Forget these rocks,—forget I once was dear.
Fly to the world, o'er the wide ocean fly,
And leave me, unremember'd, here to die!
Yet to my father should I all relate,
Death, instant death, would be a traitor's fate!"

"Nor fear, nor pity, moved my stubborn mind
I left her sorrows and the scene behind—
I sought Valdivia on the southern plain,
And join'd the careless military train:—
O! ere I sleep, thus, lowly on my knee,
Father, I absolution crave from thee."

Anselmo spoke with look and voice severe,
"Yes! thoughtless youth, my absolution hear.
First, by deep penitence the wrong atone,
Then absolution ask from God alone!
Yet stay, and to my warning voice attend—
O, hear me as a father, and a friend!
Let truth severe be wayward fancy's guide,
Let stern-eyed conscience o'er each thought preside—
The passions, that on noblest natures prey,
O! cast them, like corroding bonds, away!

Disdain to act mean falsehood's coward part,
And let religion dignify thine art.
"If, by thy bed, thou seest at midnight stand
Pale conscience, pointing, with terrific hand,
To deeds of darkness done, whilst, like a corse
To shake thy soul, uprises dire remorse—
Fly to God's mercy—fly, ere yet too late—
Perhaps one hour marks thy eternal fate—
Let the warm tear of deep contrition flow,
The heart obdurate melt, like softening snow,
The last vain follies of thy youth deplore,
Then go—in secret weep—and sin no more!"
The stars innumerous in their watches shone—
Anselmo knelt before the cross alone.
Ten thousand glowing orbs their pomp display'd,
Whilst, looking up, thus silently he pray'd:—
"O! how oppressive to the aching sense,
How fearful were this vast magnificence,
This prodigality of glory, spread
From world to world, above an emmet's head,
That toil'd his transient hour upon the shore
Of mortal life, and then was seen no more—
If man beheld, on his terrific throne,
A dark, cold, distant deity, alone!
Felt no relating, no endearing tie,
That hope might upwards raise her glistening eye,
And think, with deep, unutterable bliss,
In yonder radiant realm my kingdom is!
"More glorious than those orbs that silent roll,
Shines Heaven's redeeming mercy on the soul—
O! pure effulgence of unbounded love!
In thee I think—I feel—I live—I move—
Yet when—O! thou, whose name is Love and Light,
When will thy dayspring on these realms of night
Arise? O! when shall sever'd nations raise
One hallelujah of triumphant praise!
"Soon may thy kingdom come, that love, and peace,
And charity, may bid earth's chidings cease!
Meantime, in life or death, through good or ill,
Thy poor and feeble servant, I fulfil,
As best I may, thy high and holy will,
Till, weary, on the world my lids I close,
And hasten to my long and last repose!"

Canto IV.

ARGUMENT.

Assembly of Indian warriors—Caupolican, Ongolmo, Teucapel—Mountain chief—Song of the Indian wizard—White woman and child.

Far in the centre of the deepest wood,
Th' assembled fathers of their country stood.
'Twas midnight now: the pine-wood fire burnt red,
And to the leaves a shadowy glimmer spread:
The struggling smoke, or flame with fitful glance,
Obscured, or show'd, some dreadful countenance;
And every warrior, as his club he rear'd,
With larger shadow, indistinct, appear'd;
While more terrific, his wild locks and mien,
And fierce eye through the quivering smoke was seen.
In sea-wolf's skin, here Mariantu stood;
Gnash'd his white teeth, impatient, and cried,
"Blood!"
His lofty brow with crimson feathers bound,
Here, brooding death, the huge Ongolmo frown'd;
And, like a giant of no earthly race,
To his broad shoulders heaved his ponderous mace.
With lifted hatchet, as in act to fell,
Here stood the young and ardent Teucapel.
Like a lone cypress, stately in decay,
When time has worn its summer boughs away,
And hung its trunk with moss and lichens sere,
The mountain warrior rested on his spear.
And thus, and at this hour, a hundred chiefs,
Chosen avengers of their country's griefs;
Chiefs of the scatter'd tribes who roam the plain
That sweeps from Andes to the western main,
Their country gods around the coiling smoke,
With sacrifice and silent prayers, invoke.
For all, at first, were silent as the dead;
The pine was heard to whisper o'er their head,
So stood the stern assembly: but apart,
Wrapt in the spirit of his fearful art,
Alone, to hollow sounds "of hideous hum,"
The wizard-seer struck his prophetic drum.
Silent they stood—and watch'd, with anxious eyes,
What phantom shape might from the ground arise:
No voices came—no spectre form appear'd
A hollow sound, but not of winds, was heard
Among the leaves, and distant thunder low
Seem'd like the moans of an expiring foe.
His crimson feathers quivering in the smoke,
Then, with loud voice, first Mariantu spoke:—
"Hail we the omen!—Spirits of the slain,
I hear your voices! Mourn, devoted Spain!
Pale-visaged tyrants! still, along our coasts,
Shall we despairing mark your iron hosts?
Spirits of our brave fathers, curse the race
Who thus your name, your memory disgrace!
No: though yon mountain's everlasting snows
In vain Almagro's* toilsome march oppose;
Though Atacama's long and wasteful plain
Be heap'd with blackening carcasses in vain;
Though still fresh hosts those snowy summits scale,
And scare the llamas with their glittering mail;
Though sullen castles lour along our shore;
Though our polluted soil be drench'd with gore;
Insolent tyrants! We—prepared to die,
Your arms, your horses, and your gods, defy!"
He spoke: the warriors stamp'd upon the ground,
And tore the feathers that their foreheads bound.
"Insolent tyrants!" burst the general cry,
"We, met for vengeance! We—prepared to die!
Your arms, your horses, and your gods, defy!"
Then Teucapel, with warm emotion, cried,
"This hatchet never yet in blood was dyed!
May it be buried deep within my heart,
If living from the conflict I depart,
Till loud, from shore to shore, is heard one cry,
'See! in their gore where the last tyrants lie!'"
The mountain warrior. "O, that I could raise
The hatchet too, as in my better days,
When victor on Maypocha's banks I stood;
And while th' indignant river roll'd in blood,
And our swift arrows hiss'd like rushing rain,
I cleft Almagro's iron helm in twain!

* The first Spaniard who visited Chili. He entered it by the dreadful passage of the snows of the Andes; but afterwards the passage was attempted through the desert of Atacama.

My strength is wellnigh gone! years mark'd with wo
Have o'er me pass'd, and bow'd my spirit low!
Alas, I have no son! Beloved boy!
Thy father's last, best hope!—his pride!—his joy!
O, hadst thou lived—sole object of my prayers!—
To guard my waning life, and these gray hairs!
How bravely hadst thou now, in manhood's pride,
Swung th' uplifted war-club on my side:
But the Great Spirit will'd not! Thou art gone;
And, weary, on this earth I walk alone:
Thankful if I may yield my latest breath,
And bless my country, in the pangs of death!"
With words deliberate, and uplifted hand;
Mild to persuade, yet dauntless to command;
Raising his hatchet high, Caupolican
Survey'd th' assembled chiefs, and thus began:
"Friends, fathers, brothers—dear and sacred names!
Your stern resolve each ardent look proclaims:
On then to conquest; let one hope inspire;
One spirit animate—one vengeance fire.
Who doubts the glorious issue? to our foes
A tenfold strength and spirit we oppose.
In them no god protects his mortal sons,
Or speaks, in thunder, from their roaring guns.
Nor come they children of the radiant sky;
But, like the wounded snake, to writhe and die.
Then, rush resistless on their prostrate hands;
Snatch the red lightning from their feeble hands,
And swear, to the great spirits, hovering near—
Who now this awful invocation hear—
That we will never see our household hearth,
Till, like the dust, we sweep them from the earth.
"But vain our strength, that idly, in the fight,
Tumultuous wastes its ineffectual might,
Unless to one the hatchet we confide:
Let one, our numbers—one, our counsels guide.
And, lo! for all that in this world is dear,
I raise this hatchet, raise it high, and swear,
Never again to lay it down, till we,
And all who love this injured land, are free."
At once the loud acclaim tumultuous ran:
"Our spears, our life-blood, for Caupolican!
With thee, for all that in this world is dear,
We lift our hatchets, lift them high, and swear,
Never again to lay them down, till we,
And all who love this injured land, are free."
Then thus the chosen chief: "Bring forth the slave,
And let the death-dance recreate the brave."
Two warriors led a Spanish captive, bound
With thongs; his eyes were fix'd upon the ground.
Dark cypresses the mournful spot enclose:
High in the midst an ancient mound arose,
Mark'd, on each side, with monumental stones,
And white beneath, with sculls and scatter'd bones.
Four poniards, on the mound, encircling stood,
With points erect, dark with forgotten blood.
Forthwith, with louder voice, the chief commands,
Bring forth the lots—unbind the captive's hands;
Then north, towards his country, turn his face,
And dig beneath his feet a narrow space."*

Caupolican uplifts his axe, and cries,
"Gods of our land, be yours this sacrifice!
Now, listen, warriors!"—and forthwith commands
To place the billets in the captive's hands.
"Soldier, cast in the lot!"
With looks aghast,
The captive in the trench a billet cast.
"Soldier, declare who leads the arms of Spain
Where Santiago frowns upon the plain?"

CAPTIVE.

"Villagra!"——

WARRIOR.

"Earth upon the billet heap;
"So may a tyrant's heart be buried deep!"
The dark woods echoed to the long acclaim,
"Accursed be his nation and his name!"

WARRIOR.

"Captive, declare who leads the Spanish bands,
Where the proud fortress shades Coquimbo's sands?"

CAPTIVE.

"Ocampo!"——

WARRIOR.

"Earth upon the billet heap;
"So may a tyrant's heart be buried deep!"
The dark woods echoed to the long acclaim,
"Accursed be his nation and his name!"

WARRIOR.

"Cast in the lot."
Again, with looks aghast,
The captive in the trench a billet cast.
"Pronounce his name who here pollutes the plain
The leader of the mailed hosts of Spain?"

CAPTIVE.

"Valdivia!"——
At that name a sudden cry
Burst forth, and every lance was lifted high.

WARRIOR.

"Valdivia!——Earth upon the billet heap;
"So may a tyrant's heart be buried deep!"
The dark woods echoed to the long acclaim,
"Accursed be his nation and his name!"
And now loud yells, and whoops of death, re sound;
The shuddering captive ghastly gazed around,
When the huge war-club smote him to the ground.
Again deep stillness hush'd the listening crowd,
While the prophetic wizard sung aloud.

SONG TO THE GOD OF WAR.

By thy habitation dread,
In the valley of the dead,
Where no sun, nor day or night,
Breaks the red and dusky light;
By the grisly troops, that ride,
Of slaughter'd Spaniards, at thy side,
Slaughter'd by the Indian spear,
Mighty Epanaum,† hear!

* The reader is referred to Molina for a particular description of the war-sacrifice, which is very striking and poetical.

† Name of the war deity.

"Hark, the battle!—Hark, the din!
Now the deeds of death begin!
The Spaniards come, in clouds! above,
I hear their hoarse artillery move!
Spirits of our fathers slain,
Haste, pursue the dogs of Spain!
The noise was in the northern sky!
Haste, pursue! They fly—they fly!
Now from the cavern's secret cell,
Where the direst phantoms dwell,
See they rush,* and, riding high,
Break the moonlight as they fly;
And, on the shadow'd plain beneath,
Shoot, unseen, the shafts of death!
O'er the devoted Spanish camp,
Like a vapour, dark and damp,
May they hover, till the plain
Is hid beneath the countless slain;
And none, but silent women, tread
From corpse to corpse, to seek the dead!"

The wavering fire flash'd with expiring light,
When shrill and hollow, through the cope of night,
A distant shout was heard; at intervals
Increasing on the listening ear it falls.
It ceased; when, bursting from the thickest wood,
With lifted axe, two gloomy warriors stood:
Wan in the midst, with dark and streaming hair,
Blown by the winds upon her bosom bare,
A woman, faint from terror's wild alarms,
And folding a white infant in her arms,
Appear'd. Each warrior stoop'd his lance to gaze
On her pale looks, seen ghastlier through the blaze.
"Save!" she exclaim'd, with harrow'd aspect wild;
"O, save my innocent—my helpless child!"
Then fainting fell, as from death's instant stroke.
Caupolican, with stern inquiry, spoke—
"Whence come, to interrupt our awful rite,
At this dread hour, the warriors of the night?"
"From ocean."
"Who is she who fainting lies,
And now scarce lifts her supplicating eyes?"
"The Spanish ship went down: the seamen bore,
In a small boat, this woman to the shore:
They fell beneath our hatchets,—and again,
We gave them back to the insulted main.†
The child and woman—of a race we hate—
Warriors, 'tis yours, here, to decide their fate."
"Vengeance!" aloud, fierce Mariantu cried:
"Vengeance! let vengeance dire be satisfied!
Let none of hated Spanish blood remain,
Woman, or child, to violate our plain!"
Amid that dark and bloody scene, the child
Stretch'd to the mountain chief his hands, and smiled.
A starting tear of pity dimm'd the eye
Of the old warrior, though he knew not why.
"O! think upon your little ones!" he cried,
"Nor be compassion to the weak denied."
Caupolican then fix'd his aspect mild
On the white woman and her shrieking child,
Then firmly spoke:—
"White woman, we were free,
When first thy brethren of the distant sea
Came to our shores! White woman, theirs the guilt!
Theirs, if the blood of innocence be spilt!
Yet blood we seek not, though our arms oppose
The hate of foreign and remorseless foes:
Thou camest here a captive—so abide,
Till the Great Spirit shall our cause decide."
He spoke: the warriors of the night obey;
And, ere the earliest streak of dawning day,
They led her from the scene of blood away.

* Terrific imaginary beings, called "Man-animals," that leave their caves by night, and scatter pestilence and death as they fly. See Molina.

† "Render them back upon the insulted ocean."—*Coleridge.*

Canto V.

ARGUMENT.

Ocean cave—Spanish captive—Wild Indian maid—Genius of Andes, and spirits.

'Tis dawn:—the distant Andes' rocky spires,
One after one, have caught the orient fires.
Where the dun condor shoots his upward flight,
His wings are touch'd with momentary light.
Meantime, beneath the mountains' glittering heads,
A boundless ocean of gray vapour spreads,
That o'er the champaign, stretching far below,
Moves on, in cluster'd masses, rising slow,
Till all the living landscape is display'd
In various pomp of colour, light, and shade,
Hills, forests, rivers, lakes, and level plain,
Lessening in sunshine to the southern main.
The llama's fleece fumes with ascending dew;
The gem-like humming-birds their toils renew;
And see, where yonder stalks, in crimson pride,
The tall flamingo, by the river's side,
Stalks, in his richest plumage bright array'd,
With snowy neck superb,* and legs of lengthening shade.
Sad maid, for others may the valleys ring,
For other ears the birds of morning sing,
For other eyes the palms in beauty wave,
Dark is thy prison in the ocean cave!
Amid that winding cavern's inmost shade,
A dripping rill its ceaseless murmur made:
Masses of dim-discover'd crags aloof,
Hung, threatening, from the vast and vaulted roof;
And through a fissure, in its glimmering height,
Seen like a star, appear'd the distant light;
Beneath the opening, where the sunbeams shine,
Far down, the rock weed hung its slender twine.
Here, pale and bound, the Spanish captive lay,
Till morn on morn, in silence, pass'd away;
When once, as o'er her sleeping child she hung,
And sad her evening supplication sung,—
Like a small gem, amidst the gloom of night,
A glow-worm shot its green and trembling light,—
And, 'mid the moss and craggy fragments, shed
Faint lustre, o'er her sleeping infant's head;
And hark! a voice—a woman's voice—its sound
Dies, in faint echoes, 'mid the vault profound—
"Let us pity the poor white maid!†
She has no mother near!
No friend to dry her tear!

* The neck of the flamingo is white, and its wings of rich and beautiful crimson.

† From Mungo Park.

Upon the cold earth she is laid:
Let us pity the poor white maid!"
It seem'd the burden of a song of wo;
And mark, across the gloom an Indian girl move slow—
Her nearer look is sorrowful, yet mild——
Her hanging locks are wreath'd with rock-weed wild——
Gently she spoke, "Sad Christian, dry thy tear—
Art thou afraid? all are not cruel here.
O! still more wretched may my portion be,
Stranger, if I could injure thine and thee!
And, lo! I bring, from banks and thickets wild,
Wood-strawberries, and honey for thy child."

SPANISH WOMAN.

"Whence? Who art thou, who, in this fearful place,
Dost comfort speak to one of Spanish race?"

INDIAN.

"It is an Indian maid, who chanced to hear
Thy tale of sorrow as she wander'd near.
I loved a white man once—but he is flown,
And now I wander heartless and alone.
I traced the dark and winding way beneath;
But well I know to lead thee hence were death.
O, say! what fortunes led thee o'er the wave,
On these sad shores to find, perhaps, a grave?"

SPANISH WOMAN.

"Three years have pass'd since a fond husband left
Me, and this infant, of his love bereft;
Him I have follow'd—need I tell thee more,
Cast helpless, friendless, hopeless, on this shore?"

INDIAN.

"O! did he love thee then? let death betide,
Yes, from this cavern I will be thy guide.
Nay, do not shrink! from Caracalla's bay,
E'en now, the Spaniards wind their march this way.
I heard, at night-fall as I paced the shore,
But yesterday, their cannon's distant roar.
Wilt thou not follow? He will shield thy child,—
The Christian's God,—through passes dark and wild
He will direct thy way! Come, follow me;
O, yet be loved, be happy—and be free!
But I, an outcast on my native plain,
The lost Olola ne'er shall smile again!"
So guiding from the cave, when all was still,
And silent pointing to the farthest hill,
The Indian led, till, on Itata's side,
The Spanish camp and night-fires they descried:
Then on the stranger's neck that wild maid fell,
And said, "Thy own gods prosper thee!—Farewell!"
The owl* is hooting overhead—below,
On dusky wing, the vampire-bat sails slow.
Ongolmo stood before the cave of night,
Where the great wizard sat:—a lurid light
Was on his face; twelve giant shadows frown'd,
His mute and dreadful ministers, around.

* The owl is an object of peculiar dread to the Indians of Chili.

Each eyeball, as in life, was seen to roll,
Each lip to move; but not a living soul
Was there, save bold Ongolmo and the seer.
The warrior half advanced his lifted spear,
Then spoke—"Dread master of the secret lore!
Say, shall the Spaniards welter in their gore?"
"Let these mute ministers the answer tell,"
Replied the master of the mighty spell.
Then every giant shadow, as it stood,
Lifted on high a skull that dropp'd with blood.
"Wizard, to what I ask do thou reply—
Say, shall I live, and spurn them as they die?"
'Twas silence. "Speak!" he cried—no voice was there—
Earth moan'd, and hollow thunder shook the air.
'Tis pass'd—the phantoms, with a shriek, are flown,
And the grim warrior stands in the wild wood alone.
St. Pedro's church had rung its midnight chimes,*
And the gray friars were chanting at their primes,
When winds, as of a rushing hurricane,
Shook the tall windows of the tower'd fane—
Sounds, more than earthly, with the storm arose,
And a dire troop are pass'd to Andes' snows,
Where mighty spirits in mysterious ring
Their dread prophetic incantations sing,
Round Chillan's crater smoke, whose lurid light
Streams high against the hollow cope of night.
Thy genius, Andes, towering o'er the rest,
Rose vast, and thus a spectre shade address'd.
"Who comes so swift amid the storm?
Ha! I know thy bloodless form,
I know thee, angel, who thou art,
By the hissing of thy dart!
'Tis Death, the king! the rocks around,
Hark! echo back the fearful sound—
'Tis Death, the king! away, away—
The famish'd vulture scents its prey—
Spectre, hence! we cannot die—
Thy withering weapons we defy;
Dire and potent as thou art!"
Then spoke the phantom of th' uplifted dart,—
"Spirits who in darkness dwell,
I heard far off your secret spell!
Enough, on yonder fatal shore,
My fiends have drank your children's gore;
Lo! I come, and doom to fate
The murderers, and the foe you hate!
Of all who shook their hostile spears,
And mark'd their way through blood and tears,
(Now sleeping still on yonder plain,)
But one—one only shall remain,
Ere thrice the morn shall shine again."
Then sung the mighty spirits. "Thee," they sing
"Hail to thee, Death! All hail, to Death the king.
The battle and the noise is o'er—
The penguin flaps her wings in gore.
"Victor of the southern world,
Whose crimson banners were unfurl'd
O'er the silence of the waves,—
O'er a land of bleeding slaves!
Stern soldier, where is now thy boast?
Thy iron steeds, thy mailed hosts?
Hark! hark! they are his latest cries!
Spirits, hence!—he dies! he dies!"

* I trust this poetica licentia may be pardoned.

Canto VI.

ARGUMENT.

The city of Conception—Castle—Lautaro—Wild Indian maid—Zarinel—Missionary.

The second moon had now began to wane,
Since bold Valdivia left the southern plain—
Goal of his labours, Penco's port and bay,
Far gleaming to the summer sunset lay.
The way-worn veteran, who had slowly pass'd
Through trackless woods, or o'er savannahs vast,
With hope impatient, sees the city spires
Gild the horizon, like ascending fires.
Now well-known sounds salute him, as more near
The citadel and battlements appear;
Th' approaching trumpets ring, at intervals;
The trumpet answers from the rampart walls,
Where many a maiden casts an anxious eye,
Some long-lost object of her love to 'spy,
Or watches, as the evening light illumes
The points of lances, or the passing plumes.
The grating drawbridge and the portal arch
Now echo to the long battalion's march;
Whilst every eye some friend remember'd greets,
Amid the gazing crowd that throngs the streets.
As bending o'er his mule, amid the throng,
Pensive and pale, Anselmo rode along,—
How sacred, 'mid the noise of arms, appear'd
His venerable mien and snowy beard.
Whilst every heart a silent prayer bestow'd,
Slow to the convent's massy gate he rode—
Around, the brothers, gratulating, stand,
And ask for tidings of the southern land.
As from the turret tolls the vesper-bell,
He seeks, a weary man, his evening cell.
No sounds of social cheer, no beds of state,
Nor gorgeous canopies his coming wait;
But o'er a little bread, with folded hands,
Thanking the God that gave, a while he stands;
Then, while all thoughts of earthly sorrow cease,
Upon his pallet lays him down in peace.
The scene how different, where the castle-hall
Rings to the loud triumphant festival:
A hundred torches blaze, and flame aloof,—
Long quivering shadows streak the vaulted roof,—
Whilst, seen far off, th' illumined windows throw
A splendour on the shore and seas below.
Amid his captains, in imperial state,
Beneath a crimson canopy, elate,
Valdivia sits—while, striking loud the strings,
The wandering minstrel of Valentia sings.
'For Chili conquer'd, fill the bowl again!
For Chili conquer'd, raise th' heroic strain!"
'Bard," cried Valdivia, "sleep is on thy lid!
Wake, minstrel!—sing the war-song of the Cid!"*
Lautaro left the hall of jubilee
Unmark'd, and wander'd by the moonlight sea;
He heard far off, in dissonant acclaim,
The song, the shout, and his loved country's name.
As swell'd at times the trump's insulting sound,
He raised his eyes impatient from the ground;
Then smote his breast indignantly, and cried,
"Chili! my country; would that I had died
On the sad night of that eventful day
When on the ground my murder'd father lay!
I should not then, dejected and alone,
Have thought I heard his injured spirit groan.
Ha! was it not his form—his face—his hair.
Hold, soldier! Stern, inhuman soldier, spare!
Ha! is it not his blood? 'Avenge,' he cries,
'Avenge, my son, these wounds!' He faints—he dies.
Leave me, dread shadow! can I then forget
My father's look—his voice? he beckons yet!
Now on that glimmering rock I see him stand:
'Avenge!' he cries, and waves his dim-seen hand!"
Thus mused the youth, distemper'd and forlorn,
When, hark! the sound as of a distant horn
Swells o'er the surge: he turn'd his look around,
And still, with many a pause, he heard the sound:
It came from yonder rocks; and, list! what strain
Breaks on the silence of the sleeping main?
"I heard the song of gladness:
It seem'd but yesterday,
But it turn'd my thoughts to madness,
So soon it died away!
I sound my sea-shell; but in vain I try
To bring back that enchanting harmony!
Hark! heard ye not the surges say,
O! wretched maid, what canst thou do?
O'er the moon-gleaming ocean, I'll wander away,
And paddle to Spain in my light canoe!"
The youth drew near, by the strange accents led
Where in a cave, wild sea-weeds round her head,
And holding a large sea-conch in her hand,
He saw, with wildering air, an Indian maiden stand,
A tatter'd panco* o'er her shoulders hung
On either side, her long black locks were flung;
And now by the moon's glimmer, he espies
Her high cheek bones, and bright, but hollow, eyes
Lautaro spoke: "O! say what cruel wrong
Weighs on thy heart? maiden, what bodes thy song?"
She answer'd not, but blew her shell again;
Then thus renew'd the desultory strain:
"Yes, yes, we must forget! the world is wide;
My music now shall be the dashing tide:
In the calm of the deep I will frolic and swim
With the breath of the south, o'er the sea-blossom,† skim.
Now listen—If ever you meet with that youth,
O! do not his falsehood reprove,
Nor say,—though, alas, you would say but the truth—
His poor Olola died for love."
Lautaro stretch'd his hand—she said, "Adieu!"
And o'er the glimmering rocks like lightning flew.
He follow'd, and still heard at distance swell
The lessening echoes of that mournful shell.
It ceased at once—and now he heard no more
Than the sea's murmur dying on the shore.
"Olola!—ha! his sister had that name!
O, horrid fancies! shake not thus his frame."

* Omitted in the poem, as too much impeding the narrative.

* Indian cloak.

† The "sea-blossom," Holothuria, known to seamen by the name of "Portuguese man of war," is among the most striking and beautiful objects in the calms of the Southern ocean.

All night he wander'd by the desert main,
To catch the melancholy sounds again.
No torches blaze in Penco's castled hall
That echoed to the midnight festival.
The way-worn soldiers, by their toils oppress,
Had now retired to silence and to rest.
The minstrel only, who the song had sung
Of the brave Cid, as o'er the strings he hung,
Upon the instrument had fall'n asleep,
Weary, and now was hush'd in slumbers deep.
Tracing the scenes long past, in busy dreams
Again he wanders by his native streams;
Or sits, his evening saraband to sing
To the clear Minho's gentle murmuring.
Cold o'er the freckled clouds the morning broke
Aslant ere from his slumbers he awoke:
Still as he sat, nor yet had left the place,
The first weak light fell on his pallid face.
He wakes—he gazes round—the dawning day
Comes from the deep, in garb of cloudy gray.
The woods with crow of early turkeys ring,
The glancing birds beneath the castle sing.
And the sole sun his rising orb displays,
Radiant and reddening, through the scatter'd haze.
To recreate the languid sense a while,
When earth and ocean wore their sweetest smile,
He wander'd to the beach: the early air
Blew soft, and lifted, as it blew, his hair;
Flush'd was his cheek; his faded eye, yet bright,
Shone with a faint, but animated light,
While the soft morning ray seem'd to bestow
On his tired mind a transient kindred glow.
Then the sad thought of young Olola rose,
And the still glen beneath the mountain snows.
"I will return," he cried, "and whisper, live!
And say—(O! can I say?) Forgive! forgive!"
As thus, with shadow stretching o'er the sand,
He mused and wander'd on the winding strand,
At distance, toss'd upon the fuming tide,
A dark and floating substance he espied.
He stood, and where the eddying surges beat,
An Indian corpse was roll'd beneath his feet:
The hollow wave retired with sullen sound—
The face of that sad corpse was to the ground;
It seem'd a female, by the slender form;
He touch'd the hand—it was no longer warm;
He turn'd its face—O! God, that eye, though dim,
Seem'd with its deadly glare as fix'd on him.
How sunk his shuddering sense, how changed his hue,
When poor Olola in that corpse he knew!
Lautaro, rushing from the rocks, advanced;
His keen eye, like a startled eagle's, glanced:
'Tis she!—he knew her by a mark impress'd
From earliest infancy beneath her breast.
"O, my poor sister! when all hopes were past
Of meeting, do we meet—thus meet—at last?"
Then full on Zarinel, as one amazed,
With rising wrath and stern suspicion gazed;
(For Zarinel still knelt upon the sand,
And to his forehead press'd the dead maid's hand.)
"Speak! whence art thou?"
Pale Zarinel, his head
Upraising, answered,
"Peace is with the dead!
Him dost thou seek who injured thine and thee?
Here—strike the fell assassin—I am he!"
"Die!" he exclaim'd, and with convulsive start
Instant had plunged the dagger in his heart,
When the meek father, with his holy book,
And placid aspect, met his frenzied look,—
He trembled—struck his brow—and, turning round,
Flung the uplifted dagger to the ground.
Then murmur'd—"Father, Heaven has heard thy prayer—
"But O! the sister of my soul—lies there!
The Christian's God has triumph'd! Father, heap
Some earth upon her bones, whilst I go weep!"
Anselmo with calm brow approach'd the place,
And hasten'd with his staff his faltering pace:
"Ho! child of guilt and wretchedness," he cried,
"Speak!"—"Holy father," the sad youth replied,
"God bade the seas th' accusing victim roll
Dead at my feet, to teach my shuddering soul
Its guilt: O! father, holy father, pray
That Heaven may take the deep dire curse away.'
"O! yet," Anselmo cried, "live and repent,
For not in vain was this dread warning sent—
The deep reproaches of thy soul I spare,
Go! seek Heaven's peace by penitence and prayer."
The youth arose, yet trembling from the shock,
And sever'd from the dead maid's hair a lock—
This to his heart with trembling hand he press'd,
And dried the salt sea moisture on his breast.
They laid her limbs within the sea-beat grave,
And pray'd, "Her soul, O! blessed Mary, save!"

Canto VII.

ARGUMENT.

Midnight—Valdivia's tent—Missionary—March to the valley Arauco—First sight of assembled Indians.

The watchman on the tower his bugle blew,
And swelling to the morn the streamers flew,—
The rampart guns a dread alarum gave,
Smoke roll'd, and thunder echoed o'er the wave;
When, starting from his couch, Valdivia cried,
"What tidings?" "Of the tribes!" a scout replied
"E'en now, prepared thy bulwarks to assail,
Their gathering numbers darken all the vale!"
Valdivia call'd to the attendant youth,
"Philip," he cried, "belike thy words have truth;
The formidable host, by holy James,
Might well appal our priests and city dames
"Dost thou not fear?——Nay—dost thou no reply?
Now by the rood, and all the saints on high,
I hold it sin—that thou shouldst lift thy hand
Against thy brothers in thy native land!
But, as thou saidst, those mighty enemies
Me and my feeble legions would despise,
Yes, by our holy lady, thou shalt ride,
Spectator of their prowess, by my side!
Come life, come death, our battle shall display
Its ensigns to the earliest beam of day!
With louder summons ring the rampart bell,
And haste the shriving father from his cell—
A soldier's heart rejoices in alarms:
And let the trump at midnight sound to arms!"
And now, obedient to the chief's commands,
The gray-hair'd priest before the soldier stands:

"Father," Valdivia cried, "fierce are our foes,—
The last event of war God only knows;—
Let mass be sung.—Father, this very night
I would attend the high and holy rite.
Yet deem not that I doubt of victory,
Or place defeat or death before mine eye,—
It blenches not! But, whatsoe'er befall,
Good father! I would part in peace with all.
So tell Lautaro—his ingenuous mind
Perhaps may grieve, if late I seem'd unkind:—
Hear my heart speak—though far from virtue's way
Ambition's lure hath led my steps astray,
No wanton exercise of barbarous power
Harrows my shrinking conscience at this hour.
"If hasty passions oft my spirit fire,
They flash a moment, and the next expire;
Lautaro knows it.—There is somewhat more—
I would not, here—here, on this distant shore
(Should they, the Indian multitudes, prevail,
And this good sword and these firm sinews fail)
Amid my deadly enemies be found,
Unhostled,* unabsolved, upon the ground,
A dying man,—thy look, thy reverend age,
Might save my poor remains from barbarous rage;
And thou mayst pay the last sad obsequies,
O'er the heap'd earth where a brave soldier lies:—
So God be with thee!"——
By the torches' light,
The slow procession moves: the solemn rite
Is chanted: through the aisles and arches dim,
At intervals, is heard th' imploring hymn.
Now all is still, that only you might hear—
(The tall and slender tapers burning clear,
Whose light Anselmo's pallid brow illumes
Now glances on the mailed soldier's plumes)—
Hear, sounding far, only the iron tread,
That echoed through the cloisters of the dead.
Dark clouds are wandering o'er the heaven's wide way;
Now from the camp, at times, a horse's neigh
Breaks on the ear; and on the rampart height†
The sentinel proclaims the middle watch of night.
By the dim taper's solitary ray,
Tired, in his tent, the sovereign soldier lay.
Meantime, as shadowy dreams arise, he roams
'Mid bright pavilions and imperial domes,
Where terraces, and battlements, and towers,
Glisten in air o'er rich romantic bowers.
Sudden the visionary pomp is past,—
The vacant court sounds to the moaning blast,—
A dismal vault appears,—where, with swoln eyes,
As starting from their orbs, a dead man lies:
It is Almagro's corpse!‡—roll on, ye drums,
Lo! where the great, the proud Pizarro, comes!
Her gold, her richest gems, let fortune strew
Before the mighty conqueror of Peru!

Ah! turn and see—a dagger in his hand
With scowling brow—see the assassin stand!
Pizarro falls!*—he welters in his gore!
Lord of the western world, art thou no more?
Valdivia, hark!—it was another groan!
Another shadow comes!—it is thy own!
Ah, bind not thus his arms!—give, give him breath.
Wipe from his bleeding brow those damps of death.
Valdivia, starting, woke:—he is alone:
The taper in his tent yet dimly shone:
"Lautaro, haste!" he cried; "Lautaro, save
Thy dying master!—Ah! is this the brave,
The haughty victor?—Hush, the dream is past!
The early trumpets ring the second blast!
Arm, arm!—E'en now, th' impatient charger neighs!
Again, from tent to tent, the trumpet brays!"
By torch-light, then, Valdivia gave command,
"Haste, let Del Oro take a chosen band,
With watchful caution, on his fleetest steed,
A troop observant on the heights to lead!"
Now beautiful, beneath the heaven's gray arch,
Appear'd the main battalion's moving march;
The banner of the cross was borne before,
And next, with aspect sad, and tresses hoar,
The holy man went thoughtfully, and prest
A crucifix, in silence, to his breast.
Valdivia, all in plated steel array'd,
Upon whose crest the morn's effulgence play'd,
Majestic rein'd his steed, and seem'd alone,
Worthy the southern world's imperial throne.
His features through the barred casque that glow,
His pole-axe, pendent from the saddle bow;
His steely armour, and the glitter bright
Of his drawn sabre, in the orient light,
Speak him not, now, for knightly tournament
Array'd, but on emprise of prowess bent,
And deeds of deadly strife: in blooming pride,
Th' attendant youth rode, pensive, by his side.
Their pennon'd lances, waving in the wind,
Two hundred clanking horsemen tramp'd behind,
In iron harness clad—the bugles blew,
And high in air the sanguine ensigns flew.
The arbalasters next, with cross-bows slung,
March'd, whilst the plumed Moors their cymbals swung.
Auxiliar Indians here, a various train,
With spears and bows, darken'd the distant plain.
Drums roll'd, and fifes re-echoed shrill and clear,
At intervals, as near and yet more near,
While flags and intermingled halberts shine,
The long battalion drew its passing line.
Last roll'd the heavy guns, a sable tier,
By Indians drawn, with match-men in the rear
And many a straggling mule and sumpter train
Closed the embattled order on the plain,
Till naught beneath the azure sky appears
But the projecting points of scarce-discover'd spears
Slow up the hill, with floating vapours hoar,
Or by the blue lake's long retiring shore,
Now seen distinct, through the disparting haze,
The glittering file its banner'd length displays;
Now winding from the woods, again appears
The moving line of matchlocks and of spears,

* Shakspeare.

† It may be necessary to say here, that whenever the Spaniards founded a city, after the immediate walls of defence, their first object was to build a church, and to have, with as much pomp as possible, the ecclesiastical services performed. Hence the cathedrals founded by them, in America, were of transcendent beauty and magnificence

‡ Almagro, who first penetrated into Chili, was afterwards strangled.

* Pizarro was assassinated.

Part seen, part lost: the long illustrious march
Circling the swamp, now draws its various arch;
And seems, as on it moves, meandering slow,
A radiant segment of a living bow.
Five days the Spaniards, trooping in array,
O'er plains, and headlands, held their eastern way.
On the sixth early dawn, with shuddering awe,
And horror, in the last defile they saw,
Ten pendent heads, from which the gore still run,
All gash'd and grim, and blackening in the sun:
These were the gallant troop that pass'd before,
The Indians' vast encampment to explore,—
Led by Del Oro, now with many a wound
Pierced, and a headless trunk upon the ground.
The horses startled, as they tramp'd in blood;
The troops a moment half-recoiling stood.
But boots not now to pause, or to retire;
Valdivia's eye flash'd with indignant fire:
"Onward! brave comrades, to the pass!" he cried—
"Onward!" th' impatient cuirassiers replied.
And now, up to the hill's ascending crest,
With animated look and beating breast,
He urged his steed—when, wide beneath his eye,
He saw, in long expanse, Arauco's valley lie.
Far as the labouring sight could stretch its glance,
One undulating mass of club and lance,—
One animated surface seem'd to fill
The many stirring scene, from hill to hill:
To the deep mass he pointed with his sword,
"Banner, advance!" Give out "Castile!" the word.
Instant the files advance—the trumpets bray,
And now the host, in terrible array,
Ranged on the heights that overlook the plain,
Has halted:—
But the task were long and vain
To say what nations, from the seas that roar
Round Patagonia's melancholy shore;
From forests, brown with everlasting shades;
From rocks of sunshine, white with prone cascades;
From snowy summits where the llama roams,
Oft bending o'er the cataract as it foams;
From streams, whose bridges* tremble from the steep;
From lakes, in summer's sweetest light asleep;
Indians, of sullen brow and giant limb,
With clubs terrific, and with aspects grim,
Flock'd fearless.—
When they saw the Spanish line
Arranged, and front to front, descending shine,
Burst—instant burst, the universal cry—
(Ten thousand spears uplifted to the sky)—
"Tyrants, we come to conquer or to die!"
Grim Mariantu led the Indian force
A-left; and, rushing to the foremost horse,
Hurl'd with unerring aim th' involving thong,—
Then fearless sprung amidst the mailed throng.
Valdivia saw the horse, entangled, reel,
And shouting, as he rode, "Castile! Castile!"
Led on the charge:—like a descending flood,
It swept, till every spur was black with blood.
His force a-right, where Elicura led,
A thousand spears went hissing overhead,
And feather'd arrows, of each varying hue,
In glancing arch, beneath the sunbeams flew.

Dire was the strife, when ardent Teucapel
Advancing, in the front of carnage, fell.
At once, Ongolmo, Elicura, rush'd,
And swaying their huge clubs together, crush'd
Horseman and horse; then bathed their hands in gore,
And limb from limb the panting carcass tore
Caupolican, where the main battle bleeds,
Hosts, and succeeding hosts, undaunted leads,
Till, torn and shatter'd by the ceaseless fire,
Thousands, with gnashing teeth, and clenched spears, expire.
Pierced by a hundred wounds, Ongolmo lies,
And grasps his club terrific as he dies.
With breathless expectation, on the height,
Lautaro watch'd the long and dubious fight:
Pale and resign'd the meek man stood, and press'd
More close the holy image to his breast.
Now nearer to the fight Lautaro drew,
When on the ground a warrior met his view,
Upon whose features memory seem'd to trace
A faint resemblance of his father's face;
O'er him a horseman, with collected might,
Raised his uplifted sword, in act to smite,
When the youth springing on, without a word,
Snatch'd from a soldier's wearied grasp the sword,
And smote the horseman through the crest: a yell
Of triumph burst, as to the ground he fell.
Lautaro shouted, "On! brave brothers, on!
Scatter them, like the snow!—the day is won!
Lo, I! Lautaro,—Attacapac's son!"
The Indians turn: again the battle bleeds—
Cleft are the helms, and crush'd the struggling steeds.
The bugle sounds, and faint with toil and heat,
Some straggling horsemen to the hills retreat.
"Stand, brave companions!" bold Valdivia cried,
And shook his sword, in recent carnage died.
"O! droop not—droop not yet—all is not o'er—
Brave, faithful friends, one glorious sally more!—
Where is Lautaro? leaps his willing sword
Now to avenge his long-indulgent lord?"
He waited not for answer, but again
Spurr'd to the centre of the horrid plain,
Clubs, arrows, spears, the spot of death enclose,
And fainter now the Spanish shouts arose.
'Mid ghastly heaps of many a bleeding corpse,
Lies the caparison'd and dying horse.
While still the rushing multitudes assail,
Vain is the fiery tube, the twisted mail!
The Spanish horsemen faint: long yells resound
As the dragg'd ensign trails the gory ground.
"Shout, for the chief is seized!"—a thousand cries
Burst forth—"Valdivia! for the sacrifice!"
And lo, in silent dignity resign'd,
The meek Anselmo, led in bonds, behind!
His hand upon his breast, young Zarinel
Amidst a group of mangled Indians fell:
The spear, that to his heart a passage found,
Left poor Olola's hair within the wound.
Now all is hush'd—save where, at times, alone
Deep midnight listens to a distant moan,
Save where the condors clamour, overhead,
And strike with sounding beaks the helmets of the dead.

* Rude hanging bridges, constructed by the natives.

Canto VIII.

ARGUMENT.

Indian festival for victory—Old warrior brought in wounded—Recognises his long-lost son, and dies—Discovery—Conclusion with the old warrior's funeral, and prophetic oration by the Missionary.

The morn returns, and reddening seems to shed
One ray of glory on the patriot dead!
Round the dark stone, the victor chiefs behold!
Still on their locks the gouts of gore hang cold!
There stands the brave Caupolican, the pride
Of Chili, young Lautaro by his side!
Near the grim circle, pendent from the wood,
Twelve hundred Spanish heads are dropping blood.
Shrill sound the pipes of death: in festive dance,
The Indian maids with myrtle boughs advance;
The tinkling sea-shells on their ankles ring,
As, hailing thus the victor youth, they sing:—

SONG OF INDIAN MAIDS.

1.

'O, shout for Lautaro, the young and the brave!
The arm of whose strength was uplifted to save,
When the steeds of the strangers came rushing amain,
And the ghosts of our fathers look'd down on the slain!

2.

"'Twas eve, and the noise of the battle was o'er,
Five thousand brave warriors were cold in their gore:
When in front, young Lautaro invincible stood,
And the horses and iron men roll'd in their blood!

3.

"As the snows of the mountain are swept by the blast,
The earthquake of death o'er the white men has pass'd;
Shout, Chili, in triumph! the battle is won,
And we dance round the heads that are black in the sun!"

Lautaro, as if wrapt in thought profound,
Oft turn'd an anxious look inquiring round.
'He is not here!—Say, does my father live?"
Ere eager voices could an answer give,
With faltering footsteps and declining head,
And slowly by an aged Indian led,
Wounded and weak the mountain chief appears:
"Live, live!" Lautaro cried, with bursting tears,
And fell upon his neck, and kissing press'd,
With folding arms, his gray hairs to his breast.
"O, live! I am thy son—thy long-lost child!"
The warrior raised his look, and faintly smiled—
"Chili, my country, is avenged!" he cried:
"My son!"—then sunk upon a shield—and died
Lautaro knelt beside him, as he bow'd,
And kiss'd his bleeding breast, and wept aloud.
The sounds of sadness through the circle ran,
When thus, with lifted axe, Caupolican,—
"What, for our fathers, brothers, children, slain,
Canst thou repay, ruthless, inhuman Spain?—
Here, on the scene with recent slaughter red,
To soothe the spirits of the brave who bled,
Raise we, to-day, the war-feast of the dead.
Bring forth the chief in bonds!—Fathers, to-day,
Devote we to our gods the noblest prey."
Lautaro turn'd his eyes, and, gazing round,
Beheld Valdivia, and Anselmo, bound!
One stood in arms, as with a stern despair,
His helmet cleft in twain, his temples bare,—
Where streaks of blood, that dropt upon his mail,
Served but to show his face more deadly pale:
His eyebrows, dark and resolute, he bent,
And stood, composed, to wait the dire event.
Still on the cross his looks Anselmo cast,
As if all thought of this vain world was pass'd,—
And in a world of light, without a shade,
E'en now his meek and guileless spirit stray'd.
Where stood the Spanish chief, a muttering sound
Rose, and each club was lifted from the ground;
When, starting from his father's corpse, his sword
Waving before his once triumphant lord,
Lautaro cried, "My breast shall meet the blow:
But save—save him, to whom my life I owe!"
Valdivia mark'd him with unmoved eye,
Then look'd upon his bonds, nor deign'd reply;
When Mariantu,—stealing with slow pace,
And lifting high his iron-jagged mace,—
Smote him to earth: a thousand voices rose,
Mingled with shouts and yells, "So fall our foes!"
Lautaro gave to tears a moment's space,
As black in death he mark'd Valdivia's face,
Then cried,—"Chiefs, friends, and thou, Caupolican,
O, spare this innocent and holy man!
He never sail'd rapacious o'er the deep,
The gold of blood-polluted hands to heap.
He never gave the armed hosts his aid—
But meekly to the Mighty Spirit pray'd,
That in all lands the sounds of wo might cease,
And brothers of the wide world dwell in peace!"
The victor youth saw generous sympathy
Already steal to every warrior's eye;
Then thus again:—"O, if this filial tear
Bear witness my own father was most dear!—
If this uplifted arm, this bleeding steel
Speak, for my country what I felt, and feel;
If, at this hour, I meet her high applause,
While my heart beats still ardent in her cause;—
Hear, and forgive these tears that grateful flow
O! hear how much to this poor man I owe.
"I was a child—when to my sire's abode,
In Chillan's vale, the armed horsemen rode:
Me, whilst my father cold and breathless lay,
Far off the crested soldiers bore away,
And for a captive sold. No friend was near,
To mark a young and orphan stranger's tear:
This humble man, with kind parental care,
Snatch'd me from slavery—saved from dark despair;
And as my years increased, protected, fed,
And breathed a father's blessings on my head.
A Spanish maid was with him: need I speak?
Behold, affection's tear still wets my cheek!
Years, as they pass'd, matured in ripening grace
Her form unfolding, and her beauteous face:

She heard my orphan tale; she loved to hear,
And sometimes for my fortunes dropp'd a tear.
"Valdivia saw me, now in blooming age,
And claim'd me from the father as his page;
The chief too cherish'd me—yea, saved my life,
When in Peru arose the civil strife.
Yet still remembering her I loved so well,
Oft I return'd to the gray father's cell:
His voice instructed me; recall'd my youth
From rude idolatry to heavenly truth:
Of this hereafter. He my darkling mind
Clear'd, and from low and sensual thoughts refined.
Then first, with feelings new impress'd, I strove
To hide the tear of tenderness and love:
Amid the fairest maidens of Peru,
My eyes, my heart, one only object knew:
I lived that object's love and faith to share;
He saw, and bless'd us with a father's prayer.
"Here, at Valdivia's last and stern command,
I came—a stranger in my native land!
Anselmo (so him call—now most in need—
And standing here in bonds, for whom I plead)
Came, by our chief so summon'd, and for aid
To the Great Spirit of the Christians pray'd:
Here as a son I loved him, but I left
A wife, a child, of my fond cares bereft,
Never to see again—for death awaits
My entrance now in Lima's jealous gates.
"Caupolican, didst thou thy father love?
Did his last dying look affection move?—
Pity this aged man; unbend thy brow:
He was my father—is my father now!"
Consenting mercy marks each warrior's mien.—
But who is this?—what pallid form is seen?
As crush'd already by the fatal blow,—
Bound, and with looks white as a wreath of snow,—
Her hands upon her breast,—scarce drawn her breath,—
A Spanish woman knelt, expecting death,
Whilst, borne by a dark warrior at her side,
An infant shrunk from the red plumes, and cried.
Lautaro started——
"Injured maid of Spain!
Me!—me!—O, take me to thine arms again!"
She heard his voice,—with rushing thoughts oppress'd,
And one faint sigh, she sunk upon his breast.
Caupolican, with warm emotion, cried,
"Live! live, Lautaro! and his beauteous bride!
Live, aged father!"—and forthwith commands
A warrior to unbind Anselmo's hands.
She raised her head: his eyes first met her view—
(As round Lautaro's neck her arms she threw)—
"Ah, no!" she feebly spoke; "it is not true!—
It is some form of the distemper'd brain!"
Then hid her face upon his breast again.
Dark flashing eyes, terrific, glared around:
Here, his brains scatter'd by the deadly wound,
The Spanish chief lay, on the gory ground.
With lowering brows, and mace yet dropping blood,
And clotted hair, there Mariantu stood.
Anselmo mournful, yet in sorrow mild,
Stood opposite:—"A blessing on your child,"
The woman said, as slow revived her waking sense,
And then, with looks aghast, "O bear us hence!"
Now all th' assembled chiefs, assenting, cried,
"Live, live! Lautaro and his beauteous bride!"
With eager arms, Lautaro snatch'd his boy,
And kiss'd him in an agony of joy;
Then to Anselmo gave, who strove to speak,
And felt the tear first burning on his cheek:
The infant held his neck with strict embrace,
And kiss'd his pale emaciated face.
From the dread scene, wet with Valdivia's gore
His wan and trembling charge Lautaro bore.
There was a bank, where crept the summer light,
A small stream whispering went in mazes bright
And stealing from the sea, the western wind
Waved the magnolias on the slope inclined:
The woodpecker, in glittering plumage green,
And echoing bill, beneath the boughs was seen;
And, arch'd with gay and pendent flowers above
The floripondio* its rich trellis wove.
Lautaro bent with looks of love and joy
O'er his yet trembling wife and beauteous boy.
"O, by what miracle, beloved! say,
Hast thou escaped the perils of the way
From Lima, where our peaceful dwelling stood,
To these terrific shores, this vale of blood?"
Waked by his voice, as from the sleep of death,
Faint she replied, with slow recovering breath,
"Who shall express, when thou, best friend! wert gone,
How sunk my heart!—deserted and alone
'Would I were with thee!' oft I sat and sigh'd
When the pale moon shone on the silent tide—
At length resolved, I sought thee o'er the seas:
The brave bark cheerly went before the breeze
That arms and soldiers to Valdivia bore,
From Lima bound to Chili's southern shore
I seized the fair occasion—ocean smiled,
As to the sire I bore his lisping child.
The storm arose: with loud and sudden shock,
The vessel sunk, disparting on a rock.
Some mariners, amidst the billows wild,
Scarce saved, in one small boat, me and my child:
What I have borne, a captive since that day—
(Forgive these tears)—I scarce have heart to say!
None pitied, save one gentle Indian maid—
A wild maid,—of her looks I was afraid;
Her long black hair upon her shoulders fell,
And in her hand she bore a wreathed shell."
Lautaro for a moment turn'd aside,
And, "O! my sister!" with faint voice he cried.
"Already free from sorrow and alarms,
I clasp'd in thought a husband in my arms,
When a dark warrior, station'd on the height,
Who held his solitary watch by night,
Before me stood, and lifting high his lance
Exclaim'd, 'No further, on thy life, advance!'
Faint, wearied, sinking to the earth with dread
Back to the dismal cave my steps he led.
Duly at eve, within the craggy cleft,
Some water, and a cake of maize, were left:
The thirteenth sun unseen went down the sky:
When morning came, they brought me forth to die
But hush'd be every sigh, each boding fear,
Since all I sought on earth, and all I love, is here!

* One of the most beautiful of the beautiful climbing plants of South America.

Her infant raised his hands, with glistening eye,
To reach a large and radiant butterfly,
That flutter'd near his face; with looks of love,
And truth and tenderness, Lautaro strove
To calm her wounded heart; the holy sire,
His eyes faint lighted with a transient fire,
Hung o'er them, and to Heaven his prayer address't,
While, with uplifted hands, he wept and blest.
An Indian came, with feathers crown'd,
And knelt before Lautaro on the ground.
"What tidings, Indian?"

INDIAN.

"When I led thy sire,
Whom late thou saw'st upon his shield expire,
Son of our ulmen, didst thou mark no trace,
In these sad looks, of a remember'd face?
Dost thou remember Izdabel? Look, here!
It is thy father's hatchet and his spear."
"Friend of my infant days, how I rejoice,"
Lautaro cried, "once more to hear that voice!
Life like a dream, since last we met, has fled—
O! my beloved sister, thou art dead!"

INDIAN.

"I come to guide thee, through untrodden ways,
To the lone valley, where thy father's days
Were pass'd; where every cave, and every tree,
From morn to morn, remember'd him of thee!"
Lautaro cried, "Here, faithful Indian, stay;
I have a last sad duty yet to pay,
A little while we part:—Thou here remain:"
He spake, and pass'd like lightning o'er the plain.
"Ah, cease, Castilian maid! thy vain alarms!
See where he comes—his father in his arms!"
"Now lead," he cried.—The Indian, sad and still,
Paced on from wood to vale, from vale to hill;
Her infant tired, and hush'd a while to rest,
Smiled, in a dream, upon its mother's breast;
The pensive mother gray Anselmo led:
Behind, Lautaro bore his father dead.
Beneath the branching palms they slept at night;
The small birds waked them ere the morning light.
Before their path, in distant view, appear'd
The mountain smoke, that its dark column rear'd
O'er Andes' summits, in the pale blue sky,
Lifting their icy pinnacles so high.
Four days they onward held their eastern way:
On the fifth rising morn before them lay
Chillan's lone glen, amid whose windings green
The warrior's loved and last abode was seen.
No smoke went up,—stillness was all around,
Save where the waters fell with soothing sound,
Save where the thenca sung so loud and clear,
And the bright humming-bird was spinning near.
Yet here all human tumults seem'd to cease,
And sunshine rested on the spot of peace;
The myrtles bloom'd as fragrant and as green
As if Lautaro scarce had left the scene,
And in his ear the falling water's spray
Seem'd swelling with the sounds of yesterday.
"Where yonder rock the aged cedars shade,
There shall my father's bones in peace be laid."
Beneath the cedar's shade they dug the ground;
The small and sad communion gather'd round.
Beside the grave stood aged Izdabel,
And broke the spear, and cried, "Farewell!—farewell!—"
Lautaro hid his face, and sigh'd "Adieu!"
As the stone hatchet in the grave he threw.
The little child, that to its mother clung,
With sidelong looks, that on her garment hung,
Listen'd, half-shrinking, as with awe profound,
And dropt its flowers, unconscious, on the ground.
The alpaca, now grown old, and almost wild,
Which poor Olola cherish'd, when a child,
Came from the mountains, and with earnest gaze,
Seem'd as remembering those departed days,
When his tall neck he bent, with aspect bland,
And lick'd, in silence, the caressing hand!
And now Anselmo, his pale brow inclined,
The warrior's relics, dust to dust, consign'd
With Christian rites, and sung, on bending knee,
"Eternam pacem dona, Domine."
Then rising up, he closed the holy book;
And lifting in the beam his lighted look,
(The cross, with meekness, folded on his breast,)
"Here, too," he cried, "my bones in peace shall rest!
Few years remain to me, and never more
Shall I behold, O Spain! thy distant shore!
Here lay my bones, that the same tree may wave
O'er the poor Christian's and the Indian's grave.
Then may it—(when the sons of future days
Shall hear our tale, and on the hillock gaze,)
Then may it teach, that charity should bind,
Where'er they roam, the brothers of mankind!
The time shall come, when wildest tribes shall hear
Thy voice, O Christ! and drop the slaughtering spear.
"Yet, we condemn not him who bravely stood,
To seal his country's freedom with his blood;
And if, in after-times, a ruthless band
Of fell invaders sweep my native land,
May she, by Chili's stern example led,
Hurl back his thunder on th' assailant's head;
Sustain'd by freedom, strike th' avenging blow,
And learn one virtue from her ancient foe!"

EPILOGUE.

These notes I sung when strove indignant Spain
To rend th' abhorr'd invader's iron chain!
With beating heart, we listen'd from afar
To each faint rumour of the various war;
Now trembled, lest her fainting sons should yield;
Now follow'd thee to the ensanguined field;
Thee, most heroic Wellington, and cried,
When Salamanca's plain in shouts replied,
"All is not lost! The scatter'd eagles fly—
All is not lost! England and victory!"
Hark! the noise hurtles in the frozen north!
France pours again her banner'd legions forth,
With trump, and plumed horsemen! Whence that cry?
Lo! ancient Moscow flaming to the sky!
Imperial fugitive! back to the gates
Of Paris! while despair the tale relates,
Of dire discomfiture, and shame, and flight,
And the dead, bleaching on the snows of night.
Shout! for the heart ennobling transport fills!
Conquest's red banner floats along the hills

That gird the guilty city! Shout amain,
For Europe,—England,—for deliver'd Spain!
Shout, for a world avenged!
The toil is o'er,—
Enough wide earth hath reek'd with human gore—
At Waterloo, amidst the countless dead,
The war-fiend gave his last loud shriek, and fled.
Thou stood'st in front, my country! on that day
Of horrors; thou more awful didst display
Thy long-tried valour, when from rank to rank
Death hurrying strode, and that vast army shrank
Soldiers of England, the dread day is won!
Soldiers of England, on, brave comrades, on!
Pursue them! Yes, ye did pursue, till night
Hid the foul rout of their disastrous flight.

Halt on this hill—your wasted strength repair,
And close your labours, to the well known air,
Which e'en your children sing, "O Lord, arise!"
Peals the long line, "Scatter his enemies!"
Back to the scenes of home, the evening fire,
Or May-day sunshine on the village spire,
The blissful thought by that loved air is led,
Here heard amidst the dying and the dead.*

'Twas when affliction with cold shadow hung
On half the wasted world, these notes I sung.
Thus pass'd the storm, and o'er a night of woes
More beautiful the morn of freedom rose.
Now with a sigh, I close, alas! the strain,
And mourn thy fate, abused, insulted Spain!
When, for stern Valour, baring his bold breast,
I see wan Bigotry, in monkish vest,†
Point, scowling, to the dungeon's gloom, and wave
The sword insulting o'er the fallen brave,
(The sword of him who foreign hate withstood,
Whose point yet drops with the invader's blood,)
Then, where yon dark‡ tribunal shames the day,
Hurl it with curses and with scorn away!

Turn from the thought: and if one generous heart
In these fictitious scenes has borne a part,
For the poor Indian in remotest lands,
The sable slave, that lifts his bleeding hands,
For wretchedness, and ignorance, and need,
O! let the aged missionary plead!

The tale is told—a tale of days of yore,
The soldier—the gray father—are no more;
And the brief shades, that pleased a while the eye
Are faded, like the landscapes of the sky.

Yet may the moral still remain impress'd
To warm the patriot, or the pious breast.
Where'er aggression marches, may the brave
Rush unappall'd their father's land to save!
Where sounds of glad salvation are gone out
Unto all lands, as with an angel's shout,
May holy zeal its energies employ!
Rocks of Saldanna, break forth into joy!
Isles, o'er the waste of desert ocean strown,
Rivers, that sweep through shades and sands unknown,
Mountains of inmost Afric, where no ray
Hath ever pierced, from Beth'lem's star of day,
Savages, fierce with clubs, and shaggy hair,
Who woods and thickets with the lion share,
Hark! the glad echoes of the cliffs repeat,
"How beauteous, in the desert, are the feet
Of them, who bear, o'er wastes and trackless sands
Tidings of mercy to remotest lands!"

Patiently plodding, the Moravian mild
Sees stealing culture creep along the wild,
And twice ten thousand leagues o'er ocean's roar,
And far from friends whom he may see no more,
Constructs the warmer hut, or delves the sod;
Cheerful, as still beneath the eye of God.
Where, muttering spoil, or death, the Caffre prowl'd,
Or moonlight wolves, a gaunt assembly, howl'd,
No sounds are heard along the champaign wide,
But one small chapel bell, at eventide,
Whilst notes unwonted linger in the air,
The songs of Sion, or the voice of prayer!

And thou, the light of God's eternal word,
Record, and Spirit of the living Lord,
Hid and unknown from half the world,—at length,
Rise like the sun, and go forth in thy strength!
Already towering o'er old Ganges stream,
The dark pagoda brightens in thy beam:
And the dim eagles, on the topmost height
Of Jaggernaut, shine as in morning light!
Beyond the snows of savage Labrador
The ray pervades pale Greenland's wintry shore—
The demon spell, that bound the slumbering sense
Dissolves before its holy influence,
As the gray rock of ice, a shapeless heap,
Thaws in the sunshine of the summer deep.
Proceed, auspicious and eventful day!
Banner of Christ, thy ampler folds display!
Let Atlas shout with Andes, and proclaim
To earth, and sea, and skies, a Saviour's name,
Till angel voices in the sound shall blend,
And one hosanna from all worlds ascend!

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* Alluding to a most interesting fact in the history of that eventful struggle, closed by the national air of God save the King.

† Alluding to the unjust treatment of those brave men who saved the life and the throne of a bigoted and ungrateful prince.

‡ The Inquisition.

SONG* OF THE CID.†

The Cid is sitting, in martial state,
Within Valentia's wall;
And chiefs of high renown attend
The knightly festival.

Brave Alvar Fanez, and a troop
Of gallant men, were there;
And there came Donna Ximena,
His wife and daughters fair.

When the foot-page bent on his knee,
What tidings brought he then?
"Morocco's king is on the seas,
With fifty thousand men."

"Now God be praised!" the Cid he cried,
"Let every hold be stored:
Let fly the holy gonfalon,‡
And give 'St. James,' the word."

* Referred to in p. 505.

† Compare with Southey's admirable translation of the Cid.

‡ Banner consecrated by the pope.

And now, upon the turret high,
Was heard the signal drum;
And loud the watchman blew his trump,
And cried, "They come! they come!"

The Cid then raised his sword on high,
And by God's mother swore,
These walls, hard-gotten, he would keep,
Or bathe their base in gore.

"My wife, my daughter, what, in tears!
Nay, hang not thus your head;
For you shall see how well we fight;
How soldiers earn their bread.

"We will go out against the Moors,
And crush them in your sight;"
And all the Christians shouted loud,
"May God defend the right!"

He took his wife and daughter's hand,
So resolute was he,
And led them to the highest tower
That overlooks the sea.

They saw how vast a pagan power
Came sailing o'er the brine;
They saw, beneath the morning light,
The Moorish crescents shine.

These ladies then grew deadly pale,
As heart-struck with dismay;
And when they heard the tambours beat,
They turn'd their head away.

The thronged streamers glittering flew,
The sun was shining bright,
"Now cheer," the valiant Cid he cried;
"This is a glorious sight!"

Whilst thus, with shuddering look aghast,
These fearful ladies stood,
The Cid he raised his sword, and cried,
"All this is for your good.

"Ere fifteen days are gone and past,
If God assist the right,
Those tambours that now sound to scare,
Shall sound for your delight."

The Moors who press'd beneath the towers
Now "Allah! Allah!" sung;
Each Christian knight his broad-sword drew,
And loud the trumpets rung.

Then up, the noble Cid bespoke
"Let each brave warrior go,
And arm himself, in dusk of morn,
Ere chanticleer shall crow;

"And in the lofty minster church,
On Santiago call,—
That good Bishoppe Hieronymo,*
Shall there absolve you all.

"But let us prudent counsel take,
In this eventful hour:
For yon proud infidels, I ween,
They are a mighty power."

Then Alvar Fanez counsell'd well,
"We will deceive the foe,
And ambush with three hundred men,
Ere the first cock does crow:

"And when against the Moorish men
The Cid leads up his powers,—
We, rushing from the hollow glen,
Will fall on them with ours."

This counsel pleased the chieftain well:
He said, it should be so;
And the good bishop should sing mass,
Ere the first cock did crow.

The day is gone, the night is come;
At cock-crow all appear
In Pedro's church to shrive themselves,
And holy mass to hear:

On Santiago there they call'd,
To hear them and to save;
And that good bishop, at the mass,
Great absolution gave.

"Fear not," he cried, "when thousands bleed
When horse on man shall roll!
Whoever dies, I take his sins,
And God shall save his soul.

"A boon! a boon!" the bishop cried,
"I have sung mass to-day;
Let me be foremost in the fight,
And lead the bloody fray."

Now Alvar Fanez and his men
Had gain'd the thicket's shade;
And, with hush'd breath and anxious eye,
Had there their ambush laid.

Four thousand men, with trump, and shout,
Forth issued from the gate;
Where my brave Cid, in harness bright,
On Baviéca sate.

They pass'd the ambush on the left,
And march'd o'er dale and down,
Till soon they saw the Moorish camp
Betwixt them and the town.

My Cid then spurr'd his horse, and set
The battle in array.
The first beam on his standard shone
Which Pero bore that day

When this the Moors astonied saw,
"Allah!" began their cry:
The tambours beat, the cymbals rung,
As they would rend the sky.

"Banner, advance!" my Cid cried then,
And raised aloft his sword;
The whole host answer'd with a shout,
"St. Mary, and our Lord!"

That good Bishop, Hieronymo,
Bravely his battle bore;
And cried, as he spurr'd on his resolute steed,
"Hurrah! for the Campeador!"

The Moorish and the Christian host
Mingle their dying cries,
And many a horse along the plain
Without his rider flies.

* The common phraseology of the old metrical ballad.

Now Alvar Fanez, and his men,
Who crouch'd in thickets low,
Leap'd up, and, with the lightning glance,
Rush'd on the wavering foe.

The Moors, who saw their pennons gay
All waving in the wind,
Fled in despair, for still they fear'd
A greater host behind.

The crescent sinks!—"Pursue! pursue!
Haste—spur along the plain!
See where they fall—see where they lie,
Never to rise again."

Of fifty thousand who, at morn,
Came forth in armour bright,
Scarce fifteen thousand souls were left,
To tell the tale at night.

My Cid then wiped his bloody brow,
And thus was heard to say,
"Well, Baviéca,* hast thou sped,
My noble horse! to-day."

If thousands then escaped the sword,
Let none my Cid condemn;
For they were swept into the sea,
And the surge went over them.

There's many a maid of Tetuan
All day shall sit and weep;
But never see her lover's sail
Shine on the northern deep.

There's many a mother, with her babe,
Shall pace the sounding shore,
And think upon its father's smile,
Whom she shall see no more.

Rock, hoary ocean, mournfully,
Upon thy billowy bed;
For, dark and deep, thy surges sweep
O'er thousands of the dead.

SONNETS WRITTEN CHIEFLY DURING VARIOUS JOURNEYS.*

IN TWO PARTS.

Cantantes, licet usque, minus via lædet, eamus.
Virgil.

Still let us soothe our travel with a strain.
Warton.

PART I.

SONNET.

WRITTEN AT TYNEMOUTH, NORTHUMBERLAND, AFTER A TEMPESTUOUS VOYAGE.

As slow I climb the cliff's ascending side,
Much musing on the track of terror past,
When o'er the dark wave rode the howling blast,
Pleased I look back, and view the tranquil tide
That laves the pebbled shore: and now the beam
Of evening smiles on the gray battlement,
And yon forsaken tower* that time has rent:
The lifted oar far off with silver gleam
Is touch'd, and hush'd is all the billowy deep!
Soothed by the scene, thus on tired nature's breast
A stillness slowly steals, and kindred rest;
While sea-sounds lull her, as she sinks to sleep,
Like melodies which mourn upon the lyre,
Waked by the breeze, and, as they mourn, expire

SONNET.

AT BAMBOROUGH CASTLE.†

Ye holy towers that shade the wave-worn steep,
Long may ye rear your aged brows sublime,
Though hurrying silent by, relentless time
Assail you, and the winter whirlwind's sweep!
For far from blazing grandeur's crowded halls,
Here Charity hath fix'd her chosen seat,
Oft listening tearful wher the wild winds beat
With hollow bodings round your ancient walls;
And Pity, at the dark and stormy hour
Of midnight, when the moon is hid on high,
Keeps her lone watch upon the topmost tower,
And turns her ear to each expiring cry;
Blest if her aid some fainting wretch might save,
And snatch him cold and speechless from the wave.

SONNET.

TO THE RIVER WENSBECK.‡

While slowly wanders thy sequester'd stream,
Wensbeck! the mossy-scatter'd rocks among,
In fancy's ear still making plaintive song
To the dark woods above, that waving seem

---

* His favourite horse.

† These sonnets were dedicated "To the Rev. Newton Ogle, D D., Dean of Winchester.—Donhead, Wilts, Nov. 1797"

* Tynemouth priory and castle, Northumberland.—The remains of this monastery are situated on a high rocky point, on the north side of the entrance into the river Tyne, about a mile and a half below North-Shields. The exalted rock on which the monastery stood rendered it visible at sea a long way off, in every direction, whence it presented itself as if exhorting the seamen in danger to make their vows, and promise masses and presents to the Virgin Mary and St. Oswin for their deliverance.

† This very ancient castle, with its extensive domains, heretofore the property of the family of Forster, whose heiress married Lord Crewe, bishop of Durham, is appropriated by the will of that pious prelate to many benevolent purposes; particularly that of ministering instant relief to such shipwrecked mariners as may happen to be cast on this dangerous coast, for whose preservation, and that of their vessels, every possible assistance is contrived, and is at all times ready. The whole estate is vested in the hands of trustees, one of whom, Dr. Sharp, archdeacon of Northumberland, with an active zeal well suited to the nature of the humane institution, makes this castle his chief residence, attending with unwearied diligence to the proper application of the charity.

‡ The Wensbeck is a romantic and sequestered river in Northumberland. On its banks is situated our Lady's Chapel. "The remains of this small chapel, or oratory, (says Grose,) stand in a shady solitude, on the north bank of the Wensbeck, about three-quarters of a mile west of Bothall, in a spot admirably calculated for meditation. It was probably built by one of the Barons Ogle." This

To bend o'er some enchanted spot; removed
From life's vain coil, I listen to the wind,
And think I hear meek sorrow's plaint, reclined
O'er the forsaken tomb of one she loved!
Fair scenes! ye lend a pleasure, long unknown,
To him who passes weary on his way—
The farewell tear, which now he turns to pay,
Shall thank you;—and whene'er of pleasures flown
His heart some long-lost image would renew,
Delightful haunts! he will remember you.

SONNET.

TO THE RIVER TWEED.

O TWEED! a stranger, that with wandering feet
O'er hill and dale has journey'd many a mile
(If so his weary thoughts he might beguile,)
Delighted turns thy beauteous scenes to greet.
The waving branches that romantic bend
O'er thy tall banks,* a soothing charm bestow;
The murmurs of thy wandering wave below
Seem to his ear the pity of a friend.
Delightful stream! though now along thy shore,
When spring returns in all her wonted pride,
The shepherd's distant pipe is heard no more,
Yet here with pensive peace could I abide,†
Far from the stormy world's tumultuous roar,
To muse upon thy banks at eventide.

SONNET.

EVENING, as slow thy placid shades descend,
Veiling with gentlest hush the landscape still,
The lonely battlement, and farthest hill
And wood, I think of those that have no friend,
Who now, perhaps, by melancholy led,
From the broad blaze of day, where pleasure flaunts,
Retiring, wander 'mid thy lonely haunts
Unseen; and watch the tints that o'er thy bed
Hang lovely, to their pensive fancy's eye
Presenting fairy vales, where the tired mind
Might rest, beyond the murmurs of mankind,
Nor hear the hourly moans of misery!
Ah! beauteous views, that hope's fair gleams the while
Should smile like you, and perish as they smile!

SONNET.

ON LEAVING A VILLAGE IN SCOTLAND.

CLYDALE, as thy romantic vales I leave,
And bid farewell to each retiring hill,
Where fond attention seems to linger still,
Tracing the broad bright landscape; much I grieve
That, mingled with the toiling crowd, no more
I may return your varied views to mark,
Of rocks amid the sunshine towering dark,
Of rivers winding wild,* and mountains hoar,
Or castle gleaming on the distant steep:—
For this a look back on thy hills I cast,
And many a soften'd image of the past
Pleased I combine, and bid remembrance keep,
To soothe me with fair views and fancies rude,
When I pursue my path in solitude.

SONNET.

TO THE RIVER ITCHIN, NEAR WINTON.

ITCHIN,† when I behold thy banks again,
Thy crumbling margin, and thy silver breast,
On which the selfsame tints still seem'd to rest,
Why feels my heart the shivering sense of pain?
Is it—that many a summer's day has past
Since, in life's morn, I caroll'd on thy side?
Is it—that oft, since then, my heart has sigh'd
As youth, and hope's delusive gleams, flew fast?
Is it—that those, who circled on thy shore,
Companions of my youth, now meet no more?
Whate'er the cause, upon thy banks I bend,
Sorrowing, yet feel such solace at my heart,
As at the meeting of some long-lost friend,
From whom, in happier hours, we wept to part.‡

SONNET.

O POVERTY! though from thy haggard eye,
Thy cheerless mien, of every charm bereft,
Thy brow that hope's last traces long have left,
Vain fortune's feeble sons with terror fly;
I love thy solitary haunts to seek:—
For pity, reckless of her own distress;
And patience, in the pall of wretchedness,
That turns to the bleak storm her faded cheek;
And piety, that never told her wrong;
And meek content, whose griefs no more rebel;
And genius, warbling sweet her saddest song;
And sorrow, listening to a lost friend's knell,
Long banish'd from the world's insulting throng;
With thee, and thy unfriended offspring, dwell.

---

river is thus beautifully characterized by Akenside, who was born near it:

"O ye Northumbrian shades, which overlook
The rocky pavement, and the mossy falls
Of solitary Wensbeck's limpid stream!
How gladly I recall your well known seats
Beloved of old, and that delightful time
When all alone, for many a summer's day,
I wander'd through your calm recesses, led
In silence by some powerful hand unseen."

Written on passing the Tweed at Kelso, where the scenery is much more picturesque than it is near Berwick, the more general route of travellers into Scotland. It was a beautiful and still autumnal eve when we passed.

† Alluding to the simple and affecting pastoral strains for which Scotland has been so long celebrated. I need not mention Lochaber, the braes of Ballendine, Tweedside etc.

* There is a wildness almost fantastic in the view of the river from Stirling Castle, the course of which is seen for many miles, making a thousand turnings.

† The Itchin is a river running from Winchester to Southampton, the banks of which have been the scene of many *a holiday sport*. The lines were composed on an evening in a journey from Oxford to Southampton, the first time I had seen the Itchin since I left school.

‡ We remember them as friends from whom we were sorry ever to have parted.—*Smith's Theory.*

SONNET.

AT DOVER CLIFFS, JULY 20, 1787.

On these white cliffs, that, calm above the flood,
Uplift their shadowing heads, and, at their feet,
Scarce hear the surge that has for ages beat,
Sure many a lonely wanderer has stood;
And, whilst the lifted murmur met his ear,
And o'er the distant billows the still eve
Sail'd slow, has thought of all his heart must leave
To-morrow; of the friends he loved most dear;
Of social scenes, from which he wept to part:
But if, like me, he knew how fruitless all
The thoughts that would full fain the past recall,
Soon would he quell the risings of his heart,
And brave the wild winds and unhearing tide—
The world his country, and his God his guide.

SONNET.

AT OSTEND, LANDING, JULY 21, 1787.

The orient beam illumes the parting oar—
From yonder azure track, emerging white,
The earliest sail slow gains upon the sight,
And the blue wave comes rippling to the shore—
Meantime far off the rear of darkness flies:
Yet 'mid the beauties of the morn, unmoved,
Like one for ever torn from all he loved,
Towards Albion's heights I turn my longing eyes,
Where every pleasure seem'd erewhile to dwell:
Yet boots it not to think, or to complain,
Musing sad ditties to the reckless main:
To dreams like these, adieu! the pealing bell
Speaks of the hour that stays not—and the day
To life's sad turmoil calls my heart away.

SONNET.

AT OSTEND, JULY 22, 1787.

How sweet the tuneful bells' responsive peal!*
As when, at opening morn, the fragrant breeze
Breathes on the trembling sense of wan disease,
So piercing to my heart their force I feel!
And hark! with lessening cadence now they fall,
And now, along the white and level tide,
They fling their melancholy music wide;
Bidding me many a tender thought recall
Of summer days, and those delightful years
When by my native streams, in life's fair prime
The mournful magic of their mingling chime
First waked my wondering childhood into tears!
But seeming now, when all these days are o'er,
The sounds of joy once heard, and heard no more.

* Written on landing at Ostend, and hearing, very early in the morning, the carillons.

The effect of bells has been often described, but by none more beautifully than Cowper:—

> How soft the music of those village bells,
> Falling at intervals upon the ear
> In cadence sweet, now dying all away,
> Now pealing loud again, and louder still,
> Clear and sonorous, as the gale comes on!
> With easy force it opens all the cells
> Where memory slept. Wherever I have heard
> A kindred melody, the scene recurs,
> And with it all its pleasures and its pains.
> Such comprehensive views the spirit takes,
> That in a few short moments I retrace
> (As in a map the voyager his course)
> The windings of my way through many years.
>
> *Cowper's Task*, book vi.

SONNET.

ON THE RIVER RHINE.

'Twas morn, and beauteous on the mountain's brow
(Hung with the beamy clusters of the vine)
Stream'd the blue light, when on the sparkling Rhine
We bounded, and the white waves round the prow
In murmurs parted;—varying as we go,
Lo! the woods open, and the rocks retire,
Some convent's ancient walls or glistening spire
'Mid the bright landscape's track unfolding slow.
Here dark, with furrow'd aspect, like despair,
Frowns the bleak cliff—there on the woodland's side
The shadowy sunshine pours its streaming tide;
Whilst hope, enchanted with the scene so fair,
Would wish to linger many a summer's day,
Nor heeds how fast the prospect winds away.

SONNET.

AT A CONVENT.

If chance some pensive stranger, hither led,
(His bosom glowing from majestic views,
The gorgeous dome, or the proud landscape's hues,)
Should ask who sleeps beneath this lowly bed—
'Tis poor Matilda!—To the cloister'd scene,
A mourner, beauteous and unknown, she came,
To shed her tears unmark'd, and quench the flame
Of fruitless love: yet was her look serene
As the pale moonlight in the midnight aisle;
Her voice was soft, which yet a charm could lend,
Like that which spoke of a departed friend
And a meek sadness sat upon her smile!
Now, far removed from every earthly ill,
Her woes are buried, and her heart is still.

SONNET.

O TIME! who know'st a lenient hand to lay
Softest on sorrow's wound, and slowly thence
(Lulling to sad repose the weary sense)
The faint pang stealest unperceived away;

On thee I rest my only hope at last,
And think, when thou hast dried the bitter tear
That flows in vain o'er all my soul held dear,
I may look back on every sorrow past,
And meet life's peaceful evening with a smile—
As some lone bird, at day's departing hour,
Sings in the sunbeam, of the transient shower
Forgetful, though its wings are wet the while:—
Yet ah! how much must that poor heart endure,
Which hopes from thee, and thee alone, a cure!

SONNET.

LANGUID, and sad, and slow, from day to day
I journey on, yet pensive turn to view
(Where the rich landscape gleams with softer hue)
The streams, and vales, and hills, that steal away.
So fares it with the children of the earth:
For when life's goodly prospect opens round,
Their spirits beat to tread that fairy ground,
Where every vale sounds to the pipe of mirth.
But them vain hope and easy youth beguiles,
And soon a longing look, like me, they cast
Back on the pleasing prospect of the past:
Yet fancy points where still far onward smiles
Some sunny spot, and her fair colouring blends,
Till cheerless on their path the night descends.

SONNET.

ON A DISTANT VIEW OF ENGLAND.

AH! from mine eyes the tears unbidden start,
As thee, my country, and the long-lost sight
Of thy own cliffs, that lift their summits white
Above the wave, once more my beating heart
With eager hope and filial transport hails!
Scenes of my youth, reviving gales ye bring,
As when erewhile the tuneful morn of spring
Joyous awoke amidst your blooming vales,
And fill'd with fragrance every painted plain:
Fled are those hours, and all the joys they gave!
Yet still I gaze, and count each rising wave
That bears me nearer to your haunts again;
If haply, 'mid those woods and vales so fair,
Stranger to peace, I yet may meet her there.

SONNET.

TO THE RIVER CHERWELL, OXFORD.

CHERWELL! how pleased along thy willow'd hedge
Erewhile I stray'd, or when the morn began
To tinge the distant turret's gleamy fan,
Or evening glimmer'd o'er the sighing sedge!
And now reposing on thy banks once more,
I bid the pipe farewell, and that sad lay
Whose music on my melancholy way
I woo'd: amid thy waving willows hoar
Seeking a while to rest—till the bright sun
Of joy return, as when heaven's beauteous bow
Beams on the night-storm's passing wings below:
Whate'er betide, yet something have I won
Of solace, that may bear me on serene,
Till eve's last hush shall close the silent scene.

PART II.

SONNET.

As one who, long by wasting sickness worn,
Weary has watch'd the lingering night, and heard
Heartless the carol of the matin bird
Salute his lonely porch, now first at morn
Goes forth, leaving his melancholy bed;
He the green slope and level meadow views,
Delightful bathed with slow-ascending dews;
Or marks the clouds, that o'er the mountain's head
In varying forms fantastic wander white;
Or turns his ear to every random song,
Heard the green river's winding marge along,
The whilst each sense is steep'd in still delight.
With such delight, o'er all my heart I feel,
Sweet hope! thy fragrance pure and healing incense steal!

SONNET.

OCTOBER, 1792.

Go then, and join the roaring city's throng!
Me thou dost leave to solitude and tears,
To busy fantasies, and boding fears,
Lest ill betide thee: but 'twill not be long,
And the hard season shall be past: till then
Live happy; sometimes the forsaken shade
Remembering, and these trees now left to fade
Nor 'mid the busy scenes and "hum of men,"
Wilt thou my cares forget: in heaviness
To me the hours shall roll, weary and slow,
Till, mournful autumn past, and all the snow
Of winter pale! the glad hour I shall bless,
That shall restore thee from the crowd again,
To the green hamlet in the peaceful plain.

SONNET.

NOVEMBER, 179[illegible].

THERE is strange music in the stirring wind,
When lowers the autumnal eve, and all alone
To the dark wood's cold covert thou art gone,
Whose ancient trees on the rough slope reclined
Rock, and at times scatter their tresses sear.
If in such shades, beneath their murmuring,
Thou late hast pass'd the happier hours of spring,
With sadness thou wilt mark the fading year;
Chiefly if one, with whom such sweets at morn
Or eve thou'st shared, to distant scenes shall stray.
O, spring, return! return, auspicious May!
But sad will be thy coming, and forlorn,
If she return not with thy cheering ray,
Who from these shades is gone, gone far away.

SONNET.

APRIL, 1793.

Whose was that gentle voice, that whispering sweet,
Promised methought long days of bliss sincere?
Soothing it stole on my deluded ear,
Most like soft music, that might sometimes cheat
Thoughts dark and drooping! 'Twas the voice of hope.
Of love, and social scenes, it seem'd to speak,
Of truth, of friendship, of affection meek;
That, O! poor friend, might to life's downward slope
Lead us in peace, and bless our latest hours.
Ah me! the prospect sadden'd as she sung;
Loud on my startled ear the death-bell rung;
Chill darkness wrapt the pleasurable bowers,
Whilst horror, pointing to yon breathless clay,
'No peace be thine," exclaim'd; "away, away!"

SONNET.

MAY, 1793.

As o'er these hills I take my silent rounds,
Still on that vision which is flown I dwell!
On images I loved (alas, how well!)
Now past, and but remember'd like sweet sounds
Of yesterday! yet in my breast I keep
Such recollections, painful though they seem,
And hours of joy retrace, till from my dream
I wake, and find them not: then I could weep
To think that time so soon each sweet devours;
To think so soon life's first endearments fail,
And we are still misled by hope's smooth tale!
Who, like a flatterer, when the happiest hours
Are past, and most we wish her cheering lay,
Will fly as faithless and as fleet as they!

SONNET.

NETLEY ABBEY.

Fall'n pile! I ask not what has been thy fate;
But when the weak winds, wafted from the main,
Through each rent arch, like spirits that complain,
Come hollow to my ear, I meditate
On this world's passing pageant, and the lot
Of those who once full proudly in their prime
And beauteous might have stood, till bow'd by time
Or injury, their early boast forgot,
They may have fall'n like thee: Pale and forlorn,
Their brow, besprent with thin hairs, white as snow,
They lift, majestic yet; as they would scorn
This short-lived scene of vanity and wo;
Whilst on their sad looks smilingly they bear
The trace of creeping age, and the dim hue of care!

SONNET.

O harmony! thou tenderest nurse of pain,
If that thy note's sweet magic e'er can heal
Griefs which the patient spirit oft may feel,
O! let me listen to thy songs again,
Till memory her fairest tints shall bring,
Hope wake with brighter eye, and listening seem
With smiles to think on some delightful dream,
That waved o'er the charm'd sense its gladsome wing:
For when thou leadest all thy soothing strains
More smooth along, the silent passions meet
In one suspended transport, sad and sweet,
And naught but sorrow's softest touch remains,
That, when the transitory charm is o'er,
Just wakes a tear, and then is felt no more.

SONNET.

MAY, 1793.

How shall I meet thee, summer, wont to fill
My heart with gladness, when thy pleasant tide
First came, and on each coomb's romantic side
Was heard the distant cuckoo's hollow bill?
Fresh flowers shall fringe the wild brink of the stream,
As with the songs of joyance and of hope
The hedge-rows shall ring loud, and on the slope
The poplars sparkle in the transient beam;
The shrubs and laurels which I loved to tend,
Thinking their May-tide fragrance might delight,
With many a peaceful charm, thee, my best friend,
Shall put forth their green shoot, and cheer the sight!
But I shall mark their hues with sickening eyes,
And weep for her who in the cold grave lies!

SONNET.

How blest with thee the path could I have trod
Of quiet life, above cold want's hard fate,
(And little wishing more,) nor of the great
Envious, or their proud name! but it pleased God
To take thee to his mercy: thou didst go
In youth and beauty, go to thy death-bed;
E'en whilst on dreams of bliss we fondly fed,
Of years to come of comfort!—Be it so.
Ere this I have felt sorrow; and e'en now
(Though sometimes the unbidden thought must start,
And half unman the miserable heart)
The cold dew I shall wipe from my sad brow,
And say, since hopes of bliss on earth are vain,
"Best friend, farewell, till we do meet again?"

SONNET.

ON REVISITING OXFORD.

I never hear the sound of thy glad bells,
Oxford! and chime harmonious, but I say
(Sighing to think how time has worn away,)
"Some spirit speaks in the sweet tone that swells

Heard after years of absence, from the vale
Whefe *Cherwell* winds." Most true it speaks the tale
Of days departed, and its voice recalls
Hours of delight and hope in the gay tide
Of life, and many friends now scatter'd wide
By many fates. Peace be within thy walls!
I have scarce heart to visit thee; but yet,
Denied the joys sought in thy shades,—denied
Each better hope, since my poor ***** died,
What I have owed to thee, my heart can ne'er forget!

SONNET.

ON THE DEATH OF THE REV. WILLIAM BENWELL.*

THOU-eamest with kind looks, when on the brink
Almost of death I strove, and with mild voice
Didst soothe me, bidding my poor heart rejoice,
Though smitten sore: O, I did little think
That thou, my friend, wouldst the first victim fall
To the stern king of terrors! thou didst fly,
By pity prompted, at the poor man's cry;
And soon thyself wert stretch'd beneath the pall,
Livid infection's prey. The deep distress
Of her, who best thy inmost bosom knew,
To whom thy faith was vow'd, thy soul was true,
What powers of faltering language shall express
As friendship bids, I feebly breathe my own,
And sorrowing say, "Pure spirit, thou art gone!"

* The following elegant inscription to the memory of this amiable and excellent young man is prefixed to the chancel of Caversham church, near Reading, and does merely justice to the many valuable qualifications of him whose virtues and graces it records:—

Near this Chancel are deposited
The Remains of the REV. WILLIAM BENWELL,
Late Fellow of Trinity College, Oxford,
Who died of a contagious fever, the consequence of
his charitable endeavours to relieve and comfort the
inhabitants of the village in which he resided.
From early youth
He was remarkable for correctness of taste,
and variety of knowledge;
Simple, modest, and retired;
In manners and conversation he possessed a natural grace;
a winning courtesy, truly expressive of the heavenly
serenity of his mind, and of the meekness, low-
liness and benevolence of his heart.
To his Relations, and to his Companions whom he loved,
he was most tenderly and consistently affectionate:
To the poor a zealous friend, a wise and patient instructer;
By his mildness cheering the sorrowful;
And, by the pure and amiable sanctity which beamed in
his countenance, repressing the licentious.
Habitually pious,
He appeared in every instance of life
to act, to speak, and to think,
as in the sight of GOD.
He died Sept. 6th, 96, in his 32d year:
His soul pleased the LORD, therefore hasted He to take
him away.
This Tablet was erected to his Memory, with heart-
felt grief, and the tenderest affection,
By PENELOPE, eldest daughter of JOHN LOVEDAY, Esq.;
and PENELOPE his wife,
Who, after many years of the most ardent friendship,
became his wife and his widow in the
course of eleven weeks!"

SONNET.

WRITTEN AT MALVERN, JULY 11, 1793.

I SHALL behold far off thy towering crest,
Proud mountain! from thy heights as slow I stray
Down through the distant vale my homeward way,
I shall behold, upon thy rugged breast,
The parting sun sit smiling: me the while
Escaped the crowd, thoughts full of heaviness
May visit, as life's bitter losses press
Hard on my bosom: but I shall "beguile
The thing I am," and think, that e'en as thou
Dost lift in the pale beam thy forehead high,
Proud mountain! (whilst the scatter'd vapours fly
Unheeded round thy breast,) so, with calm brow,
The shades of sorrow I may meet, and wear
The smile unchanged of peace, though prest by care!

SONNET.

ON REVIEWING THE FOREGOING. SEPT. 21, 1797.

I TURN these leaves with thronging thoughts, and say,
"Alas! how many friends of youth are dead,
How many visions of fair hope have fled,
Since first, my muse, we met:"—So speeds away
Life, and its shadows; yet we sit and sing,
Stretch'd in the noontide bower, as if the day
Declined not, and we yet might trill our lay
Beneath the pleasant morning's purple wing
That fans us, while aloft the gay clouds shine!
O, ere the coming of the long cold night,
RELIGION, may we bless thy purer light,
That still shall warm us, when the tints decline
O'er earth's dim hemisphere, and sad we gaze
On the vain visions of our passing days!

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE.

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE was born at Bristol, about 1770, where he received the earliest portion of his education. He was afterwards sent to Christ's Hospital, London, where, he says, in his Biographia Literaria, "I enjoyed the inestimable advantage of a very sensible, though, at the same time, a very severe master, the Rev. James Bowyer, who early moulded my taste to the preference of Demosthenes to Cicero, of Homer and Theocritus to Virgil, and again of Virgil to Ovid, &c." From Christ's Hospital he was sent to Jesus College, Cambridge, where he obtained the Sir William Brown's gold medal, for the best Greek ode, in 1792. About the same time, he became acquainted with Southey, then a student of Baliol College, Oxford, and, like himself, imbued with ardent predilections for poesy and liberty. With him and some other young men, he entered into a scheme, which want of means alone prevented them from putting into execution, for settling on the Susquehannah river, in North America, under a pantisocratic form of society. About 1794, he retired to Alforton, in Somersetshire, where he was joined by his friend Wordsworth, with whom he passed his time in literary pursuits, and in wandering about the Quantock hills, with such an air of mystery, that they became objects of suspicion to the neighbourhood. A spy was set upon their conduct, and an examination actually appears to have taken place, by the village authorities, of a poor rustic who was supposed to have discovered their dangerous designs. Our author has given a ludicrous account of this in the work before quoted from, and the conclusion is worth extracting, as developing somewhat of his habits and character. "Has not this Mr. Coleridge been wandering on the hills towards the channel, and along the shore, with books and papers in his hand, taking charts and maps of the country?"—"Why, as to that, your honour," was the rustic's reply; "I am sure I would not wish to say ill of anybody; but it is certain that I have heard—" "Speak out, man! don't be afraid: you are doing your duty to your king and government. What have you heard?" "Why, folks do say, your honour, as how that he is a poet; and that he is going to put Quantock, and all about here, in print; and as they (Wordsworth and Coleridge) be so much together, I suppose that the strange gentleman (Wordsworth) has some consarn in the business." The business which engaged him was the composition of a poem, to be called The Brook, which, had he finished, it was his intention to have dedicated to the committee of public safety, as containing the charts and maps with which he was reported to have supplied the French government, in aid of their plans of invasion.

A perusal of Bowles's Sonnets appears to have first inspired him with a taste for poetry, of which his earliest specimen was given to the public in a small volume, published previously to the foregoing incident, in which publication a monody on the death of the unfortunate Chatterton was universally admired. In 1795, he published some antiministerial pamphlets; and in the following year, made an unsuccessful attempt to establish a periodical paper, called The Watchman, at the persuasion, he says, of sundry philanthropists and antipolemists. His next publication was a poem on the prospect of peace; he shortly afterwards accompanied Sir Alexander Ball, governor of Malta, as his secretary; and, on his return from this employment, became entitled to a pension. This so far improving his circumstances as to leave him at full liberty to pursue his literary designs, he engaged in the publication of a variety of works, and delivered two public courses of lectures, one on the plays of Shakspeare, and another on poetry and the belles lettres, which gained him a reputation for considerable oratorical powers. In 1813, he published Remorse, a tragedy; followed, in 1817, by Sibylline Leaves; A Collection of Poems; his Biographia Literaria, or biographical sketches of his life and opinions; and other works, poetical and political. In 1818, he commenced The Friend, a series of essays, that extended to three volumes; and in the tenth and eleventh numbers of which, he says, he has left a record of his principles. In 1825, he published Aids to Reflection, in the formation of a manly character, &c.; and, in 1830, his Treatise on the Constitution of the Church and State, according to the idea of each: with aids towards a right judgment of the late Catholic bill. Mr. Coleridge towards the close of life resided at Highgate, where he occasionally received his literary friends, and passed his time in reading, and the amusements of his garden. He was said to excel all his contemporaries in powers of argument; and, when once fairly launched on any favourite topic, to be possessed of the faculty of riveting for hours, the attention of his audience by the charm of his eloquence alone. He died July 25th, 1834.

In addition to the works already mentioned, he wrote, during the peace of Amiens, essays for The Morning Post and Courier. Mr. Fox is said to have pointed his allusion to these contributions, when he declared, that the war, which fol-

lowed the above treaty, was a war raised by The Morning Post. Whilst Mr. Coleridge was staying at Rome, Bonaparte is said to have sent an order for his arrest, from which he was rescued, partly, by the forbearance of the late pope, Pius the Seventh. Our poet, however, has never displayed any evidence of his having been guided by any fixed political creed; and he altogether disowns, as was hinted by The Morning Chronicle, that he ever bettered his fortune by his labours as a political writer. Indeed, it is as a poet only that he will be known by posterity; however zealously his friends may labour to procure a reputation for him as the founder of a sect in morals or philosophy. The chief fault of Coleridge's poetry lies in the style, which has been justly objected to on account of its obscurity, general turgidness of diction, and a profusion of new-coined double epithets. With regard to its obscurity, he says, in the preface to a late edition of his poems, that where he appears unintelligible, "the deficiency is in the reader." This is nothing more or less than to suppose his readers endowed with the powers of divination; for we defy any one who is not in the confidence of the author upon this subject, to solve the riddle which is appended as a conclusion to Christabel. He might as well attribute deficiency of capacity to a beholder of his countenance, who should fail, in its workings, to discover the exact emotions of his mind; for Mr. Coleridge has afforded no clearer clue to the generality of his poetical arcana. This is particularly manifest in his singularly wild and striking poem of The Ancient Mariner, on which he is said to have written the following epigram, addressed to himself:

"Your poem must eternal be,
Dear sir! it cannot fail;
For, 'tis incomprehensible,
And without head or tail."

Mr. Coleridge is unquestionably at the head of the Lake school of poetry, and excels all his fraternity of that class in feeling, fancy, and sublimity. Some of his minor poems will bear comparison with those of the bards of this or any other age or country; and his verses on Love appear to us the most touching, delicate, and beautiful delineation of that passion that ever was penned.

SIBYLLINE LEAVES.

I. POEMS OCCASIONED BY POLITICAL EVENTS OR FEELINGS CONNECTED WITH THEM.

When I have borne in memory what has tamed
Great nations, how ennobling thoughts depart
When men change swords for legers, and desert
The student's bower for gold, some fears unnamed
I had, my country! Am I to be blamed?
But, when I think of thee, and what thou art,
Verily, in the bottom of my heart,
Of those unfilial fears I am ashamed.
But dearly must we prize thee; we who find
In thee a bulwark of the cause of men;
And I by my affection was beguiled.
What wonder if a poet, now and then,
Among the many movements of his mind,
Felt for thee as a lover or a child.

Wordsworth.

ODE TO THE DEPARTING YEAR.*

Ἰοὺ, ἰού, ὦ ὦ πανδ.
Ὑπ' αὖ με δεινὸς ὀρθομαντείας πόνος
Στροβεῖ, παράσσων φροιμίοις ἐφημίοις.
* * * * * *
Τὸ μέλλον ἥξει. Καὶ οὐ μὴν πάχει παρὼν
Ἀγαν γ' ἀληθόμαντιν μ' ἐρεῖς.

ÆSCHYL. *Agam.* 1225.

ARGUMENT.

The Ode commences with an address to the Divine Providence, that regulates into one vast harmony all the events of time, however calamitous some of them may appear to mortals. The second strophe calls on men to suspend their private joys and sorrows, and devote them for a while to the cause of human nature in general. The first epode speaks of the Empress of Russia, who died of an apoplexy on the 17th of November, 1796: having just concluded a subsidiary treaty with the kings combined against France. The first and second antistrophe describe the image of the departing year, etc. as in a vision. The second epode prophesies, in anguish of spirit, the downfall of this country.

Spirit who sweepest the wild harp of time!
It is most hard with an untroubled ear
Thy dark inwoven harmonies to hear!
Yet, mine eye fix'd on heaven's unchanging clime,
Long when I listen'd, free from mortal fear,
With inward stillness, and submitted mind;
When lo! its folds far waving on the wind,
I saw the train of the departing year!
Starting from my silent sadness,
Then with no unholy madness,
Ere yet the enter'd cloud foreclosed my sight,
I raised th' impetuous song, and solemnized his flight.

II.

Hither, from the recent tomb,
From the prison's direr gloom,
From distemper's midnight anguish;
And thence, where poverty doth waste and languish,
Or where, his two bright torches blending,
Love illumines manhood's maze;
Or where, o'er cradled infants bending,
Hope has fix'd her wishful gaze,
Hither, in perplexed dance,
Ye woes! ye young-eyed joys! advance!
By time's wild harp, and by the hand
Whose indefatigable sweep
Raises its fateful strings from sleep,
I bid you haste, a mix'd, tumultuous band!
From every private bower,
And each domestic hearth,
Haste for one solemn hour;

* This ode was composed on the 24th, 25th, and 26th days of December, 1796: and was first published on the last day of that year.

And with a loud and yet a louder voice,
O'er nature struggling in portentous birth
Weep and rejoice!
Still echoes the dread name that o'er the earth
Let slip the storm, and woke the brood of hell:
And now advance in saintly jubilee
Justice and truth! They too have heard thy spell,
They too obey thy name, divinest Liberty!

III.

I mark'd Ambition in his war array!
I heard the mailed monarch's troublous cry—
"Ah! wherefore does the northern conqueress stay!
Groans not her chariot on its onward way?"
Fly, mailed monarch, fly!
Stunn'd by death's twice mortal mace,
No more on murder's lurid face
Th' insatiate hag shall gloat with drunken eye!
Manes of the unnumber'd slain!
Ye that gasp'd on Warsaw's plain!
Ye that erst at Ismail's tower,
When human ruin choked the streams,
Fell in conquest's glutted hour,
'Mid women's shrieks and infant's screams!
Spirits of the uncoffin'd slain,
Sudden blasts of triumph swelling,
Oft, at night, in misty train,
Rush around her narrow dwelling!
The exterminating fiend is fled—
(Foul her life, and dark her doom)—
Mighty armies of the dead
Dance like death-fires round her tomb!
Then with prophetic song relate,
Each some tyrant murderer's fate!

IV.

Departing year! 'twas on no earthly shore
My soul beheld thy vision! where alone,
Voiceless and stern, before the cloudy throne,
Aye Memory sits: thy robe inscribed with gore,
With many an unimaginable groan
Thou storied'st thy sad hours! Silence ensued,
Deep silence o'er th' ethereal multitude,
Whose locks with wreaths, whose wreaths with glories shone,
Then, his eye wild ardours glancing,
From the choired gods advancing,
The Spirit of the earth made reverence meet,
And stood up, beautiful, before the cloudy seat.

V.

Throughout the blissful throng,
Hush'd were harp and song:
Till wheeling round the throne the Lampads seven
(The mystic words of heaven)
Permissive signal make:
The fervent spirit bow'd, then spread his wings and spake!
"Thou in stormy blackness throning
Love and uncreated light,
By the earth's unsolaced groaning,
Seize thy terrors, Arm of might!
By peace with proffer'd insult scared,
Masked hate and envying scorn!
By years of havoc yet unborn!
And hunger's bosom to the frost winds bared!
But chief by Afric's wrongs,
Strange, horrible, and foul!
By what deep guilt belongs
To the deaf synod, 'full of gifts and lies!'
By wealth's insensate laugh! by torture's howl!
Avenger, rise!
For ever shall the thankless island scowl,
Her quiver full, and with unbroken bow?
Speak! from thy storm black heaven, O speak aloud,
And on the darkling foe
Open thine eye of fire from some uncertain cloud!
O dart the flash! O rise and deal the blow!
The past to thee, to thee the future cries!
Hark! how wide nature joins her groans below,
Rise, God of nature! rise."

VI.

The voice had ceased, the vision fled;
Yet still I gasp'd and reel'd with dread.
And over, when the dream of night
Renews the phantom to my sight,
Cold sweat-drops gather on my limbs;
My ears throb hot; my eyeballs start;
My brain with horrid tumult swims;
Wild is the tempest of my heart;
And my thick and struggling breath
Imitates the toil of death!
No stronger agony confounds
The soldier on the war-field spread,
When all foredone with toil and wounds,
Death-like he dozes among heaps of dead!
(The strife is o'er, the daylight fled,
And the night-wind clamours hoarse!
See! the starting wretch's head
Lies pillow'd on a brother's corse!)

VII.

Not yet enslaved, not wholly vile,
O Albion! O my mother isle!
Thy valleys, fair as Eden's bowers,
Glitter green with sunny showers;
Thy grassy uplands' gentle swells
Echo to the bleat of flocks,
(Those grassy hills, those glittering dells
Proudly ramparted with rocks;)
And ocean, 'mid his uproar wild,
Speaks safely to his island child!
Hence, for many a fearless age
Has social quiet loved thy shore!
Nor ever proud invader's rage
Or sack'd thy towers, or stain'd thy fields with gore

VIII.

Abandon'd of Heaven! mad avarice thy guide,
At cowardly distance, yet kindling with pride—
'Mid thy herds and thy corn-fields secure thou hast stood,
And join'd the wild yelling of famine and blood!
The nations curse thee! They with eager wondering
Shall hear destruction, like a vulture, scream!
Strange-eyed destruction! who with many a dream
Of central fires through nether seas upthundering
Soothes her fierce solitude; yet, as she lies
By livid fount, or red volcanic stream,
If ever to her lidless dragon-eyes,
O Albion! thy predestined ruins rise,

The fiend hag on her perilous couch doth leap,
Muttering distemper'd triumph in her charmed sleep.

IX.

Away, my soul, away!
In vain, in vain, the birds of warning sing—
And hark! I hear the famish'd brood of prey
Flap their lank pennons on the groaning wind!
Away, my soul, away!
I, unpartaking of the evil thing,
With daily prayer and daily toil
Soliciting for food my scanty soil,
Have wail'd my country with a loud lament.
Now I recentre my immortal mind
In the deep sabbath of meek self-content;
Cleansed from the vaporous passions that bedim
God's Image, sister of the Seraphim.

FRANCE.

AN ODE.

I.

Ye clouds! that far above me float and pause,
Whose pathless march no mortal may control!
Ye ocean waves! that, wheresoe'er ye roll,
Yield homage only to eternal laws!
Ye woods! that listen to the night-birds' singing,
Midway the smooth and perilous slope reclined,
Save when your own imperious branches swinging,
Have made a solemn music of the wind!
Where, like a man beloved of God,
Through glooms, which never woodman trod,
How oft, pursuing fancies holy,
My moonlight way o'er flowering weeds I wound,
Inspired, beyond the guess of folly,
By each rude shape and wild unconquerable sound!
O ye loud waves! and O ye forests high!
And O ye clouds that far above me soar'd!
Thou rising sun! thou blue, rejoicing sky!
Yea, every thing that is and will be free!
Bear witness for me, wheresoe'er ye be,
With what deep worship I have still adored
The spirit of divinest Liberty.

II.

When France in wrath her giant-limbs uprear'd,
And with that oath, which smote air, earth and sea,
Stamp'd her strong foot, and said she would be free,
Bear witness for me, how I hoped and fear'd!
With what a joy my lofty gratulation
Unawed I sang, amid a slavish band:
And when to whelm the disenchanted nation,
Like fiends embattled by a wizard's wand,
The monarchs march'd in evil day,
And Britain join'd the dire array;
Though dear her shores and circling ocean,
Though many friendships, many youthful loves
Had swoln the patriot emotion,
And flung a magic light o'er all her hills and groves;
Yet still my voice, unalter'd, sang defeat
To all that braved the tyrant-quelling lance,
And shame too long delay'd and vain retreat!
For ne'er, O Liberty! with partial aim
I dimm'd thy light or damp'd thy holy flame;
But bless'd the pæans of deliver'd France,
And hung my head, and wept at Britain's name.

III.

"And what," I said, "though blasphemy's loud scream
With that sweet music of deliverance strove!
Though all the fierce and drunken passions wove
A dance more wild than e'er was maniac's dream!
Ye storms, that round the dawning east assembled,
The sun was rising, though he hid his light!
And when, to soothe my soul, that hoped and trembled,
The dissonance ceased, and all seem'd calm and bright;
When France her front deep-scarr'd and gory
Conceal'd with clustering wreaths of glory;
When, insupportably advancing,
Her arm made mockery of the warrior's tramp;
While timid looks of fury glancing,
Domestic treason, crush'd beneath her fatal stamp,
Writhed like a wounded dragon in his gore;
Then I reproach'd my fears that would not flee;
"And soon," I said, "shall wisdom teach her lore
In the low huts of them that toil and groan!
And, conquering by her happiness alone,
Shall France compel the nations to be free,
Till love and joy look round, and call the earth their own."

IV.

Forgive me, Freedom! O forgive those dreams!
I hear thy voice, I hear thy loud lament,
From bleak Helvetia's icy caverns sent—
I hear thy groans upon her blood-stain'd streams.
Heroes, that for your peaceful country perish'd;
And ye that, fleeing, spot your mountain snows
With bleeding wounds; forgive me that I cherish'd
One thought that ever bless'd your cruel foes!
To scatter rage, and traitorous guilt,
Where peace her jealous home had built;
A patriot race to disinherit
Of all that made their stormy wilds so dear;
And with inexpiable spirit
To taint the bloodless freedom of the mountaineer—
O France, that mockest Heaven, adulterous, blind,
And patriot only in pernicious toils!
Are these thy boasts, champion of human kind?
To mix with kings in the low lust of sway,
Yell in the hunt, and share the murderous prey;
To insult the shrine of liberty with spoils
From freemen torn; to tempt and to betray?

V.

The sensual and the dark rebel in vain,
Slaves by their own compulsion! In mad game
They burst their manacles, and wear the name
Of freedom, graven on a heavier chain!
O Liberty! with profitless endeavour
Have I pursued thee, many a weary hour;
But thou nor swell'st the victor's strain, nor ever
Didst breathe thy soul in forms of human power.
Alike from all, howe'er they praise thee,
(Not prayer nor boastful name delays thee,)

Alike from priestcraft's harpy minions,
And factious blasphemy's obscener slaves,
Thou speedest on thy subtle pinions,
The guide of homeless winds, and playmates of the waves!
And there I felt thee!—on that sea-cliff's verge,
Whose pines, scarce travell'd by the breeze above,
Had made one murmur with the distant surge!
Yes, while I stood and gazed, my temples bare,
And shot my being through earth, sea, and air,
Possessing all things with intensest love,
O Liberty! my spirit felt thee there.

February, 1797.

FEARS IN SOLITUDE.

WRITTEN IN APRIL, 1798, DURING THE ALARM OF AN INVASION.

A GREEN and silent spot amid the hills,
A small and silent dell! O'er stiller place
No sinking skylark ever poised himself.
The hills are heathy, save that swelling slope,
Which hath a gay and gorgeous covering on,
All golden with the never-bloomless furze,
Which now blooms most profusely; but the dell,
Bathed by the mist, is fresh and delicate
As vernal corn-field, or the unripe flax,
When, through its half-transparent stalks, at eve,
The level sunshine glimmers with green light.
O! 'tis a quiet, spirit-healing nook!
Which all, methinks, would love; but chiefly he,
The humble man, who, in his youthful years,
Knew just so much of folly as had made
His early manhood more securely wise!
Here he might lie on fern or wither'd heath,
While from the singing lark, (that sings unseen
The minstrelsy that solitude loves best,)
And from the sun, and from the breezy air,
Sweet influences trembled o'er his frame;
And he, with many feelings, many thoughts,
Made up a meditative joy, and found
Religious meanings in the forms of nature!
And so, his senses gradually wrapt
In a half sleep, he dreams of better worlds,
And dreaming hears thee still, O singing lark!
That singest like an angel in the clouds!
My God! it is a melancholy thing
For such a man, who would full fain preserve
His soul in calmness, yet perforce must feel
For all his human brethren—O my God!
It weighs upon the heart, that he must think
What uproar and what strife may now be stirring
This way or that way o'er these silent hills—
Invasion, and the thunder and the shout,
And all the crash of onset; fear and rage,
And undetermined conflict—even now,
E'en now, perchance, and in his native isle;
Carnage and groans beneath this blessed sun!
We have offended, O! my countrymen!
We have offended very grievously,
And been most tyrannous. From east to west
A groan of accusation pierces heaven!
The wretched plead against us; multitudes
Countless and vehement, the sons of God,
Our brethren! Like a cloud that travels on,
Steam'd up from Cairo's swamps of pestilence,
E'en so, my countrymen! have we gone forth,
And borne to distant tribes slavery and pangs,
And, deadlier far, our vices, whose deep taint
With slow perdition murders the whole man,
His body and his soul! Meanwhile, at home,
All individual dignity and power
Ingulf'd in courts, committees, institutions,
Associations and societies,
A vain, speech-mouthing, speech-reporting guild,
One benefit club for mutual flattery,
We have drunk up, demure as at a grace,
Pollutions from the brimming cup of wealth;
Contemptuous of all honourable rule,
Yet bartering freedom and the poor man's life
For gold, as at a market! The sweet words
Of Christian promise, words that even yet
Might stem destruction were they wisely preach'd
Are mutter'd o'er by men whose tones proclaim
How flat and wearisome they feel their trade:
Rank scoffers some, but most too indolent
To deem them falsehoods or to know their truth.
O! blasphemous! the book of life is made
A superstitious instrument, on which
We gabble o'er the oaths we mean to break;
For all must swear—all and in every place,
College and wharf, council and justice court;
All, all must swear, the briber and the bribed,
Merchant and lawyer, senator and priest,
The rich, the poor, the old man and the young;
All, all make up one scheme of perjury,
That faith doth reel; the very name of God
Sounds like a juggler's charm; and, bold with joy,
Forth from his dark and lonely hiding-place,
(Portentous sight!) the owlet Atheism,
Sailing on obscene wings athwart the noon,
Drops his blue-fringed lids, and holds them close,
And hooting at the glorious sun in heaven,
Cries out, "Where is it?"
Thankless too for peace
(Peace long preserved by fleets and perilous seas,)
Secure from actual warfare, we have loved
To swell the war-whoop, passionate for war!
Alas! for ages ignorant of all
Its ghastlier workings (famine or blue plague,
Battle, or siege, or flight through wintry snows,)
We, this whole people, have been clamorous
For war and bloodshed; animating sports,
The which we pay for as a thing to talk of,
Spectators and not combatants! No guess
Anticipative of a wrong unfelt,
No speculation or contingency,
However dim and vague, too vague and dim
To yield a justifying cause; and forth
(Stuff'd out with big preamble, holy names,
And adjurations of the God in heaven)
We send our mandates for the certain death
Of thousands and ten thousands! Boys and girls,
And women, that would groan to see a child
Pull off an insect's leg, all read of war,
The best amusement for our morning meal!
The poor wretch, who has learnt his only prayers
From curses, who knows scarcely words enough
To ask a blessing from his heavenly Father,
Becomes a fluent phraseman, absolute

And technical in victories and defeats,
And all our dainty terms for fratricide;
Terms which we trundle smoothly o'er our tongues
Like mere abstractions, empty sounds, to which
We join no feeling and attach no form!
As if the soldier died without a wound;
As if the fibres of this godlike frame
Were gored without a pang; as if the wretch,
Who fell in battle, doing bloody deeds,
Pass'd off to heaven, translated and not kill'd:
As though he had no wife to pine for him,
No God to judge him! Therefore, evil days
Are coming on us, O my countrymen!
And what if all-avenging Providence,
Strong and retributive, should make us know
The meaning of our words, force us to feel
The desolation and the agony
Of our fierce doings!
Spare us yet a while,
Father and God! O! spare us yet a while?
O! let not English women drag their flight
Fainting beneath the burden of their babes,
Of the sweet infants, that but yesterday
Laugh'd at the breast! Sons, brothers, husbands, all
Who ever gazed with fondness on the forms
Which grew up with you round the same fireside,
And all who ever heard the Sabbath-bells
Without the infidel's scorn, make yourselves pure!
Stand forth: be men! repel an impious foe,
Impious and false, a light yet cruel race,
Who laugh away all virtue, mingling mirth
With deeds of murder; and still promising
Freedom, themselves too sensual to be free,
Poison life's amities, and cheat the heart
Of faith and quiet hope, and all that soothes
And all that lifts the spirit! Stand we forth;
Render them back upon the insulted ocean,
And let them toss as idly on its waves
As the vile sea-weed, which some mountain blast
Swept from our shores! And O! may we return,
Not with a drunken triumph, but with fear,
Repenting of the wrongs with which we stung
So fierce a foe to frenzy!
I have told,
O Britons! O my brethren! I have told
Most bitter truth, but without bitterness.
Nor deem my zeal or factious or mistimed;
For never can true courage dwell with them,
Who, playing tricks with conscience, dare not look
At their own vices. We have been too long
Dupes of a deep delusion! Some, belike
Groaning with restless enmity, expect
All change from change of constituted power;
As if a government had been a robe,
On which our vice and wretchedness were tagg'd
Like fancy points and fringes, with the robe
Pull'd off at pleasure. Fondly these attach
A radical causation to a few
Poor drudges of chastising Providence,
Who borrow all their hues and qualities
From our own folly and rank wickedness,
Which gave them birth and nursed them. Others, meanwhile,
Dote with a mad idolatry; and all
Who will not fall before their images,
And yield them worship, they are enemies
E'en of their country!
Such have I been deem'd—
But, O dear Britain! O my mother isle!
Needs must thou prove a name most dear and holy
To me, a son, a brother, and a friend,
A husband, and a father! who revere
All bonds of natural love, and find them all
Within the limits of thy rocky shores.
O native Britain! O my mother isle!
How shouldst thou prove aught else but dear and holy
To me, who from thy lakes and mountain-hills
Thy clouds, thy quiet dales, thy rocks and seas,
Have drunk in all my intellectual life,
All sweet sensations, all ennobling thoughts,
All adoration of the God in nature,
All lovely and all honourable things,
Whatever makes this mortal spirit feel
The joy and greatness of its future being?
There lives nor form nor feeling in my soul
Unborrow'd from my country. O divine
And beauteous island! thou hast been my sole
And most magnificent temple, in the which
I walk with awe, and sing my stately songs,
Loving the God that made me!
May my fears,
My filial fears, be vain! and may the vaunts
And menace of the vengeful enemy
Pass like the gust, that roar'd and died away
In the distant tree: which heard, and only heard
In this low dell, bow'd not the delicate grass.
But now the gentle dew-fall sends abroad
The fruit-like perfume of the golden furze:
The light has left the summit of the hill,
Though still a sunny gleam lies beautiful,
Aslant the ivied beacon. Now farewell,
Farewell, a while, O soft and silent spot!
On the green sheep-track, up the heathy hill,
Homeward I wind my way; and lo! recall'd
From bodings that have wellnigh wearied me,
I find myself upon the brow, and pause
Startled! And after lonely sojourning
In such a quiet and surrounding nook,
This burst of prospect, here the shadowy main,
Dim-tinted, there the mighty majesty
Of that huge amphitheatre of rich
And elmy fields, seems like society—
Conversing with the mind, and giving it
A livelier impulse and a dance of thought!
And now, beloved Stowey! I behold
Thy church-tower, and, methinks, the four huge elms
Clustering, which mark the mansion of my friend,
And close behind them, hidden from my view,
Is my own lowly cottage, where my babe
And my babe's mother dwell in peace! With light
And quicken'd footsteps thitherward I tend,
Remembering thee, O green and silent dell!
And grateful, that, by nature's quietness
And solitary musings, all my heart
Is soften'd, and made worthy to indulge
Love, and the thoughts that yearn for human kind.

Nether Stowey, April 28th, 1798.

FIRE, FAMINE, AND SLAUGHTER.

A WAR ECLOGUE.

The scene a desolated tract in La Vendée. FAMINE is discovered lying on the ground; to her enter FIRE and SLAUGHTER.

FAMINE.

SISTERS! sisters! who sent you here?

SLAUGHTER, (*to* FIRE.)

I will whisper it in her ear.

FIRE.

No! no! no!
Spirits hear what spirits tell:
'Twill make a holiday in hell.
No! no! no
Myself, I named him once below,
And all the souls that damned be,
Leap'd up at once in anarchy,
Clapp'd their hands and danced for glee.
They no longer heeded me;
But laugh'd to hear hell's burning rafters
Unwillingly re-echo laughters!
No! no! no!
Spirits hear what spirits tell:
'Twill make a holiday in hell!

FAMINE.

Whisper it, sister! so and so!
In a dark hint, soft and slow.

SLAUGHTER.

Letters four do form his name—
And who sent you?

BOTH.

The same! the same!

SLAUGHTER.

He came by stealth, and unlock'd my den,
And I have drunk the blood since then
Of thrice three hundred thousand men.

BOTH.

Who bade you do it?

SLAUGHTER.

The same! the same!
Letters four do form his name.
He let me loose, and cried Halloo
To him alone the praise is due.

FAMINE.

Thanks, sister, thanks! the men have bled,
Their wives and their children faint for bread.
I stood in a swampy field of battle;
With bones and sculls I made a rattle,
To frighten the wolf and carrion crow,
And the homeless dog—but they would not go.
So off I flew; for how could I bear
To see them gorge their dainty fare?
I heard a groan and a peevish squall,
And through the chink of a cottage wall—
Can you guess what I saw there?

BOTH.

Whisper it, sister! in our ear.

FAMINE.

A baby beat its dying mother.
I had starved the one, and was starving the other!

BOTH.

Who bade you do't?

FAMINE.

The same! the same!
Letters four do form his name.
He let me loose, and cried Halloo!
To him alone the praise is due.

FIRE.

Sisters! I from Ireland came!
Hedge and corn-fields all on flame,
I triumph'd o'er the setting sun!
And all the while the work was done,
On as I strode with my huge strides,
I flung back my head and I held my sides,
It was so rare a piece of fun
To see the swelter'd cattle run
With uncouth gallop through the night,
Scared by the red and noisy light!
By the light of his own blazing cot
Was many a naked rebel shot:
The house-stream met the flame and hiss'd,
While crash! fell in the roof, I wist,
On some of those old bedrid nurses,
That deal in discontent and curses.

BOTH.

Who bade you do't?

FIRE.

The same! the same!
Letters four do form his name.
He let me loose, and cried Halloo!
To him alone the praise is due.

ALL.

He let us loose, and cried Halloo!
How shall we yield him honour due?

FAMINE.

Wisdom comes of lack of food,
I'll gnaw, I'll gnaw the multitude,
Till the cup of rage o'erbrim:
They shall seize him and his brood—

FIRE.

O thankless beldames and untrue!
And is this all that you can do
For him who did so much for you?
Ninety months he, by my troth!
Hath richly cater'd for you both;
And in an hour would you repay
An eight years' work?—Away! away!
I alone am faithful! I
Cling to him everlastingly.

1796.

RECANTATION

ILLUSTRATED IN THE STORY OF THE MAD OX.

An ox, long fed with musty hay,
And work'd with yoke and chain,
Was turn'd out on an April day,
When fields are in their best array,
And growing grasses sparkle gay,
At once with sun and rain.

The grass was fine, the sun was bright,
With truth I may aver it;
The ox was glad, as well he might,
Thought a green meadow no bad sight,
And frisk'd to show his huge delight,
Much like a beast of spirit.

"Stop, neighbours! stop! why these alarms?
The ox is only glad."
But still they pour from cots and farms—
Halloo! the parish is up in arms,
(A *hoaxing* hunt has always charms,)
Halloo! the ox is mad.

The frighted beast scamper'd about,
Plunge! through the hedge he drove—
The mob pursue with hideous rout,
A bull-dog fastens on his snout,
He gores the dog, his tongue hangs out—
He's mad, he's mad, by Jove!

"Stop, neighbours, stop!" aloud did call
A sage of sober hue,
But all at once on him they fall,
And women squeak and children squall,
"What! would you have him toss us all?
And, damme! who are you?"

Ah, hapless sage! his ears they stun,
And curse him o'er and o'er—
"You bloody-minded dog!" (cries one,)
"To slit your windpipe were good fun—
'Od bl— you for an *impious** son
Of a Presbyterian w—re!

"You'd have him gore the parish-priest,
And run against the altar—
You *fiend!*"—The sage his warnings ceased,
And north, and south, and west, and east,
Halloo! they follow the poor beast,
Mat, Dick, Tom, Bob, and Walter.

Old Lewis, 'twas his evil day,
Stood trembling in his shoes;
The ox was his—what could he say?
His legs were stiffen'd with dismay,
The ox ran o'er him 'mid the fray,
And gave him his death's bruise.

The frighted beast ran on—but here,
The gospel scarce more true is—
My muse stops short in mid career—
Nay, gentle reader! do not sneer,
I cannot choose but drop a tear,
A tear for good old Lewis.

The frighted beast ran through the town,
All follow'd, boy and dad,
Bull-dog, parson, shopman, clown,
The Publicans rush'd from the Crown,
"Halloo! hamstring him! cut him down;"
They drove the poor ox mad.

Should you a rat to madness tease,
Why e'en a rat might plague you:
There's no philosopher but sees
That rage and fear are *one* disease—
Though that may burn and this may freeze,
They're both alike the ague.

And so this ox, in frantic mood,
Faced round like any bull—
The mob turn'd tail, and he pursued,
Till they with fright and fear were stew'd,
And not a chick of all this brood
But had his belly-full.

Old Nick's astride the beast, 'tis clear—
Old Nicholas to a tittle!
But all agree he'd disappear,
Would but the parson venture near,
And through his teeth, right o'er the steer,
Squirt out some fasting-spittle.*

Achilles was a warrior fleet,
The Trojans he could worry—
Our parson too was swift of feet,
But show'd it chiefly in retreat!
The victor ox scour'd down the street,
The mob fled hurry-skurry.

Through gardens, lanes, and fields new-plow'd,
Through *his* hedge and through *her* hedge,
He plunged and toss'd, and bellow'd loud,
Till in his madness he grew proud
To see this helter-skelter crowd,
That had more wrath than courage.

Alas! to mend the breaches wide
He made for these poor ninnies,
They all must work, whate'er betide,
Both days and months, and pay beside
(Sad news for avarice and for pride)
A sight of golden guineas.

But here once more to view did pop
The man that kept his senses.
And now he cried—"Stop, neighbours! stop.
The ox is mad! I would not swop,
No, not a schoolboy's farthing top
For all the parish fences.

"The ox is mad! Ho! Dick, Bob, Mat!
What means this coward fuss?
Ho! stretch this rope across the plat—
'Twill trip him up—or if not that,
Why, damme, we must lay him flat—
See, here's my blunderbuss!"

"A lying dog! just now he said,
The ox was only glad,—
Let's break his Presbyterian head!"
"Hush!" quoth the sage, "you've been misled,
No quarrels now—let's all make head—
You drove the poor ox mad!"

As thus I sat in careless chat,
With the morning's wet newspaper,
In eager haste, without his hat,
As blind and blundering as a bat,
In came that fierce aristocrat,
Our pursy woollen-draper.

* One of the many *fine* words which the most uneducated had about this time a constant opportunity of acquiring from the sermons in the pulpit, and the proclamations on the ——— corners.

* According to the superstition of the west countries, if you meet the devil, you may either cut him in half with a straw, or you may cause him instantly to disappear by spitting over his horns.

And so my muse perforce drew bit,
And in he rush'd and panted:—
"Well, have you heard?"—"No! not a whit."
"What! han't you heard?"—"Come, out with it!"
"That Tierney votes for Mister Pitt,
And Sheridan's *recanted*."

II. LOVE POEMS.

Quas humilis tenero stylus olim effudit in ævo.
Perlegis hic lacrymas, et quod pharetratus acutâ
Ille puer puero fecit mihi cuspide vulnus,
Omnia paulatim consumit longior ætas,
Vivendoque simul morimur, rapimurque manendo
Ispe mihi collatus enim non ille videbor:
Frons alia est, moresque alii, nova mentis imago,
Voxque aliud sonat—
Pectore nunc gelido calidos miseremur amantes,
Jamque arsisse pudet. Veteres tranquilla tumultus
Mens horret relegensque alium putat ista locutum.
Petrarch.

INTRODUCTION TO THE TALE OF THE DARK LADIE.

The following poem is intended as the introduction to a somewhat longer one. The use of the old ballad word *Ladie* for Lady, is the only piece of obsoleteness in it; and as it is professedly a tale of ancient times, I trust that the affectionate lovers of venerable antiquity (as Camden says) will grant me their pardon, and perhaps may be induced to admit a force and propriety in it. A heavier objection may be adduced against the author, that in these times of fear and expectation, when novelties *explode* around us in all directions, he should presume to offer to the public a silly tale of old-fashioned love: and five years ago, I own I should have allowed and felt the force of this objection. But, alas! explosion has succeeded explosion so rapidly, that novelty itself ceases to appear new; and it is possible that now even a simple story, wholly uninspired with politics or personality, may find some attention amid the hubbub of revolutions, as to those who have remained a long time by the falls of Niagara, the lowest whispering becomes distinctly audible.—S. T. C.
Dec. 21, 1799.

O LEAVE the lily on its stem;
O leave the rose upon the spray;
O leave the elder bloom, fair maids!
And listen to my lay.

A cypress and a myrtle-bough
This morn around my harp you twined,
Because it fashion'd mournfully
Its murmurs in the wind.

And now a tale of love and wo,
A woful tale of love I sing;
Hark, gentle maidens, hark! it sighs
And trembles on the string.

But most, my own dear Genevieve,
It sighs and trembles most for thee!
O come and hear what cruel wrongs
Befell the Dark Ladie.

Few sorrows hath she of her own,
My hope, my joy, my Genevieve!
She loves me best, whene'er I sing
The songs that make her grieve.

All thoughts, all passions, all delights,
Whatever stir this mortal frame,
All are but ministers of love,
And feed his sacred flame.

O! ever in my waking dreams,
I dwell upon that happy hour,
When midway on the mount I sate,
Beside the ruin'd tower.

The moonshine, stealing o'er the scene,
Had blended with the lights of eve;
And she was there, my hope, my joy,
My own dear Genevieve!

She lean'd against the armed man,
The statue of the armed knight;
She stood and listen'd to my harp,
Amid the lingering light.

I play'd a sad and doleful air,
I sang an old and moving story—
An old rude song that fitted well
That ruin wild and hoary.

She listen'd with a flitting blush,
With downcast eyes and modest grace;
For well she knew, I could not choose
But gaze upon her face.

I told her of the knight that wore
Upon his shield a burning brand;
And how for ten long years he woo'd
The ladie of the land:

I told her how he pined: and ah!
The deep, the low, the pleading tone
With which I sung another's love,
Interpreted my own.

She listen'd with a flitting blush,
With downcast eyes and modest grace;
And she forgave me, that I gazed
Too fondly on her face!

But when I told the cruel scorn
That crazed this bold and lonely knight
And how he roam'd the mountain woods,
Nor rested day or night;

And how he cross'd the woodman's paths,
Through briers and swampy mosses beat;
How boughs rebounding scourged his limbs,
And low stubs gored his feet;

That sometimes from the savage den,
And sometimes from the darksome shade,
And sometimes starting up at once
In green and sunny glade;

There came and look'd him in the face
An angel beautiful and bright;
And how he knew it was a fiend,
This miserable knight!

And how, unknowing what he did,
He leapt amid a lawless band,
And saved from outrage worse than death
The ladie of the land!

And how she wept, and clasp'd his knees;
And how she tended him in vain—
And meekly strove to expiate
The scorn that crazed his brain:

And how she nursed him in a cave;
And how his madness went away,
When on the yellow forest leaves
A dying man he lay:

His dying words—but when I reach'd
That tenderest strain of all the ditty,
My faltering voice and pausing harp
Disturb'd her soul with pity!

All impulses of soul and sense
Had thrill'd my guiltless Genevieve;
The music and the doleful tale,
The rich and balmy eve;

And hopes, and fears that kindle hope,
An undistinguishable throng,
And gentle wishes long subdued,
Subdued and cherish'd long!

She wept with pity and delight,
She blush'd with love and maiden shame;
And, like the murmurs of a dream,
I heard her breathe my name.

I saw her bosom heave and swell,
Heave and swell with inward sighs—
I could not choose but love to see
Her gentle bosom rise.

Her wet cheek glow'd: she stept aside
As conscious of my look she stepp'd:
Then suddenly, with timorous eye,
She flew to me and wept.

She half-enclosed me with her arms,
She press'd me with a meek embrace;
And bending back her head, look'd up,
And gazed upon my face.

'Twas partly love, and partly fear,
And partly 'twas a bashful art,
That I might rather feel than see
The swelling of her heart.

I calm'd her fears, and she was calm,
And told her love with virgin pride;
And so I won my Genevieve,
My bright and beauteous bride.

And now once more a tale of wo,
A woful tale of love I sing:
For thee, my Genevieve! it sighs,
And trembles on the string.

When last I sang the cruel scorn
That crazed this bold and lonely knight
And how he roam'd the mountain woods,
Nor rested day or night:

I promised thee a sister tale
Of man's perfidious cruelty:
Come, then, and hear what cruel wrong
Befell the Dark Ladie.

LEWTI, OR THE CIRCASSIAN LOVE-CHANT.

At midnight by the stream I roved,
To forget the form I loved.
Image of Lewti! from my mind
Depart; for Lewti is not kind.

The moon was high, the moonlight gleam
And the shadow of a star
Heaved upon Tamaha's stream;
But the rock shone brighter far,
The rock half-shelter'd from my view
By pendent boughs of tressy yew—
So shines my Lewti's forehead fair,
Gleaming through her sable hair.
Image of Lewti! from my mind
Depart; for Lewti is not kind.

I saw a cloud of palest hue,
Onward to the moon it pass'd;
Still brighter and more bright it grew,
With floating colours not a few,
Till it reach'd the moon at last:
Then the cloud was wholly bright
With a rich and amber light!
And so with many a hope I seek,
And with such joy I find my Lewti:
And even so my pale wan cheek
Drinks in as deep a flush of beauty!
Nay, treacherous image! leave my mind,
If Lewti never will be kind.

The little cloud—it floats away,
Away it goes; away so soon?
Alas! it has no power to stay;
Its hues are dim, its hues are gray—
Away it passes from the moon!
How mournfully it seems to fly,
Ever fading more and more,
To joyless regions of the sky—
And now 'tis whiter than before!
As white as my poor cheek will be,
When, Lewti! on my couch I lie,
A dying man for love of thee.
Nay, treacherous image! leave my mind—
And yet thou didst not look unkind.

I saw a vapour in the sky,
Thin, and white, and very high;
I ne'er beheld so thin a cloud
Perhaps the breezes that can fly
Now below and now above,
Have snatch'd aloft the lawny shroud
Of lady fair—that died for love.
For maids, as well as youths, have perish'd
From fruitless love too fondly cherish'd.
Nay, treacherous image! leave my mind—
For Lewti never will be kind.

Hush! my heedless feet from under
Slip the crumbling banks for ever:
Like echoes to a distant thunder,
They plunge into the gentle river.
The river-swans have heard my tread,
And startle from their reedy bed.

O beauteous birds! methinks ye measure
Your movements to some heavenly tune!
O beauteous birds! 'tis such a pleasure
To see you move beneath the moon,
I would it were your true delight
To sleep by day and wake all night.

I know the place where Lewti lies,
When silent night has closed her eyes:
It is a breezy jasmine bower,
The nightingale sings o'er her head:
Voice of the night! had I the power
That leafy labyrinth to thread,
And creep, like thee, with soundless tread,
I then might view her bosom white
Heaving lovely to my sight,
As these two swans together heave
On the gently swelling wave.

O! that she saw me in a dream,
And dreamt that I had died for care;
All pale and wasted I would seem,
Yet fair withal, as spirits are!
I'd die, indeed, if I might see
Her bosom heave, and heave for me!
Soothe, gentle image! soothe my mind!
To-morrow Lewti may be kind.
1795.

THE PICTURE, OR THE LOVER'S RESOLUTION.

Through weeds and thorns, and matted underwood
I force my way; now climb, and now descend
O'er rocks, or bare or mossy, with wild foot
Crushing the purple whorts; while oft unseen,
Hurrying along the drifted forest leaves,
The scared snake rustles. Onward still I toil,
I know not, ask not whither! A new joy,
Lovely as light, sudden as summer gust,
And gladsome as the first-born of the spring,
Beckons me on, or follows from behind,
Playmate, or guide! The master-passion quell'd,
I feel that I am free. With dun-red bark
The fir trees, and th' unfrequent slender oak,
Forth from this tangle wild of bush and brake
Soar up, and form a melancholy vault
High o'er me, murmuring like a distant sea.
Here wisdom might resort, and here remorse;
Here too the lovelorn man who, sick in soul,
And of this busy human heart aweary,
Worships the spirit of unconscious life
In tree or wild-flower. Gentle lunatic!
If so he might not wholly cease to be,
He would far rather not be that, he is;
But would be something that he knows not of,
In winds, or waters, or among the rocks!
But hence, fond wretch! breathe not contagion here!
No myrtle-walks are these: these are no groves
Where love dare loiter! If in sullen mood
He should stray hither, the low stumps shall gore
His dainty feet, the brier and the thorn
Make his plumes haggard. Like a wounded bird
Easily caught, ensnare him, O ye nymphs,
Ye Oreads chaste, ye dusky Dryades!
And you, ye earth-winds! you that make at noon
The dew-drops quiver on the spider's webs!
You, O ye wingless airs! that creep between
The rigid stems of heath and bitten furze,
Within whose scanty shade, at summer-noon
The mother-sheep hath worn a hollow bed—
Ye, that now cool her fleece with dropless damp,
Now pant and murmur with her feeding lamb.
Chase, chase him, all ye fays, and elfin gnomes!
With prickles sharper than his darts bemock
His little godship, making him perforce
Creep through a thorn-bush on yon hedgehog's back.
This is my hour of triumph! I can now
With my own fancies play the merry fool,
And laugh away worse folly, being free.
Here will I seat myself, beside this old,
Hollow, and weedy oak, which ivy-twine
Clothes as with network: here will I couch my limbs,
Close by this river, in this silent shade,
As safe and sacred from the step of man
As an invisible world—unheard, unseen,
And listening only to the pebbly brook
That murmurs with a dead, yet tinkling sound;
Or to the bees, that in the neighbouring trunk
Make honey-hoards. The breeze that visits me
Was never love's accomplice, never raised
The tendril ringlets from the maiden's brow,
And the blue, delicate veins above her cheek;
Ne'er played the wanton—never half-disclosed
The maiden's snowy bosom, scattering thence
Eye-poisons for some love-distemper'd youth,
Who ne'er henceforth may see an aspen grove
Shiver in sunshine, but his feeble heart
Shall flow away like a dissolving thing.
Sweet breeze! thou only, if I guess aright,
Liftest the feathers of the robin's breast,
That swells its little breast, so full of song,
Singing above me, on the mountain ash.
And thou too, desert stream! no pool of thine,
Though clear as lake in latest summer eve,
Did e'er reflect the stately virgin's robe,
The face, the form divine, the downcast look
Contemplative! Behold! her open palm
Presses her cheek and brow! her elbow rests
On the bare branch of half-uprooted tree,
That leans towards its mirror! Who erewhile
Had from her countenance turn'd, or look'd by stealth,
(For fear is true love's cruel nurse,) he now
With steadfast gaze and unoffending eye,
Worships the watery idol, dreaming hopes
Delicious to the soul, but fleeting, vain,
E'en as that phantom world on which he gazed.
But not unheeded gazed! for see, ah! see,
The sportive tyrant with her left hand plucks
The heads of tall flowers that behind her grow,
Lychnis, and willow-herb, and fox-glove bells:
And suddenly, as one that toys with time,
Scatters them on the pool! Then all the charm
Is broken—all that phantom world so fair
Vanishes, and a thousand circlets spread,
And each misshapes the other. Stay a while

Poor youth, who scarcely darest lift up thine eyes!
The stream will soon renew its smoothness, soon
The visions will return! And lo! he stays:
And soon the fragments dim of lovely forms
Come trembling back, unite, and now once more
The pool becomes a mirror; and behold
Each wild-flower on the marge inverted there,
And there the half-uprooted tree—but where,
O where the virgin's snowy arm, that lean'd
On its bare branch? He turns, and she is gone!
Homeward she steals through many a woodland maze
Which he shall seek in vain. Ill-fated youth!
Go, day by day, and waste thy manly prime
In mad love-yearning by the vacant brook,
Till sickly thoughts bewitch thine eyes, and thou
Behold'st her shadow still abiding there,
The Naiad of the mirror!
Not to thee,
O wild and desert stream! belongs this tale:
Gloomy and dark art thou—the crowded firs
Spire from thy shores, and stretch across thy bed,
Making thee doleful as a cavern-well:
Save when the shy kingfishers build their nest
On thy steep banks, no loves hast thou, wild stream!
This be my chosen haunt—emancipate
From passion's dreams, a freeman, and alone,
I rise and trace its devious course. O lead,
Lead me to deeper shades and lonelier glooms.
Lo! stealing through the canopy of firs,
How fair the sunshine spots that mossy rock,
Isle of the river, whose disparted waves
Dart off asunder with an angry sound,
How soon to reunite! And see! they meet,
Each in the other lost and found: and see
Placeless, as spirits, one soft water-sun
Throbbing within them, heart at once and eye!
With its soft neighbourhood of filmy clouds,
The stains and shadings of forgotten tears,
Dimness o'erswum with lustre! Such the hour
Of deep enjoyment, following love's brief feuds;
And hark, the noise of a near waterfall!
I pass forth into light—I find myself
Beneath a weeping birch, (most beautiful
Of forest-trees, the lady of the woods,)
Hard by the brink of a tall weedy rock
That overbrows the cataract. How bursts
The landscape on my sight! Two crescent hills
Fold in behind each other, and so make
A circular vale, and land-lock'd, as might seem,
With brook and bridge, and gray stone cottages,
Half hid by rocks and fruit trees. At my feet
The whortleberries are bedewed with spray,
Dash'd upwards by the furious waterfall.
How solemnly the pendent ivy mass
Swings in its winnow: all the air is calm.
The smoke from cottage chimneys, tinged with light
Rises in columns; from this house alone,
Close by the waterfall, the column slants,
And feels its ceaseless breeze. But what is this?
That cottage, with its slanting chimney smoke,
And close beside its porch a sleeping child,
His dear head pillow'd on a sleeping dog—
One arm between its fore-legs, and the hand
Holds loosely its small handful of wild-flowers,
Unfilleted, and of unequal lengths.
A curious picture, with a master's haste
Sketch'd on a strip of pinky-silver skin,
Peel'd from the birchen bark! Divinest maid!
Yon bark her canvass, and those purple berries
Her pencil! See, the juice is scarcely dried
On the fine skin! She has been newly here;
And lo! yon patch of heath has been her couch—
The pressure still remains! O blessed couch!
For this mayest thou flower early, and the sun,
Slanting at eve, rest bright, and linger long
Upon thy purple bells! O Isabel!
Daughter of genius! stateliest of our maids!
More beautiful than whom Alcæus woo'd,
The Lesbian woman of immortal song!
O child of genius! stately, beautiful,
And full of love to all, save only me,
And not ungentle e'en to me! My heart,
Why beats it thus? Through yonder coppice-wood
Needs must the pathway turn, that leads straightway
On to her father's house. She is alone!
The night draws on—such ways are hard to hit—
And fit it is I should restore this sketch,
Dropt unawares, no doubt. Why should I yearn
To keep the relic? 'twill but idly feed
The passion that consumes me. Let me haste.
The picture in my hand which she has left,
She cannot blame me that I follow'd her;
And I may be her guide the long wood through.

THE NIGHT-SCENE.

A DRAMATIC FRAGMENT.

SANDOVAL.

You loved the daughter of Don Manrique!

EARL HENRY.

Loved?

SANDOVAL.

Did you not say you woo'd her?

EARL HENRY.

Once I loved
Her whom I dared not woo!

SANDOVAL.

And woo'd, perchance
One whom you loved not!

EARL HENRY.

O! I were most base,
Not loving Oropeza. True, I woo'd her,
Hoping to heal a deeper wound; but she
Met my advances with impassion'd pride,
That kindled love with love. And when her sire,
Who in his dream of hope already grasp'd
The golden circlet in his hand, rejected
My suit with insult, and in memory
Of ancient feuds pour'd curses on my head,
Her blessings overtook and baffled them!
But thou art stern, and with unkindly countenance
Art inly reasoning whilst thou listenest to me.

SANDOVAL.

Anxiously, Henry! reasoning anxiously,
But Oropeza—

EARL HENRY.

Blessings gather round her!
Within this wood there winds a secret passage,
Beneath the walls, which opens out at length
Into the gloomiest covert of the garden—
The night ere my departure to the army,
She, nothing trembling, led me through that gloom,
And to that covert by a silent stream,
Which, with one star reflected near its marge,
Was the sole object visible around me.
No leaflet stirr'd; the air was almost sultry;
So deep, so dark, so close the umbrage o'er us!
No leaflet stirr'd;—yet pleasure hung upon
The gloom and stillness of the balmy night-air.
A little further on an arbour stood,
Fragrant with flowering trees—I well remember
What an uncertain glimmer in the darkness
Their snow-white blossoms made—thither she led me,
To that sweet bower! Then Oropeza trembled—
I heard her heart beat—if 'twere not my own.

SANDOVAL.

A rude and scaring note, my friend!

EARL HENRY.

O! no!
I have small memory of aught but pleasure.
Th' inquietudes of fear, like lesser streams
Still flowing, still were lost in those of love:
So love grew mightier from the fear, and nature,
Fleeing from pain, shelter'd herself in joy.
The stars above our heads were dim and steady,
Like eyes suffused with rapture. Life was in us:
We were all life, each atom of our frames
A living soul—I vow'd to die for her:
With the faint voice of one who, having spoken,
Relapses into blessedness, I vow'd it:
That solemn vow, a whisper scarcely heard,
A murmur breathed against a lady's ear.
O! there is joy above the name of pleasure,
Deep self-possession, an intense repose.

SANDOVAL, (*with a sarcastic smile.*)

No other than as eastern sages paint,
The god, who floats upon a lotos leaf,
Dreams for a thousand ages; then awaking,
Creates a world, and smiling at the bubble,
Relapses into bliss.

EARL HENRY.

Ah! was that bliss
Fear'd as an alien, and too vast for man?
For suddenly, impatient of its silence,
Did Oropeza, starting, grasp my forehead.
I caught her arms; the veins were swelling on them.
Through the dark bower she sent a hollow voice,
O! what if all betray me? what if thou?
I swore, and with an inward thought that seem'd
The purpose and the substance of my being,
I swore to her, that were she red with guilt,
I would exchange my unblench'd state with hers.—
Friend! by that winding passage, to that bower
I now will go—all objects there will teach me
Unwavering love, and singleness of heart.
Go, Sandoval! I am prepared to meet her—
Say nothing of me—I myself will seek her—
Nay, leave me, friend! I cannot bear the torment
And keen inquiry of that scanning eye.

[EARL HENRY *retires into the wood.*

SANDOVAL, (*alone.*)

O Henry! always strivest thou to be great
By thine own act—yet art thou never great
But by the inspiration of great passion.
The whirl-blast comes, the desert-sands rise up
And shape themselves: from earth to heaven they stand,
As though they were the pillars of a temple,
Built by Omnipotence in its own honour!
But the blast pauses, and their shaping spirit
Is fled: the mighty columns were but sand,
And lazy snakes trail o'er the level ruins!

TO AN UNFORTUNATE WOMAN,

WHOM THE AUTHOR HAD KNOWN IN THE DAY OF HER INNOCENCE.

MYRTLE-LEAF that, ill-besped,
Pinest in the gladsome ray,
Soil'd beneath the common tread,
Far from thy protecting spray!

When the partridge o'er the sheaf
Whirr'd along the yellow vale,
Sad I saw thee, headless leaf!
Love the dalliance of the gale.

Lightly didst thou, foolish thing!
Heave and flutter to his sighs,
While the flatterer, on his wing,
Woo'd and whispered thee to rise

Gayly from thy mother-stalk
Wert thou danced and wafted high—
Soon on this unsheltered walk
Flung to fade, to rot, and die.

TO AN UNFORTUNATE WOMAN AT THE THEATRE.

MAIDEN, that with sullen brow
Sittest behind those virgins gay,
Like a scorch'd and mildew'd bough,
Leafless 'mid the blooms of May!

Him who lured thee and forsook,
Oft I watch'd with angry gaze,
Fearful saw his pleading look,
Anxious heard his fervid phrase.

Soft the glances of the youth,
Soft his speech, and soft his sigh;
But no sound like simple truth,
But no true love in his eye.

Loathing thy polluted lot,
Hie thee, maiden, hie thee hence!
Seek thy weeping mother's cot,
With a wiser innocence.

Thou hast known deceit and folly,
Thou hast felt that vice is woe;
With a musing melancholy
Inly arm'd, go, maiden! go.

Mother sage of self-dominion,
Firm thy steps, O melancholy!
The strongest plume in wisdom's pinion
Is the memory of past folly.

Mute the sky-lark and forlorn,
While she moults the firstling plumes,
That had skimm'd the tender corn,
Or the bean-field's odorous blooms;

Soon with renovated wing
Shall she dare a loftier flight,
Upward to the day-star spring,
And embathe in heavenly light.

LINES COMPOSED IN A CONCERT-ROOM.

Nor cold nor stern my soul! yet I detest
These scented rooms, where, to a gaudy throng,
Heaves the proud harlot her distended breast,
In intricacies of laborious song.

These feel not music's genuine power, nor deign
To melt at nature's passion-warbled plaint;
But when the long-breathed singer's uptrill'd strain
Bursts in a squall—they gape for wonderment.

Hark the deep buzz of vanity and hate!
Scornful, yet envious, with self-torturing sneer
My lady eyes some maid of humbler state,
While the pert captain, or the primmer priest,
Prattles accordant scandal in her ear.
O give me, from this heartless scene released,
To hear our old musician, blind and gray,
(Whom stretching from my nurse's arms I kiss'd,)
His Scottish tunes and warlike marches play
By moonshine, on the balmy summer-night,
The while I dance amid the tedded hay
With merry maids, whose ringlets toss in light.

Or lies the purple evening on the bay
Of the calm glossy lake, O let me hide
Unheard, unseen, behind the alder trees,
For round their roots the fisher's boat is tied,
On whose trim seat doth Edmund stretch at ease,
And while the lazy boat sways to and fro,
Breathes in his flute sad airs, so wild and slow,
That his own cheek is wet with quiet tears.

But O, dear Anne! when midnight wind careers,
And the gust pelting on the outhouse shed
Makes the cock shrilly on the rain-storm crow,
To hear thee sing some ballad full of woe,
Ballad of shipwreck'd sailor floating dead,
Whom his own true-love buried in the sands!
Thee, gentle woman, for thy voice remeasures
Whatever tones and melancholy pleasures
The things of nature utter; birds or trees,
Or moan of ocean gale in weedy caves,
Or where the stiff grass 'mid the heath-plant waves,
Murmur and music thin of sudden breeze.

THE KEEPSAKE.

The tedded hay, the first-fruits of the soil,
The tedded hay and corn-sheaves in one field,
Show summer gone, ere come. The fox-glove tall
Sheds its loose purple bells, or in the gust,
Or when it bends beneath th' up-springing lark,
Or mountain-finch alighting. And the rose
(In vain the darling of successful love)
Stands, like some boasted beauty of past years,
The thorns remaining, and the flowers all gone.
Nor can I find, amid my lonely walk
By rivulet, or spring, or wet road-side,
That blue and bright-eyed floweret of the brook,
Hope's gentle gem, the sweet Forget-me-not![*]
So will not fade the flowers which Emmeline
With delicate fingers on the snow-white silk
Has work'd (the flowers which most she knew I loved,)
And, more beloved than they, her auburn hair.

In the cool morning twilight, early waked
By her full bosom's joyous restlessness,
Softly she rose, and lightly stole along,
Down the slope coppice to the woodbine bower,
Whose rich flowers, swinging in the morning breeze,
Over their dim, fast-moving shadows hung,
Making a quiet image of disquiet
In the smooth, scarcely-moving river-pool.
There, in that bower where first she own'd her love,
And let me kiss my own warm tear of joy
From off her glowing cheek, she sate and stretch'd
The silk upon the frame, and work'd her name
Between the moss-rose and forget-me-not—
Her own dear name, with her own auburn hair!
That forced to wander till sweet spring return,
I yet might ne'er forget her smile, her look,
Her voice, (that even in her mirthful mood
Has made me wish to steal away and weep,)
Nor yet th' entrancement of that maiden kiss
With which she promised, that when spring return'd,
She would resign one-half of that dear name,
And own thenceforth no other name but mine!

TO A LADY.

WITH FALCONER'S "SHIPWRECK."

Ah! not by Cam or Isis, famous streams,
In arched groves, the youthful poet's choice;
Nor while half-listening, 'mid delicious dreams,
To harp and song from lady's hand and voice;

[*] One of the names (and meriting to be the only one) of the *Myosotis Scorpioides Palustris*, a flower from six to twelve inches high, with blue blossom and bright yellow eye. It has the same name over the whole empire of Germany, (*Vergissmein nicht,*) and, we believe, in Denmark and Sweden.

Nor yét while gazing in sublimer mood
On cliff, or cataract, in Alpine dell;
Nor in dim cave with bladdery sea-weed strew'd,
Framing wild fancies to the ocean's swell;

Our sea-bard sang this song! which still he sings,
And sings for thee, sweet friend! Hark, Pity, hark!
Now mounts, now totters on the tempest's wings,
Now groans, and shivers, the replunging bark!

"Cling to the shrouds!" In vain! The breakers roar—
Death shrieks! With two alone of all his clan
Forlorn the poet paced the Grecian shore,
No classic roamer, but a shipwreck'd man!

Say then, what muse inspired these genial strains,
And lit his spirit to so bright a flame?
The elevating thought of suffer'd pains,
Which gentle hearts shall mourn; but chief, the name

Of gratitude! remembrances of friend,
Or absent or no more! Shades of the past,
Which love makes substance! Hence to thee I send,
O dear as long as life and memory last!

I send with deep regards of heart and head,
Sweet maid, for friendship form'd! this work to thee:
And thou, the while thou canst not choose but shed
A tear for Falconer, wilt remember me.

HOME-SICK.

WRITTEN IN GERMANY.

'Tis sweet to him, who all the week
Through city crowds must push his way,
To stroll along through fields and woods,
And hallow thus the Sabbath-day;

And sweet it is, in summer bower,
Sincere, affectionate, and gay,
One's own dear children feasting round,
To celebrate one's marriage-day.

But what is all, to his delight,
Who having long been doom'd to roam,
Throws off the bundle from his back
Before the door of his own home?

Home-sickness is a wasting pang;
This feel I hourly more and more:
There's healing only in thy wings,
Thou breeze that playest on Albion's shore!

ANSWER TO A CHILD'S QUESTION.

Do you ask what the birds say? The sparrow, the dove,
The linnet and thrush, say. "I love and I love!"
In the winter they're silent—the wind is so strong
What it says, I don't know, but it sings a loud song.
But green leaves, and blossoms, and sunny, warm weather,
And singing, and loving—all come back together.
But the lark is so brimful of gladness and love,
The green fields below him, the blue sky above,
That he sings, and he sings; and for ever sings he—
"I love my love, and my love loves me!"

TO A YOUNG LADY.

ON HER RECOVERY FROM A FEVER.

Why need I say, Louisa dear!
How glad I am to see you here
A lovely convalescent;
Risen from the bed of pain and fear,
And feverish heat incessant.

The sunny showers, the dappled sky,
The little birds that warble high,
Their vernal loves commencing,
Will better welcome you than I
With their sweet influencing.

Believe me, while in bed you lay,
Your danger taught us all to pray:
You made us grow devouter!
Each eye look'd up, and seem'd to say
How can we do without her?

Besides, what vex'd us worst, we knew,
They have no need of such as you
In the place where you were going;
This world has angels all too few,
And heaven is overflowing!

THE VISIONARY HOPE.

Sad lot, to have no hope! Though lowly kneeling
He fain would frame a prayer within his breast,
Would fain entreat for some sweet breath of healing,
That his sick body might have ease and rest;
He strove in vain! the dull sighs from his chest
Against his will the stifling load revealing,
Though nature forced; though like some captive guest,
Some royal prisoner at his conqueror's feast,
An alien's restless mood but half-concealing,
The sternness on his gentle brow confess'd,
Sickness within and miserable feeling:
Though obscure pangs made curses of his dreams,
And dreaded sleep, each night repell'd in vain,
Each night was scatter'd by its own loud screams,
Yet never could his heart command, though fain,
One deep full wish to be no more in pain.
That hope, which was his inward bliss and boast
Which waned and died, yet ever near him stood,
Though changed in nature, wander where he would—
For love's despair is but hope's pining ghost!

For this one hope he makes his hourly moan,
He wishes and *can* wish for this alone!
Pierced, as with light from heaven, before its gleams
(So the love-stricken visionary deems)
Disease would vanish, like a summer shower,
Whose dews fling sunshine from the noontide bower!
Or let it stay! yet this one hope should give
Such strength that he would bless his pains and live.

SOMETHING CHILDISH, BUT VERY NATURAL.

WRITTEN IN GERMANY.

If I had but two little wings,
And were a little feathery bird,
To you I'd fly, my dear!
But thoughts like these are idle things,
And I stay here.

But in my sleep to you I fly:
I'm always with you in my sleep!
The world is all one's own.
But then one wakes, and where am I?
All, all alone.

Sleep stays not, though a monarch bids:
So I love to wake ere break of day:
For though my sleep be gone,
Yet, while 'tis dark, one shuts one's lids,
And still dreams on.

RECOLLECTIONS OF LOVE.

How warm this woodland wild recess!
Love surely hath been breathing here,
And this sweet bed of heath, my dear!
Swells up, then sinks, with faint caress,
As if to have you yet more near.

Eight springs have flown, since last I lay
On seaward Quantock's heathy hills,
Where quiet sounds from hidden rills
Float here and there, like things astray,
And high o'erhead the sky-lark shrills.

No voice as yet had made the air
Be music with your name; yet why
That asking look? that yearning sigh?
That sense of promise everywhere?
Beloved! flew your spirit by?

As when a mother doth explore
The rose mark on her long-lost child,
I met, I loved you, maiden mild!
As whom I long had loved before—
So deeply, had I been beguiled.

You stood before me like a thought,
A dream remember'd in a dream.
But when those meek eyes first did seem
To tell me, love within you wrought—
O Greta, dear domestic stream!
Has not, since then, love's prompture deep,
Has not love's whisper evermore,
Been ceaseless, as thy gentle roar?
Sole voice, when other voices sleep,
Dear under-song in clamour's hour.

THE HAPPY HUSBAND.

A FRAGMENT.

Oft, oft methinks, the while with thee
I breathe, as from the heart, thy dear
And dedicated name, I hear
A promise and a mystery,
A pledge of more than passing life,
Yea, in that very name of wife!

A pulse of love, that ne'er can sleep!
A feeling that upbraids the heart
With happiness beyond desert,
That gladness half requests to weep!
Nor bless I not the keener sense
And unalarming turbulence

Of transient joys, that ask no sting
From jealous fears, or coy denying;
But born beneath love's brooding wing,
And into tenderness soon dying,
Wheel out their giddy moment, then
Resign the soul to love again.

A more precipitated vein
Of notes, that eddy in the flow
Of smoothest song, they come, they go,
And leave the sweeter under-strain,
Its own sweet self—a love of thee
That seems, yet cannot greater be!

ON REVISITING THE SEA-SHORE, AFTER LONG ABSENCE,

UNDER STRONG MEDICAL RECOMMENDATION NOT TO BATHE.

God be with thee, gladsome ocean!
How gladly greet I thee once more:
Ships and waves, and ceaseless motion,
And men rejoicing on thy shore.

Dissuading spake the mild physician,
"Those briny waves for thee are death."
But my soul fulfill'd her mission,
And lo! I breathe untroubled breath!

Fashion's pining sons and daughters,
That seek the crowd they seem to fly,
Trembling they approach thy waters;
And what cares nature, if they die?

Me a thousand hopes and pleasures,
A thousand recollections bland,
Thoughts sublime, and stately measures
Revisit on thy echoing strand:

Dreams, (the soul herself forsaking,)
Tearful raptures, boyish mirth;
Silent adorations, making
A blessed shadow of this earth!

O ye hopes, that stir within me,
Health comes with you from above!
God is with me, God is in me!
I cannot die, if life be love.

THE COMPOSITION OF A KISS.

CUPID, if storying legends* tell aright,
Once framed a rich elixir of delight.
A chalice o'er love-kindled flames he fix'd,
And in it nectar and ambrosia mix'd:
With these the magic dews, which evening brings,
Brush'd from th' Idalian star by faery wings:
Each tender pledge of sacred faith he join'd,
Each gentler pleasure of th' unspotted mind—
Day-dreams, whose tints with sportive brightness glow,
And hope, the blameless parasite of wo.
The eyeless chemist heard the process rise,
The steamy chalice bubbled up in sighs;
Sweet sounds transpired, as when th' enamour'd dove
Pours the soft murmuring of responsive love.
The finish'd work might envy vainly blame,
And "Kisses" was the precious compound's name.
With half the god his Cyprian mother blest,
And breathed on SARA's lovelier lips the rest.

III. MEDITATIVE POEMS.

IN BLANK VERSE.

Yea, he deserves to find himself deceived,
Who seeks a heart in the unthinking man.
Like shadows on a stream, the forms of life
Impress their characters on the smooth forehead:
Naught sinks into the bosom's silent depth.
Quick sensibility of pain and pleasure
Moves the light fluids lightly; but no soul
Warmeth the inner frame.

Schiller.

HYMN BEFORE SUNRISE, IN THE VALE OF CHAMOUNY.

Besides the rivers Arve and Arveiron, which have their sources in the foot of Mont Blanc, five conspicuous torrents rush down its sides, and within a few paces of the Glaciers, the gentiana major grows in immense numbers, with its "flowers of loveliest blue."

HAST thou a charm to stay the morning star
In his steep course? So long he seems to pause
On thy bald awful head, O sovran Blanc!
The Arve and Arveiron at thy base
Rave ceaselessly; but thou, most awful form!
Risest from forth thy silent sea of pines,
How silently! Around thee and above
Deep is the air and dark, substantial, black,
An ebon mass: methinks thou piercest it,
As with a wedge! But when I look again,
It is thine own calm home, thy crystal shrine,
Thy habitation from eternity!
O dread and silent mount! I gazed upon thee,
Till thou, still present to the bodily sense,
Didst vanish from my thought: entranced in prayer,
I worshipp'd the Invisible alone.
Yet, like some sweet beguiling melody,
So sweet, we know not we are listening to it,
Thou, the meanwhile, wast blending with my thought,
Yea, with my life and life's own secret joy:
Till the dilating soul, enrapt, transfused,
Into the mighty vision passing—there
As in her natural form, swell'd vast to heaven!
Awake, my soul! not only passive praise
Thou owest! not alone these swelling tears,
Mute thanks, and secret ecstasy! Awake,
Voice of sweet song! Awake, my heart, awake!
Green vales and icy cliffs, all join my hymn.
Thou first and chief, sole sovereign of the vale!
O struggling with the darkness all the night,
And visited all night by troops of stars,
Or when they climb the sky, or when they sink:
Companion of the morning star at dawn,
Thyself earth's rosy star, and of the dawn
Co-herald: wake, O wake, and utter praise!
Who sank thy sunless pillars deep in earth?
Who fill'd thy countenance with rosy light?
Who made thee parent of perpetual streams?
And you, ye five wild torrents fiercely glad!
Who call'd you forth from night and utter death
From dark and icy caverns call'd you forth,
Down those precipitous, black, jagged rocks,
For ever shatter'd and the same for ever?
Who gave you your invulnerable life,
Your strength, your speed, your fury, and your joy
Unceasing thunder, and eternal foam?
And who commanded, (and the silence came,)
Here let the billows stiffen, and have rest?
Ye ice-falls! ye that from the mountain's brow
Adown enormous ravines slope amain—
Torrents, methinks, that heard a mighty voice,
And stopp'd at once amid their maddest plunge!
Motionless torrents! silent cataracts!
Who made you glorious as the gates of heaven
Beneath the keen full moon? Who bade the sun
Clothe you with rainbows? Who, with living flowers
Of loveliest blue, spread garlands at your feet?—
God! let the torrents, like a shout of nations,
Answer! and let the ice-plains echo, God!

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* Effinixt quondam blandum meditata laborem
Basia lascivâ Cypria Diva manâ.
Ambrosiæ succos occultâ temperat arte,
Fragransque infuso nectare tingit opus.
Sufficit et partem mellis, quod subdolus olim
Non impune favis surripuisset Amor
Decussos violæ foliis ad miscet odores
Et spolia æstivis plurima rapta rosis.
Addit et illecebras et mille et mille leporos,
Et quot Acidalius gaudia Cestus habet.
Ex his composuit Dea basia; et omnia libans
Invenias nitidæ sparsa per ora Cloës.

Carm. Quod. Vol II.

God! sing, ye meadow-streams with gladsome voice!
Ye pine-groves, with your soft and soul-like sounds!
And they too have a voice, yon piles of snow,
And in their perilous fall shall thunder, God!
Ye living flowers that skirt th' eternal frost!
Ye wild goats, sporting round the eagle's nest!
Ye eagles, playmates of the mountain storm!
Ye lightnings, the dread arrows of the clouds!
Ye signs and wonders of the element!
Utter forth God, and fill the hills with praise!
Thou, too, hoar mount! with thy sky-pointing peaks,
Oft from whose feet the avalanche, unheard,
Shoots downward, glittering through the pure serene
Into the depth of clouds, that veil thy breast—
Thou too again, stupendous mountain! thou
That as I raised my head, a while bow'd low
In adoration, upward from thy base
Slow travelling with dim eyes suffused with tears,
Solemnly seemest, like a vapory cloud,
To rise before me—Rise, O ever rise,
Rise like a cloud of incense, from the earth!
Thou kingly spirit throned among the hills,
Thou dread ambassador from earth to heaven,
Great hierarch! tell thou the silent sky,
And tell the stars, and tell yon rising sun,
Earth, with her thousand voices, praises God.

LINES

WRITTEN IN THE ALBUM AT ELBINGERODE, IN THE HARTZ FOREST.

I stood on Brocken's* sovran height, and saw
Woods crowding upon woods, hills over hills
A surging scene, and only limited
By the blue distance. Heavily my way
Downward I dragg'd through fir-groves evermore,
Where bright green moss heaves in sepulchral forms
Speckled with sunshine; and, but seldom heard,
The sweet bird's song became a hollow sound;
And the breeze, murmuring indivisibly,
Preserved its solemn murmur most distinct
From many a note of many a waterfall,
And the brook's chatter: 'mid whose islet stones
The dingy kidling with its tinkling bell
Leap'd frolicsome, or old romantic goat
Sat, his white beard slow waving. I moved on
In low and languid mood:† for I had found
That outward forms, the loftiest, still receive
Their finer influence from the life within:
Fair ciphers else: fair, but of import vague
Or unconcerning, where the heart not finds
History or prophecy of friend, or child,
Or gentle maid, our first and early love,
Or father, or the venerable name
Of our adored country! O thou queen,
Thou delegated deity of earth,
O dear, dear England! how my longing eye
Turn'd westward, shaping in the steady clouds
Thy sands and high white cliffs!
My native land.
Fill'd with the thought of thee this heart was proud,
Yea, mine eye swam with tears: that all the view
From sovran Brocken, woods and woody hills,
Floated away, like a departing dream,
Feeble and dim! Stranger, these impulses
Blame thou not lightly; nor will I profane,
With hasty judgment or injurious doubt,
That man's sublimer spirit, who can feel
That God is everywhere! the God who framed
Mankind to be one mighty family,
Himself our Father, and the world our home.

* The highest mountain in the Hartz, and, indeed, in North Germany.

† When I have gazed
From some high eminence on goodly vales,
And cots and villages embower'd below,
The thought would rise that all to me was strange
Amid the scenes so fair, nor one small spot
Where my tired mind might rest, and call it home.
Southey's Hymn to the Penates.

ON OBSERVING A BLOSSOM ON THE FIRST OF FEBRUARY, 1796.

Sweet flower! that peeping from thy russet stem
Unfoldest timidly, (for in strange sort
This dark, frieze-coated, hoarse, teeth-chattering month
Hath borrow'd Zephyr's voice, and gazed upon thee
With blue voluptuous eye,) alas, poor flower!
These are but flatteries of the faithless year.
Perchance, escaped its unknown polar cave,
E'en now the keen north-east is on its way.
Flower that must perish! shall I liken thee
To some sweet girl of too, too rapid growth,
Nipp'd by consumption 'mid untimely charms?
Or to Bristowa's bard,* the wondrous boy!
An amaranth, which earth scarce seem'd to own,
Till disappointment came, and pelting wrong
Beat it to earth? or with indignant grief
Shall I compare thee to poor Poland's hope,
Bright flower of hope kill'd in the opening bud?
Farewell, sweet blossom! better fate be thine,
And mock my boding! Dim similitudes
Weaving in moral strains, I've stolen one hour
From anxious Self, life's cruel task-master!
And the warm wooings of this sunny day
Tremble along my frame, and harmonize
Th' attemper'd organ, that even saddest thoughts
Mix with some sweet sensations, like harsh tones
Play'd deftly on a soft-toned instrument.

* Chatterton.

THE EOLIAN HARP.

COMPOSED AT CLEVEDON, SOMERSETSHIRE.

My pensive Sara! thy soft cheek reclined
Thus on mine arm, most soothing sweet it is
To sit beside our cot, our cot o'ergrown
With white-flower'd jasmin, and the broad-leaved myrtle,

(Meet emblems they of innocence and love!)
And watch the clouds, that late were rich with light,
Slow saddening round, and mark the star of eve
Serenely brilliant (such should wisdom be)
Shine opposite! How exquisite the scents
Snatch'd from yon bean-field! and the world so hush'd!
The stilly murmur of the distant sea
Tells us of silence.
And that simplest lute,
Placed length-ways in the clasping casement, hark!
How by the desultory breeze caress'd,
Like some coy maid half yielding to her lover,
It pours such sweet upbraiding, as must needs
Tempt to repeat the wrong! And now, its strings,
Boldlier swept, the long sequacious notes
Over delicious surges sink and rise,
Such a soft floating witchery of sound
As twilight elfins make, when they at eve
Voyage on gentler gales from Fairy-land,
Where melodies round honey-dropping flowers,
Footless and wild, like birds of paradise,
Nor pause, nor perch, hovering on untamed wing!
O the one life within us and abroad,
Which meets all motion and becomes its soul,
A light in sound, a sound-like power in light,
Rhythm in all thought, and joyance everywhere—
Methinks, it should have been impossible
Not to love all things in a world so fill'd;
Where the breeze warbles, and the mute still air
Is music slumbering on her instrument.
And thus, my love! as on the midway slope
Of yonder hill I stretch my limbs at noon,
Whilst through my half-closed eyelids I behold
The sunbeams dance, like diamonds, on the main,
And tranquil muse upon tranquillity;
Full many a thought uncall'd and undetain'd,
And many idle, flitting fantasies,
Traverse my indolent and passive brain,
As wild and various as the random gales
That swell and flutter on this subject lute!
And what if all of animated nature
Be but organic harps diversely framed,
That tremble into thought, as o'er them sweeps,
Plastic and vast, one intellectual breeze,
At once the soul of each, and God of all?
But thy more serious eye a mild reproof
Darts, O beloved woman! nor such thoughts
Dim and unhallow'd dost thou not reject,
And biddest me walk humbly with my God.
Meek daughter in the family of Christ!
Well hast thou said, and holily dispraised
These shapings of th' unregenerate mind!
Bubbles that glitter as they rise and break
On vain philosophy's aye-babbling spring.
For never guiltless may I speak of Him,
The Incomprehensible! save when with awe
I praise him, and with faith that inly feels;
Who with his saving mercies healed me,
A sinful and most miserable man,
Wilder'd and dark, and gave me to possess
Peace, and this cot, and thee, heart-honour'd maid!

REFLECTIONS ON HAVING LEFT A PLACE OF RETIREMENT.

Sermoni propriora.—*Hor.*

Low was our pretty cot: our tallest rose
Peep'd at the chamber window. We could hear
At silent noon, and eve, and early morn,
The sea's faint murmur. In the open air
Our myrtles blossom'd; and across the porch
Thick jasmins twined: the little landscape round
Was green and woody, and refresh'd the eye.
It was a spot which you might aptly call
The Valley of Seclusion! once I saw
(Hallowing his Sabbath-day by quietness)
A wealthy son of commerce saunter by,
Bristowa's citizen: methought, it calm'd
His thirst of idle gold, and made him muse
With wiser feelings; for he paused, and look'd
With a pleased sadness, and gazed all around,
Then eyed our cottage, and gazed round again,
And sigh'd, and said, it was a blessed place.
And we were bless'd. Oft with patient ear
Long listening to the viewless sky-lark's note,
(Viewless, or haply for a moment seen
Gleaming on sunny wings,) in whisper'd tones
I've said to my beloved, "Such, sweet girl!
The inobtrusive song of happiness,
Unearthly minstrelsy! then only heard
When the soul seeks to hear; when all is hush'd,
And the heart listens!"
But the time, when first
From that low dell, steep up the stony mount
I climb'd with perilous toil, and reach'd the top,
O! what a goodly scene! *Here* the bleak mount,
The bare bleak mountain speckled thin with sheep,
Gray clouds, that shadowing spot the sunny fields
And river, now with bushy rocks o'erbrow'd,
Now winding bright and full, with naked banks;
And seats, and lawns, the abbey and the wood,
And cots, and hamlets, and faint city spire;
The channel *there*, the islands, and white sails,
Dim coasts, and cloud-like hills, and shoreless ocean—
It seem'd like Omnipresence! God, methought,
Had built him there a temple: the whole world
Seem'd imaged in its vast circumference,
No *wish* profaned my overwhelmed heart.
Blest hour! It was a luxury,—to be!
Ah! quiet dell; dear cot, and mount sublime!
I was constrain'd to quit you. Was it right,
While my unnumber'd brethren toil'd and bled,
That I should dream away th' intrusted hours
On rose-leaf beds, pampering the coward heart
With feelings all too delicate for use?
Sweet is the tear that from some Howard's eye
Drops on the cheek of one he lifts from earth:
And he that works me good with unmoved face,
Does it but half: he chills me while he aids,
My benefactor, not my brother man!
Yet even this, this cold beneficence,
Praise, praise it, O my soul! oft as thou scann'st
The sluggard pity's vision-weaving tribe!
Who sigh for wretchedness, yet shun the wretched,
Nursing in some delicious solitude

Their slothful loves and dainty sympathies!
. therefore go, and join head, heart, and hand,
Active and firm, to fight the bloodless fight
Of science, freedom, and the truth in Christ.
Yet oft, when after honourable toil
Rests the tired mind, and waking loves to dream,
My spirit shall revisit thee, dear cot!
Thy jasmin and thy window-peeping rose,
And myrtles fearless of the mild sea-air.
And I shall sigh fond wishes—sweet abode!
Ah!—had none greater! And that all had such!
It might be so—but the time is not yet.
Speed it, O Father! Let thy kingdom come!

TO THE REV. GEORGE COLERIDGE OF OTTERY ST. MARY, DEVON.

WITH SOME POEMS.

Notus in fratres animi paterni.
Hor. Carm. lib. i. 2.

A BLESSED lot hath he, who having pass'd
His youth and early manhood in the stir
And turmoil of the world, retreats at length,
With cares that move, not agitate the heart,
To the same dwelling where his father dwelt;
And haply views his tottering little ones
Embrace those aged knees and climb that lap,
On which first kneeling his own infancy
Lisp'd its brief prayer. Such, O my earliest friend!
Thy lot, and such thy brothers too enjoy.
At distance did ye climb life's upland road,
Yet cheer'd and cheering; now fraternal love
Hath drawn you to one centre. Be your days
Holy, and blest, and blessing may ye live!
To me th' Eternal Wisdom hath dispensed
A different fortune and more different mind—
Me from the spot where first I sprang to light
Too soon transplanted, ere my soul had fix'd
Its first domestic loves; and hence through life
Chasing chance-started friendships. A brief while
Some have preserved me from life's pelting ills;
But, like a tree with leaves of feeble stem,
If the clouds lasted, and a sudden breeze
Ruffled the boughs, they on my head at once
Dropp'd the collected shower; and some most false,
False and fair-foliaged as the manchineel,
Have tempted me to slumber in their shade
E'en 'mid the storm; then breathing subtlest damps,
Mix'd their own venom with the rain from heaven,
That I woke poison'd! But, all praise to Him
Who gives us all things, more have yielded me
Permanent shelter; and beside one friend,
Beneath th' impervious covert of one oak,
I've raised a lowly shed, and know the names
Of husband and of father; nor unlearning
Of that divine and nightly-whispering voice,
Which from my childhood to maturer years
Spake to me of predestinated wreaths
Bright with no fading colours!
Yet at times
My soul is sad, that I have roam'd through life
Still most a stranger, most with naked heart
At mine own home and birthplace: chiefly then,
When I remember thee, my earliest friend!
Thee, who didst watch my boyhood and my youth
Didst trace my wanderings with a father's eye;
And boding evil, yet still hoping good,
Rebuked each fault, and over all my woes
Sorrow'd in silence! He who counts alone
The beatings of the solitary heart,
That Being knows, how I have loved thee ever,
Loved as a brother, as a son revered thee!
O! 'tis to me an ever-new delight,
To talk of thee and thine: or when the blast
Of the shrill winter, rattling our rude sash,
Endears the cleanly hearth and social bowl;
Or when as now, on some delicious eve,
We, in our sweet sequester'd orchard plot,
Sit on the tree crook'd earthward; whose old boughs,
That hang above us in an arborous roof,
Stirr'd by the faint gale of departing May,
Send their loose blossoms slanting o'er our heads.
Nor dost not *thou* sometimes recall those hours,
When with the joy of hope thou gavest thine ear
To my wild firstling-lays? Since then my son
Hath sounded deeper notes, such as beseem
Or that sad wisdom folly leaves behind,
Or such as, tuned to these tumultuous times
Cope with the tempest's swell!
These various strains,
Which I have framed in many a various mood,
Accept, my brother! and (for some perchance
Will strike discordant on thy milder mind)
If aught of error or intemperate truth
Should meet thine ear, think thou that riper age
Will calm it down, and let thy love forgive it!

A TOMBLESS EPITAPH.

'Tis true, Idoloclastes Satyrane!
(So call him, for so mingling blame with praise,
And smiles with anxious looks, his earliest friends,
Masking his birth-name, wont to character
His wild-wood fancy and impetuous zeal,)
'Tis true that, passionate for ancient truths,
And honouring with religious love the great
Of elder times, he hated to excess,
With an unquiet and intolerant scorn,
The hollow puppets of a hollow age,
Ever idolatrous, and changing ever
Its worthless idols! Learning, power, and time,
(Too much of all,) thus wasting in vain war
Of fervid colloquy. Sickness, 'tis true,
Whole years of weary days, besieged him close,
E'en to the gates and inlets of his life!
But it is true, no less, that strenuous, firm,
And with a natural gladness, he maintained
The citadel unconquer'd, and in joy
Was strong to follow the delightful muse.
For not a hidden path, that to the shades
Of the beloved Parnassian forest leads,
Lurk'd undiscover'd by him; not a rill
There issues from the fount of Hippocrene,
But he had traced it upward to its source,
Through open glade, dark glen, and secret dell.
Knew the gay wild-flowers on its banks, and cull'd

Its med'cinable herbs. Yea, oft alone,
Piercing the long-neglected holy cave,
The haunt obscure of old philosophy,
He bade with lifted torch its starry walls
Sparkle as erst they sparkled to the flame
Of odorous lamps tended by saint and sage.
O framed for calmer times and nobler hearts!
O studious poet, eloquent for truth!
Philosopher! contemning wealth and death,
Yet docile, childlike, full of life and love!
Here, rather than on monumental stone,
This record of thy worth thy friend inscribes,
Thoughtful, with quiet tears upon his cheek.

INSCRIPTION FOR A FOUNTAIN ON A HEATH.

This sycamore, oft musical with bees,—
Such tents the patriarchs loved! O long unharm'd
May all its aged boughs o'er-canopy
The small round basin, which this jutting stone
Keeps pure from falling leaves! Long may the spring,
Quietly as a sleeping infant's breath,
Send up cold waters to the traveller
With soft and even pulse! Nor ever cease
Yon tiny cone of sand its soundless dance,
Which at the bottom, like a fairy's page,
As merry and no taller, dances still,
Nor wrinkles the smooth surface of the fount.
Here twilight is and coolness: here is moss,
A soft seat, and a deep and ample shade.
Thou mayst toil far and find no second tree.
Drink, pilgrim, here! Here rest! and if thy heart
Be innocent, here too shalt thou refresh
Thy spirit, listening to some gentle sound,
Or passing gale, or hum of murmuring bees!

THIS LIME-TREE BOWER MY PRISON.

In the June of 1797, some long-expected friends paid a visit to the author's cottage; and on the morning of their arrival, he met with an accident, which disabled him from walking during the whole time of their stay. One evening, when they had left him for a few hours, he composed the following lines in the garden bower.

Well, they are gone, and here must I remain,
This lime-tree bower my prison! I have lost
Beauties and feelings, such as would have been
Most sweet to my remembrace, e'en when age
Had dimm'd mine eyes to blindness! They, meanwhile,
Friends, whom I never more may meet again,
On springy heath, along the hill-top edge,
Wander in gladness, and wind down, perchance,
To that still roaring dell, of which I told:
The roaring dell, o'erwooded, narrow, deep,
And only speckled by the mid-day sun;
Where its slim trunk the ash from rock to rock
Flings arching like a bridge;—that branchless ash,
Unsunn'd and damp, whose few poor yellow leaves
Ne'er tremble in the gale, yet tremble still,
Fann'd by the waterfall! and there my friends
Behold the dark green file of long lank weeds,*
That all at once (a most fantastic sight!)
Still nod and drip beneath the dripping edge
Of the blue clay-stone.
Now, my friends emerge
Beneath the wide, wide heaven—and view again
The many-steepled tract magnificent
Of hilly fields and meadows, and the sea,
With some fair bark, perhaps, whose sails light up
The slip of smooth clear blue betwixt two isles
Of purple shadow! Yes, they wander on
In gladness all; but thou, methinks, most glad,
My gentle-hearted Charles; for thou hast pined
And hunger'd after nature, many a year,
In the great city pent, winning thy way
With sad yet patient soul, through evil and pain
And strange calamity! Ah! slowly sink
Behind the western ridge, thou glorious sun!
Shine in the slant beams of the sinking orb,
Ye purple heath-flowers! richlier burn, ye clouds!
Live in the yellow light, ye distant groves!
And kindle, thou blue ocean! So my friend,
Struck with deep joy, may stand, as I have stood,
Silent with swimming sense; yea, gazing round
On the wide landscape, gaze till all doth seem
Less gross than bodily; and of such hues
As veil th' Almighty Spirit, when yet he makes
Spirits perceive his presence.
A delight
Comes sudden on my heart, and I am glad
As I myself was there! Nor in this bower,
This little lime-tree bower, have I not mark'd
Much that has soothed me. Pale beneath the blaze
Hung the transparent foliage; and I watch'd
Some broad and sunny leaf, and loved to see
The shadow of the leaf and stem above
Dappling its sunshine! And that walnut tree
Was richly tinged, and a deep radiance lay
Full on the ancient ivy, which usurps
Those fronting elms, and now, with blackest mass,
Makes their dark branches gleam a lighter hue
Through the late twilight: and though now the bat
Wheels silent by, and not a swallow twitters,
Yet still the solitary humble bee
Sings in the bean-flower! Henceforth I shall know
That nature ne'er deserts the wise and pure;
No plot so narrow, be but nature there,
No waste so vacant, but may well employ
Each faculty of sense, and keep the heart
Awake to love and beauty! and sometimes
'Tis well to be bereft of promised good,
That we may lift the soul, and contemplate
With lively joy the joys we cannot share.
My gentle-hearted Charles! when the last rook
Beat its straight path along the dusky air
Homewards, I blest it! deeming its black wing
(Now a dim speck now vanishing in light)
Had cross'd the mighty orb's dilated glory,

* The asplenium scolopendrium, called in some countries the adder's tongue, in others the hart's tongue; but Withering gives the adder's tongue as the trivial name of the ophioglossum only

While thou stood'st gazing; or when all was still,
Flew creaking* o'er thy head, and had a charm
For thee, my gentle-hearted Charles, to whom
No sound is dissonant which tells of life.

TO A GENTLEMAN.

COMPOSED ON THE NIGHT AFTER HIS RECITATION OF A POEM ON THE GROWTH OF AN INDIVIDUAL MIND.

FRIEND of the wise! and teacher of the good!
Into my heart have I received that lay
More than historic, that prophetic lay,
Wherein (high theme by thee first sung aright)
Of the foundations and the building up
Of a human spirit, thou hast dared to tell
What may be told, to the understanding mind
Revealable; and what within the mind,
By vital breathings secret as the soul
Of vernal growth, oft quickens in the heart
Thoughts all too deep for words!—
Theme hard as high!
Of smiles spontaneous, and mysterious fears,
(The first-born they of reason and twin birth,)
Of tides obedient to external force,
And currents self-determined, as might seem,
Or by some inner power; of moments awful,
Now in thy inner life, and now abroad,
When power stream'd from thee, and thy soul received
The light reflected, as a light bestow'd—
Of fancies fair, and milder hours of youth,
Hyblean murmurs of poetic thought
Industrious in its joy, in vales and glens
Native or outland, lakes and famous hills!
Or on the lonely high-road, when the stars
Were rising; or by secret mountain streams,
The guides and the companions of thy way!
Of more than fancy, of the social sense
Distending wide, and man beloved as man,
Where France in all her towns lay vibrating
Like some becalmed bark beneath the burst
Of heaven's immediate thunder, when no cloud
Is visible, or shadow on the main.
For thou wert there, thine own brows garlanded,
Amid the tremor of a realm aglow,
Amid a mighty nation jubilant,
When from the general heart of human kind
Hope sprang forth like a full-born deity;
——Of that dear hope afflicted and struck down,
So summon'd homeward, thenceforth calm and sure
From the dread watch-tower of man's absolute self,
With light unwaning on her eyes, to look
Far on—herself a glory to behold,
The angel of the vision! Then (last strain)
Of duty, chosen laws controlling choice,
Action and joy!—An orphic song, indeed,
A song divine, of high and passionate thoughts,
To their own music chanted!
O great bard!
Ere yet that last strain dying awed the air,
With steadfast eye I view'd thee in the choir
Of e'er-enduring men. The truly great
Have all one age, and from one visible space
Shed influence! They, both in power and act
Are permanent, and time is not with *them*,
Save as it worketh *for* them, they *in* it.
Nor less a sacred roll, than those of old,
And to be placed, as they, with gradual fame
Among the archives of mankind, thy work
Makes audible a linked lay of truth,
Of truth profound a sweet continuous lay,
Not learnt, but native, her own natural notes!
Ah! as I listen'd with a heart forlorn,
The pulses of my being beat anew:
And e'en as life returns upon the drown'd,
Life's joy rekindling roused a throng of pains—
Keen pangs of love, awakening as a babe
Turbulent, with an outcry in the heart;
And fears self-will'd, that shunn'd the eye of hope;
And hope that scarce would know itself from fear,
Sense of past youth, and manhood come in vain,
And genius given, and knowledge won in vain;
And all which I had cull'd in wood-walks wild,
And all which patient toil had rear'd, and all,
Commune with *thee* had open'd out—but flowers
Strew'd on my corse, and borne upon my bier,
In the same coffin, for the selfsame grave!
That way no more! and ill beseems it me,
Who came a welcomer in herald's guise,
Singing of glory, and futurity,
To wander back on such unhealthful road,
Plucking the poisons of self-harm! And ill
Such intertwine beseems triumphal wreaths
Strew'd before *thy* advancing!
Nor do thou,
Sage bard! impair the memory of that hour
Of my communion with thy nobler mind
By pity or grief, already felt too long!
Nor let my words import more blame than needs.
The tumult rose and ceased; for peace is nigh
Where wisdom's voice has found a listening heart.
Amid the howl of more than wintry storms,
The halcyon hears the voice of vernal hours
Already on the wing.
Eve following eve,
Dear tranquil time, when the sweet sense of home
Is sweetest! moments for their own sake hail'd
And more desired, more precious for thy song,
In silence listening, like a devout child,
My soul lay passive, by the various strain
Driven as in surges now beneath the stars,
With momentary stars of my own birth,
Fair constellated foam,* still darting off

* Some months after I had written this line, it gave me pleasure to observe that Bartram had observed the same circumstance of the Savanna crane. "When these birds move their wings in flight, their strokes are slow, moderate, and regular; and even when at a considerable distance, or high above us, we plainly hear the quill-feathers; their shafts and webs upon one another creak as the joints or working of a vessel in a tempestuous sea."

* "A beautiful white cloud of foam at momentary intervals coursed by the side of the vessel with a roar, and little stars of flame danced and sparkled and went out in it: and every now and then light detachments of this white cloud-like foam darted off from the vessel's side, each with its own small constellation, over the sea, and scoured out of sight like a Tartar troop over a wilderness."—*The Friend*, p. 220.

Into the darkness; now a tranquil sea,
Outspread and bright, yet swelling to the moon.
And when—O friend! my comforter and guide!
Strong in thyself, and powerful to give strength!—
Thy long-sustained song finally closed,
And thy deep voice had ceased—yet thou thyself
Wert still before my eyes, and round us both
That happy vision of beloved faces—
Scarce conscious, and yet conscious of its close
I sate, my being blended in one thought,
(Thought was it? or aspiration? or resolve?)
Absorb'd, yet hanging still upon the sound—
And when I rose, I found myself in prayer.

TO A FRIEND,

WHO HAD DECLARED HIS INTENTION OF WRITING NO MORE POETRY.

Dear Charles! whilst yet thou wert a babe, I ween
That genius plunged thee in that wizard fount,
Hight Castalie: and (sureties of thy faith)
That pity and simplicity stood by,
And promised for thee, that thou shouldst renounce
The world's low cares and lying vanities,
Steadfast and rooted in the heavenly muse,
And wash'd and sanctified to poesy.
Yes, thou wert plunged, but with forgetful hand
Held, as by Thetis erst her warrior son:
And with those recreant unbaptized heels
Thou'rt flying from thy bounden ministeries—
So sore it seems and burthensome a task
To weave unwithering flowers! But take thou heed:
For thou art vulnerable, wild-eyed boy,
And I have arrows* mystically dipp'd,
Such as may stop thy speed. Is thy Burns dead?
And shall he die unwept, and sink to earth
"Without the meed of one melodious tear?"
Thy Burns, and nature's own beloved bard,
Who to the "Illustrious† of his native land
So properly did look for patronage."
Ghost of Mæcenas! hide thy blushing face!
They snatch'd him from the sickle and the plough,
To gauge ale-firkins.
O! for shame, return!
On a bleak rock, midway th' Aonian mount,
There stands a lone and melancholy tree,
Whose aged branches in the midnight blast
Make solemn music: pluck its darkest bough,
Ere yet th' unwholesome night-dew be exhaled,
And weeping wreath it round thy poet's tomb.
Then in the outskirts, where pollutions grow,
Pick the rank henbane and the dusky flowers
Of night-shade, or its red and tempting fruit.
These with stopp'd nostril and glove-guarded hand,
Knit in nice intertexture, so to twine
Th' illustrious brow of Scotch nobility.

1796.

* Vide Pind. Olymp. iii. l. 156.

† Verbatim from Burns's dedication of his Poem to the Nobility and Gentry of the Caledonian Hunt.

THE NIGHTINGALE:

A CONVERSATION POEM.

WRITTEN IN APRIL, 1798.

No cloud, no relic of the sunken day
Distinguishes the west, no long thin slip
Of sullen light, no obscure trembling hues.
Come, we will rest on this old mossy bridge!
You see the glimmer of the stream beneath,
But hear no murmuring: it flows silently,
O'er its soft bed of verdure. All is still,
A balmy night! and though the stars be dim,
Yet let us think upon the vernal showers
That gladden the green earth, and we shall find
A pleasure in the dimness of the stars.
And hark! the nightingale begins its song,
"Most musical, most melancholy"† bird!
A melancholy bird? O! idle thought!
In nature there is nothing melancholy.
But some night-wandering man, whose heart was pierced
With the remembrance of a grievous wrong,
Or slow distemper, or neglected love,
(And so, poor wretch! fill'd all things with himself,
And made all gentle sounds tell back the tale
Of his own sorrow,) he, and such as he,
First named these notes a melancholy strain.
And many a poet echoes the conceit;
Poet who hath been building up the rhyme
When he had better far have stretch'd his limbs
Beside a brook in mossy forest dell,
By sun or moonlight, to the influxes
Of shapes and sounds and shifting elements
Surrendering his whole spirit, of his song
And of his frame forgetful! so his fame
Should share in nature's immortality,
A venerable thing! and so his song
Should make all nature lovelier, and itself
Be loved like nature! But 'twill not be so;
And youths and maidens most poetical,
Who lose the deepening twilights of the spring
In ball-rooms and hot theatres, they still,
Full of meek sympathy, must heave their sighs
O'er Philomela's pity-pleading strains.
My friend, and thou, our sister! we have learnt
A different lore: we may not thus profane
Nature's sweet voices, always full of love
And joyance! 'Tis the merry nightingale
That crowds, and hurries, and precipitates
With fast thick warble his delicious notes,
As he were fearful that an April night
Would be too short for him to utter forth
His love-chant, and disburthen his full soul
Of all its music!
And I know a grove
Of large extent, hard by a castle huge,

* This passage in Milton possesses an excellence far superior to that of mere description. It is spoken in the character of the melancholy man, and has therefore a dramatic propriety. The author makes this remark, to rescue himself from the charge of having alluded with levity to a line in Milton; a charge than which none could be more painful to him, except perhaps that of having ridiculed his Bible.

Which the great lord inhabits not; and so
This grove is wild with tangling underwood,
And the trim walks are broken up, and grass,
Thin grass and king-cups grow within the paths.
But never elsewhere in one place I knew
So many nightingales; and far and near,
In wood and thicket, over the wide grove,
They answer and provoke each other's song,
With skirmish and capricious passagings,
And murmurs musical and swift jug jug,
And one low piping sound more sweet than all—
Stirring the air with such a harmony,
That should you close your eyes, you might almost
Forget it was not day! On moonlight bushes,
Whose dewy leaflets are but half-disclosed,
You may perchance behold them on the twigs,
Their bright, bright eyes, their eyes both bright and full,
Glistening, while many a glow-worm in the shade
Lights up her love-torch.
A most gentle maid,
Who dwelleth in her hospitable home
Hard by the castle, and at latest eve,
(E'en like a lady vow'd and dedicate
To something more than nature in the grove,)
Glides through the pathways: she knows all their notes,
That gentle maid! and oft a moment's space,
What time the moon was lost behind a cloud,
Hath heard a pause of silence; till the moon
Emerging, hath awaken'd earth and sky
With one sensation, and these wakeful birds
Have all burst forth in choral minstrelsy,
As if some sudden gale had swept at once
A hundred airy harps! And she hath watch'd
Many a nightingale perch'd giddily
On blossomy twig still swinging from the breeze,
And to that motion tune his wanton song
Like tipsy joy that reels with tossing head.
Farewell, O warbler! till to-morrow eve,
And you, my friends! farewell, a short farewell!
We have been loitering long and pleasantly,
And now for our dear homes.—The strain again?
Full fain it would delay me! My dear babe,
Who, capable of no articulate sound,
Mars all things with his imitative lisp,
How he would place his hand beside his ear,
His little hand, the small forefinger up,
And bid us listen! And I deem it wise
To make him nature's playmate. He knows well
The evening star; and once, when he awoke
In most distressful mood, (some inward pain
Had made up that strange thing, an infant's dream,)
I hurried with him to our orchard-plot,
And he beheld the moon, and, hush'd at once,
Suspends his sobs, and laughs most silently,
While his fair eyes, that swam with undropp'd tears
Did glitter in the yellow moonbeam! Well!—
It is a father's tale: but if that Heaven
Should give me life, his childhood shall grow up
Familiar with these songs, that with the night
He may associate joy! Once more, farewell,
Sweet nightingale! Once more, my friends! farewell.

FROST AT MIDNIGHT.

The frost performs its secret ministry,
Unhelp'd by any wind. The owlet's cry
Came loud—and hark, again! loud as before.
The inmates of my cottage, all at rest,
Have left me to that solitude, which suits
Abstruser musings: save that at my side
My cradled infant slumbers peacefully.
'Tis calm indeed! so calm, that it disturbs
And vexes meditation with its strange
And extreme silentness. Sea, hill, and wood,
This populous village! Sea, and hill, and wood,
With all the numberless goings on of life,
Inaudible as dreams! the thin blue flame
Lies on my low burnt fire, and quivers not;
Only that film, which flutter'd on the grate,
Still flutters there, the sole unquiet thing.
Methinks, its motion in this hush of nature
Gives it dim sympathies with me who live,
Making it a companionable form,
Whose puny flaps and freaks the idling spirit
By its own moods interprets, everywhere
Echo or mirror seeking of itself,
And makes a toy of thought.
But O! how oft,
How oft, at school, with most believing mind
Presageful, have I gazed upon the bars,
To watch that fluttering *stranger!* and as oft
With unclosed lids, already had I dreamt
Of my sweet birthplace, and the old church tower,
Whose bells, the poor man's only music, rang
From morn to evening, all the hot fair-day,
So sweetly, that they stirr'd and haunted me
With a wild pleasure, falling on mine ear
Most like articulate sounds of things to come!
So gazed I, till the soothing things I dreamt,
Lull'd me to sleep, and sleep prolong'd my dreams!
And so I brooded all the following morn,
Awed by the stern preceptor's face, mine eye
Fix'd with mock study on my swimming book:
Save if the door half-open'd, and I snatch'd
A hasty glance, and still my heart leap'd up,
For still I hoped to see the *stranger's* face,
Townsman, or aunt, or sister more beloved,
My playmate when we both were clothed alike!
Dear babe, that sleepest cradled by my side,
Whose gentle breathings, heard in this deep calm,
Fill up the interspersed vacancies
And momentary pauses of the thought!
My babe so beautiful! it thrills my heart
With tender gladness, thus to look at thee,
And think that thou shalt learn far other lore,
And in far other scenes! For I was rear'd
In the great city, pent 'mid cloisters dim,
And saw naught lovely but the sky and stars.
But *thou*, my babe! shalt wander like a breeze
By lakes and sandy shores, beneath the crags
Of ancient mountain, and beneath the clouds,
Which image in their bulk both lakes and shores
And mountain crags: so shalt thou see and hear
The lovely shapes and sounds intelligible
Of that eternal language, which thy God
Utters, who from eternity doth teach
Himself in all, and all things in himself,

Great universal Teacher! he shall mould
Thy spirit, and by giving make it ask.
Therefore all seasons shall be sweet to thee,
Whether the summer clothe the general earth
With greenness, or the redbreast sit and sing
Betwixt the tufts of snow on the bare branch
Of mossy apple tree, while the nigh thatch
Smokes in the sun-thaw; whether the eave-drops fall
Heard only in the trances of the blast,
Or if the secret ministry of frost
Shall hang them up in silent icicles,
Quietly shining to the quiet moon.

TO A FRIEND.

TOGETHER WITH AN UNFINISHED POEM.

THUS far my scanty brain hath built the rhyme
Elaborate and swelling: yet the heart
Not owns it. From thy spirit-breathing powers
I ask not now, my friend! the aiding verse,
Tedious to thee, and from my anxious thought
Of dissonant mood. In fancy (well I know)
From business wandering far and local cares,
Thou creepest round a dear-loved sister's bed
With noiseless step, and watchest the faint look
Soothing each pang with fond solicitude,
And tenderest tones medicinal of love.
I too a sister had, an only sister——
She loved me dearly, and I doted on her!
To her I pour'd forth all my puny sorrows,
(As a sick patient in his nurse's arms,)
And of the heart those hidden maladies
That shrink ashamed from even friendship's eye.
O! I have woke at midnight, and have wept
Because SHE WAS NOT!—Cheerily, dear Charles!
Thou thy best friend shalt cherish many a year:
Such warm presages feel I of high hope.
For not uninterested the dear maid
I've view'd—her soul affectionate yet wise,
Her polish'd wit as mild as lambent glories
That play around a sainted infant's head.
He knows (the Spirit that in secret sees,
Of whose omniscient and all-spreading love
Aught to *implore** were impotence of mind)
That my mute thoughts are sad before his throne,
Prepared, when he his healing ray vouchsafes,
To pour forth thanksgiving with lifted heart,
And praise him gracious with a brother's joy!

December, 1794.

THE HOUR WHEN WE SHALL MEET AGAIN.

COMPOSED DURING ILLNESS AND IN ABSENCE.

DIM hour! that sleep'st on pillowing clouds afar,
O rise and yoke the turtles to thy car!
Bend o'er the traces, blame each lingering dove,
And give me to the bosom of my love!
My gentle love, caressing and carest,
With heaving heart shall cradle me to rest;
Shed the warm tear-drop from her smiling eyes,
Lull with fond wo, and med'cine me with sighs:
While finely-flushing float her kisses meek,
Like melted rubies, o'er my pallid cheek.
Chill'd by the night, the drooping rose of May
Mourns the long absence of the lovely day;
Young day, returning at her promised hour,
Weeps o'er the sorrows of her favourite flower
Weeps the soft dew, the balmy gale she sighs,
And darts a trembling lustre from her eyes.
New life and joy th' expanding floweret feels:
His pitying mistress mourns, and mourning heals!

LINES TO JOSEPH COTTLE.

MY honour'd friend! whose verse concise, yet clear,
Tunes to smooth melody unconquer'd sense,
May your fame fadeless live, as "never-sere"
The ivy wreathes yon oak, whose broad defence
Embowers me from noon's sultry influence!
For, like that nameless rivulet stealing by,
Your modest verse, to musing quiet dear,
Is rich with tints heaven-borrow'd: the charm'd eye
Shall gaze undazzled there, and love the soften'd sky.

Circling the base of the poetic mount
A stream there is, which rolls in lazy flow
Its coal-black waters from oblivion's fount:
The vapour-poison'd birds, that fly too low,
Fall with dead swoop, and to the bottom go.
Escaped that heavy stream on pinion fleet,
Beneath the mountain's lofty frowning brow,
Ere aught of perilous ascent you meet,
A mead of mildest charm delays th' unlabouring feet.

Not there the cloud-climb'd rock, sublime and vast,
That like some giant king, o'erglooms the hill;
Nor there the pine-grove to the midnight blast
Makes solemn music! But th' unceasing rill
To the soft wren or lark's descending trill
Murmurs sweet under-song 'mid jasmin bowers.
In this same pleasant meadow, at your will,
I ween, you wander'd—there collecting flowers
Of sober tint, and herbs of med'cinable powers!

There for the monarch-murder'd soldier's tomb
You wove th' unfinish'd wreath of saddest hues;*
And to that holier chaplet† added bloom,
Besprinkling it with Jordan's cleansing dews.
But lo! your Henderson‡ awakes the muse——
His spirit beckon'd from the mountain's height!
You left the plain and soar'd mid richer views:
So nature mourn'd, when sank the first day's light,
With stars, unseen before, spangling her robe of night!

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* . . utterly recant the sentiment contained in the lines

Of whose omniscient and all-spreading love
Aught to *implore* were impotence of mind,

it being written in Scripture, "*Ask*, and it shall be given you," and my human reason being moreover convinced of the propriety of offering *petitions* as well as thanksgivings to the Deity.

* War, a fragment. † John the Baptist, a poem.
‡ Monody on John Henderson.

Mount soar, my friend, those richer views among,
Strong, rapid, fervent flashing fancy's beam!
Virtue and truth shall love your gentler song;
But poesy demands th' impassion'd theme:
Waked by heaven's silent dews at eve's mild gleam,
What balmy sweets Pomona breathes around!
But if the vext air rush a stormy stream,
Or autumn's shrill gust moan in plaintive sound,
With fruits and flowers she loads the tempest-honour'd ground.

IV. ODES AND MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

THE THREE GRAVES.

A FRAGMENT OF A SEXTON'S TALE.

[THE author has published the following humble fragment, encouraged by the decisive recommendation of more than one of our most celebrated living poets. The language was intended to be dramatic; that is, suited to the narrator: and the metre corresponds to the homeliness of the diction. It is therefore presented as the fragment, not of a poem, but of a common ballad tale. Whether this is sufficient to justify the adoption of such a style, in any metrical composition not professedly ludicrous, the author is himself in some doubt. At all events, it is not presented as poetry, and it is in no way connected with the author's judgment concerning poetic diction. Its merits, if any, are exclusivley psychological. The story, which must be supposed to have been narrated in the first and second parts, is as follows.

Edward, a young farmer, meets, at the house of Ellen, her bosom friend, Mary, and commences an acquaintance, which ends in a mutual attachment. With her consent, and by the advice of their common friend Ellen, he announces his hopes and intentions to Mary's mother, a widow woman bordering on her fortieth year, and from constant health, the possession of a competent property, and from having had no other children but Mary and another daughter, (the father died in their infancy,) retaining, for the greater part, her personal attractions and comeliness of appearance; but a woman of low education and violent temper. The answer which she at once returned to Edward's application was remarkable: "Well! Edward, you are a handsome young fellow, and you shall have my daughter." From this time all their wooing passed under the mother's eye; and, in fine, she became herself enamoured of her future son-in-law, and practised every art, both of endearment and of calumny, to transfer his affections from her daughter to herself. (The outlines of the tale are positive facts, and of no very distant date, though the author has purposely altered the names and the scene of action, as well as invented the characters of the parties and the detail of the incidents.) Edward, however, though perplexed by her strange detraction from her daughter's good qualities, yet in the innocence of his own heart still mistaking her increasing fondness for motherly affection; she, at length, overcome by her miserable passion, after much abuse of Mary's temper and moral tendencies, exclaimed with violent emotion—"O Edward! indeed, indeed, she is not fit for you—she has not a heart to love you as you deserve. It is I that love you! Marry me, Edward! and I will this very day settle all my property on you."—The lover's eyes were now opened; and thus taken by surprise, whether from the effect of the horror which he felt, acting as it were hysterically on his nervous system, or that at the first moment he lost the sense of the proposal in the feeling of its strangeness and absurdity, he flung her from him and burst into a fit of laughter. Irritated by this almost to frenzy, the woman fell on her knees, and in a loud voice that approached to a scream, she prayed for a curse both on him and on her own child. Mary happened to be in the room directly above them, heard Edward's laugh and her mother's blasphemous prayer, and fainted away. He, hearing the fall, ran up stairs, and taking her in his arms, carried her off to Ellen's home; and after some fruitless attempts on her part toward a reconciliation with her mother, she was married to him.—And here the third part of the tale begins.

I was not led to choose this story from any partiality to tragic, much less to monstrous events, (though at the time that I composed the verses, somewhat more than twelve years ago, I was less averse to such subjects than at present,) but from finding in it a striking proof of the possible effect on the imagination, from an idea violently and suddenly impressed on it. I had been reading Bryan Edwards's account of the effect of the *Obi* Witchcraft on the Negroes in the West Indies, and Hearne's deeply interesting anecdotes of similar workings on the imagination of the Copper Indians, (those of my readers who have it in their power will be well repaid for the trouble of referring to those works for the passages alluded to,) and I conceived the design of showing that instances of this kind are not peculiar to savage or barbarous tribes, and of illustrating the mode in which the mind is affected in these cases, and the progress and symptoms of the morbid action on the fancy from the beginning.

[The tale is supposed to be narrated by an old sexton, in a country churchyard, to a traveller whose curiosity had been awakened by the appearance of three graves, close by each other, to two only of which there were grave-stones. On the first of these were the name, and dates, as usual: on the second no name but only a date, and the words, The mercy of God is infinite.]

* * * * *
* * * * *

PART III.

THE grapes upon the vicar's wall
Were ripe as ripe could be;
And yellow leaves in sun and wind
Were falling from the tree.

On the hedge elms in the narrow lane
Still swung the spikes of corn;
Dear Lord! it seems but yesterday—
Young Edward's marriage morn.

Up through that wood behind the church,
There leads from Edward's door
A mossy track, all over-bough'd
For half a mile or more.

And from their house-door by that track
The bride and bridegroom went;
Sweet Mary, though she was not gay,
Seem'd cheerful and content.

But when they to the churchyard came,
I've heard poor Mary say,
As soon as she stepp'd into the sun,
Her heart it died away.

And when the vicar joined their hands,
Her limbs did creep and freeze;
But when they pray'd, she thought she saw
Her mother on her knees.

And o'er the church path they return'd—
I saw poor Mary's back,
Just as she stepp'd beneath the boughs
Into the mossy track.

Her feet upon the mossy track
The married maiden set:
That moment—I have heard her say—
She wish'd she could forget.

The shade o'erflush'd her limbs with heat—
Then came a chill like death:
And when the merry bells rang out,
They seem'd to stop her breath.

Beneath the foulest mother's curse
No child could ever thrive;
A mother is a mother still,
The holiest thing alive.

So five months pass'd: the mother still
Would never heal the strife:
But Edward was a loving man,
And Mary a fond wife.

"My sister may not visit us,
My mother says her nay:
O Edward! you are all to me,
I wish for your sake I could be
More lifesome and more gay.

"I'm dull and sad! indeed, indeed,
I know I have no reason!
Perhaps I am not well in health,
And 'tis a gloomy season."

'Twas a drizzly time—no ice, no snow!
And on the few fine days
She stirr'd not out, lest she might meet
Her mother in her ways.

But Ellen, spite of miry ways,
And weather dark and dreary,
Trudged every day to Edward's house,
And made them all more cheery

O! Ellen was a faithful friend,
More dear than any sister!
As cheerful, too, as singing lark;
And ne'er left them till it was dark
And then they always miss'd her.

And now Ash Wednesday came—that day
But few to church repair:
For on that day you know we read
The commination prayer.

Our late old vicar, a kind man,
Once, sir, he said to me,
He wish'd that service was clean out
Of our good Liturgy.

The mother walk'd into the church—
To Ellen's seat she went;
Though Ellen always kept her church,
All church-days during Lent.

And gentle Ellen welcomed her
With courteous looks and mild;
Thought she, "What if her heart should melt
And all be reconciled!"

The day was scarcely like a day—
The clouds were black outright;
And many a night with half a moon,
I've seen the church more light.

The wind was wild; against the glass
The rain did beat and bicker;
The church tower swinging overhead,
You scarce could hear the vicar!

And then and there the mother knelt,
And audibly she cried—
"O! may a clinging curse consume
This woman by my side!

"O hear me, hear me, Lord in heaven,
Although you take my life—
O curse this woman, at whose house
Young Edward woo'd his wife.

"By night and day, in bed and bower,
O let her cursed be!!!"
So having pray'd, steady and slow,
She rose up from her knee!
And left the church, nor e'er again
The church door enter'd she.

I saw poor Ellen kneeling still,
So pale! I guess'd not why:
When she stood up, there plainly was
A trouble in her eye.

And when the prayers were done, we all
Came round and ask'd her why:

Giddy she seem'd, and sure there was
A trouble in her eye.

But ere she from the church door stepp'd,
She smiled and told us why;
"It was a wicked woman's curse,"
Quoth she, "and what care I?"

She smiled, and smiled, and pass'd it off
Ere from the door she stept—
But all agree it would have been
Much better had she wept.

And if her heart was not at ease,
This was her constant cry—
"It was a wicked woman's curse—
God's good, and what care I?"

There was a hurry in her looks,
Her struggles she redoubled:
"It was a wicked woman's curse,
And why should I be troubled?"

These tears will come—I dandled her
When 'twas the merest fairy—
Good creature! and she hid it all:
She told it not to Mary.

But Mary heard the tale: her arms
Round Ellen's neck she threw;
"O Ellen, Ellen, she cursed me,
And now she hath cursed you!"

I saw young Edward by himself
Stalk fast adown the lea,
He snatch'd a stick from every fence,
A twig from every tree.

He snapp'd them still with hand or knee,
And then away they flew.
As if with his uneasy limbs
He knew not what to do!

You see, good sir! that single hill
His farm lies underneath:
He heard it there, he heard it all,
And only gnash'd his teeth.

Now Ellen was a darling love
In all his joys and cares:
And Ellen's name and Mary's name
Fast link'd they both together came,
Whene'er he said his prayers.

And in the moment of his prayers
He loved them both alike:
Yea, both sweet names with one sweet joy
Upon his heart did strike!

He reach'd his home, and by his looks
They saw his inward strife!
And they clung round him with their arms,
Both Ellen and his wife.

And Mary could not check her tears,
So on his breast she bow'd;
Then frenzy melted into grief,
And Edward wept aloud.

Dear Ellen did not weep at all,
But closelier did she cling,
And turn'd her face, and look'd as if
She saw some frightful thing.

PART IV.

To see a man tread over graves
I hold it no good mark;
'Tis wicked in the sun and moon,
And bad luck in the dark!

You see that grave? The Lord he gives,
The Lord he takes away:
O, sir! the child of my old age
Lies there as cold as clay.

Except that grave, you scarce see one
That was not dug by me:
I'd rather dance upon them all
Than tread upon these three!

"Ay, sexton! 'tis a touching tale."
You, sir! are but a lad;
This month I'm in my seventieth year,
And still it makes me sad.

And Mary's sister told it me,
For three good hours and more;
Though I had heard it, in the main,
From Edward's self, before.

Well! it pass'd off! the gentle Ellen
Did wellnigh dote on Mary;
And she went oftener than before,
And Mary loved her more and more:
She managed all the dairy.

To market she on market days,
To church on Sundays came;
All seem'd the same: all seem'd so, sir!
But all was not the same!

Had Ellen lost her mirth? O! no!
But she was seldom cheerful;
And Edward look'd as if he thought
That Ellen's mirth was fearful.

When by herself, she to herself
Must sing some merry rhyme;
She could not now be glad for hours,
Yet silent all the time.

And when she soothed her friend, through all
Her soothing words 'twas plain
She had a sore grief of her own,
A haunting in her brain.

And oft she said, I'm not grown thin!
And then her wrist she spann'd;
And once, when Mary was downcast,
She took her by the hand,
And gazed upon her, and at first
She gently press'd her hand;

Then harder, till her grasp at length
Did gripe like a convulsion!
Alas! said she, we ne'er can be
Made happy by compulsion!

And once her both arms suddenly
Round Mary's neck she flung,
And her heart panted, and she felt
The words upon her tongue.

She felt them coming, but no power
Had she the words to smother;
And with a kind of shriek she cried,
"O Christ! you're like your mother!"

So gentle Ellen now no more
Could make this sad house cheery;
And Mary's melancholy ways
Drove Edward wild and weary.

Lingering he raised his latch at eve,
Though tired in heart and limb:
He loved no other place, and yet
Home was no home to him.

One evening he took up a book,
And nothing in it read;
Then flung it down, and groaning, cried,
"O! Heaven! that I were dead."

Mary look'd up into his face,
And nothing to him said;
She tried to smile, and on his arm
Mournfully lean'd her head.

And he burst into tears, and fell
Upon his knees in prayer;
"Her heart is broke! O God! my grief,
It is too great to bear!"

'Twas such a foggy time as makes
Old sextons, sir! like me,
Rest on their spades to cough; the spring
Was late uncommonly.

And then the hot days, all at once,
They came, we knew not how;
You look'd about for shade, when scarce
A leaf was on a bough.

It happen'd then, ('twas in the bower
A furlong up the wood;
Perhaps you know the place, and yet
I scarce know how you should,)

No path leads thither, 'tis not nigh
To any pasture plot;
But cluster'd near the chattering brook,
Lone hollies mark'd the spot.

Those hollies of themselves a shape
As of an arbour took,
A close, round arbour; and it stands
Not three strides from a brook.

Within this arbour, which was still
With scarlet berries hung,
Were these three friends, one Sunday morn,
Just as the first bell rung.

'Tis sweet to hear a brook, 'tis sweet
To hear the Sabbath bell,
'Tis sweet to hear them both at once,
Deep in a woody dell.

His limbs along the moss, his head
Upon a mossy heap,
With shut-up senses, Edward lay,
That brook e'en on a working day
Might chatter one to sleep.

And he had pass'd a restless night,
And was not well in health;
The women sat down by his side,
And talk'd as 'twere by stealth.

"The sun peeps through the close thick leaves
See, dearest Ellen! see!
'Tis in the leaves, a little sun,
No bigger than your e'e;

"A tiny sun, and it has got
A perfect glory, too;
Ten thousand threads and hairs of light,
Make up a glory, gay and bright,
Round that small orb, so blue."

And then they argued of these rays,
What colour they might be:
Says this, "They're mostly green;" says that,
"They're amber-like to me."

So they sat chatting, while bad thoughts
Were troubling Edward's rest;
But soon they heard his hard quick pants,
And the thumping in his breast.

"A mother, too!" these selfsame words
Did Edward mutter plain;
His face was drawn back on itself,
With horror and huge pain.

Both groan'd at once, for both knew well
What thoughts were in his mind;
When he waked up, and stared like one
That hath been just struck blind.

He sat upright; and ere the dream
Had had time to depart,
"O God, forgive me!" he exclaim'd,
"I have torn out her heart."

Then Ellen shriek'd, and forthwith burst
Into ungentle laughter;
And Mary shiver'd, where she sat,
And never she smiled after.

Carmen reliquum in futurum tempus relegatum. To morrow! and to-morrow! and to-morrow!—

DEJECTION;

AN ODE.

Late, late yestreen, I saw the new Moon,
With the old Moon in her arms;
And I fear, I fear, my master dear!
We shall have a deadly storm.
Ballad of Sir Patrick Spens.

I.

WELL! if the bard was weather-wise, who made
The grand old ballad of Sir Patrick Spence,
This night, so tranquil now, will not go hence
Unroused by winds, that ply a busier trade

Than those which mould yon cloud in lazy flakes,
Or the dull sobbing draught, that moans and rakes
Upon the strings of this Æolian lute,
Which better far were mute.
For lo! the new moon winter-bright!
And overspread with phantom light,
(With swimming phantom light o'erspread,
But rimm'd and circled by a silver thread,)
I see the old moon in her lap, foretelling
The coming on of rain and squally blast.
And O! that even now the gust were swelling,
And the slant night-shower driving loud and fast!
Those sounds which oft have raised me, whilst they awed,
And sent my soul abroad,
Might now perhaps their wonted impulse give,
Might startle this dull pain, and make it move and live!

II.

A grief without a pang, void, dark, and drear,
A stifled, drowsy, unimpassion'd grief,
Which finds no natural outlet, no relief,
In word, or sigh, or tear—
O lady! in this wan and heartless mood,
To other thoughts by yonder throstle woo'd,
All this long eve, so balmy and serene,
Have I been gazing on the western sky,
And its peculiar tint of yellow green;
And still I gaze—and with how blank an eye;
And those thin clouds above, in flakes and bars,
That give away their motion to the stars;
Those stars, that glide behind them or between,
Now sparkling, now bedimm'd, but always seen:
Yon crescent moon, as fix'd as if it grew
In its own cloudless, starless lake of blue;
I see them all so excellently fair,
I see, not feel, how beautiful they are!

III.

My genial spirits fail,
And what can these avail
To lift the smothering weight from off my breast?
It were a vain endeavour,
Though I should gaze for ever
On that green light that lingers in the west:
I may not hope from outward forms to win
The passion and the life, whose fountains are within.

IV.

O lady! we receive but what we give,
And in our life alone does nature live:
Ours is her wedding garment, ours her shroud!
And would we aught behold, of higher worth,
Than that inanimate cold world allow'd
To the poor, loveless, ever-anxious crowd,
Ah! from the soul itself must issue forth,
A light, a glory, a fair luminous cloud
Enveloping the earth—
And from the soul itself must there be sent
A sweet and potent voice, of its own birth,
Of all sweet sounds the life and element!

V.

O pure of heart! thou need'st not ask of me
What this strong music in the soul may be!
What, and wherein it doth exist,
This light, this glory, this fair luminous mist,
This beautiful, and beauty-making power.
Joy, virtuous lady! Joy that ne'er was given,
Save to the pure, and in their purest hour,
Life, and life's effluence, cloud at once and shower
Joy, lady! is the spirit and the power,
Which wedding nature to us gives in dower,
A new earth and new heaven,
Undreamt of by the sensual and the proud;
Joy is the sweet voice, Joy the luminous cloud—
We in ourselves rejoice!
And thence flows all that charms or ear or sight,
All melodies the echoes of that voice,
All colours a suffusion from that light.

VI.

There was a time when, though my path was rough,
This joy within me dallied with distress,
And all misfortunes were but as the stuff
Whence fancy made me dreams of happiness:
For hope grew round me, like the twining vine,
And fruits, and foliage, not my own, seem'd mine.
But now afflictions bow me down to earth;
Nor care I that they rob me of my mirth.
But O! each visitation
Suspends what nature gave me at my birth,
My shaping spirit of imagination.
For not to think of what I needs must feel,
But to be still and patient, all I can;
And haply by abstruse research to steal
From my own nature all the natural man—
This was my sole resource, my only plan;
Till that which suits a part infects the whole,
And now is almost grown the habit of my soul.

VII.

Hence, viper thoughts, that coil around my mind,
Reality's dark dream!
I turn from you, and listen to the wind,
Which long has raved unnoticed. What a scream
Of agony by torture lengthen'd out
That lute sent forth! Thou wind, that raves without,
Bare crag, or mountain tairn,* or blasted tree,
Or pine-grove whither woodman never clomb,
Or lonely house, long held the witches' home,
Methinks were fitter instruments for thee,
Mad lutanist! who in this month of showers,
Of dark-brown gardens, and of peeping flowers,
Makest devils' yule, with worse than wintry song,
The blossoms, buds, and timorous leaves among.
Thou actor, perfect in all tragic sounds!
Thou mighty poet, e'en to frenzy bold!
What tell'st thou now about?
'Tis of the rushing of a host in rout,
With groans of trampled men, with smarting wounds—
At once they groan with pain, and shudder with the cold!

* Tairn is a small lake, generally, if not always, applied to the lakes up in the mountains, and which are the feeders of those in the valleys. This address to the storm wind will not appear extravagant to those who have heard it at night, and in a mountainous country.

But hush! there is a pause of deepest silence!
And all that noise, as of a rushing crowd,
With groans, and tremulous shudderings—all is over—
It tells another tale, with sounds less deep and loud!
A tale of less affright,
And temper'd with delight,
As Otway's self had framed the tender lay,
'Tis of a little child
Upon a lonesome wild,
Not far from home, but she hath lost her way,
And now moans low in bitter grief and fear,
And now screams loud, and hopes to make her mother hear.

VIII.

'Tis midnight, but small thoughts have I of sleep:
Full seldom may my friend such vigils keep!
Visit her, gentle sleep! with wings of healing,
And may this storm be but a mountain-birth,
May all the stars hang bright above her dwelling,
Silent as though they watch'd the sleeping earth!
With light heart may she rise,
Gay fancy, cheerful eyes,
Joy lift her spirit, joy attune her voice:
To her may all things live, from pole to pole,
Their life the eddying of her living soul!
O simple spirit, guided from above,
Dear lady! friend devoutest of my choice,
Thus may'st thou ever, evermore rejoice.

ODE TO GEORGIANA, DUTCHESS OF DEVONSHIRE,

ON THE TWENTY-FOURTH STANZA IN HER "PASSAGE OVER MOUNT GOTHARD."

And hail the chapel! hail the platform wild!
Where *Tell* directed the avenging dart,
With well-strung arm, that first preserved his child,
Then aim'd the arrow at the tyrant's heart.

Splendour's fondly foster'd child!
And did you hail the platform wild,
Where once the Austrian fell
Beneath the shaft of Tell?
O lady, nursed in pomp and pleasure!
Whence learnt you that heroic measure?

Light as a dream your days their circlets ran,
From all that teaches brotherhood to man;
Far, far removed! from want, from hope, from fear!
Enchanting music lull'd your infant ear,
Obeisance, praises soothed your infant heart:
Emblazonments and old ancestral crests
With many a bright obtrusive form of art,
Detain'd your eye from nature: stately vests,
That veiling strove to deck your charms divine,
Rich viands, and the pleasurable wine,
Were yours unearn'd by toil; nor could you see
The unenjoying toiler's misery.
And yet, free nature's uncorrupted child,
You hail'd the chapel and the platform wild,
Where once the Austrian fell
Beneath the shaft of Tell!
O lady, nursed in pomp and pleasure!
Whence learnt you that heroic measure?

There crowd your finely-fibred frame,
All living faculties of bliss;
And genius to your cradle came,
His forehead wreathed with lambent flame,
And bending low, with godlike kiss
Breathed in a more celestial life;
But boasts no many a fair compeer
A heart as sensitive to joy and fear;
And some, perchance, might wage an equal strife
Some few, to nobler being wrought,
Co-rivals in the nobler gift of thought.
Yet *these* delight to celebrate
Laurell'd war and plumy state;
Or in verse and music dress
Tales of rustic happiness—
Pernicious tales! insidious strains!
That steel the rich man's breast,
And mock the lot unblest,
The sordid vices and the abject pains,
Which evermore must be
The doom of ignorance and penury!
But you, free nature's uncorrupted child,
You hail'd the chapel and the platform wild,
Where once the Austrian fell
Beneath the shaft of Tell!
O lady, nursed in pomp and pleasure!
Where learnt you that heroic measure?

You were a mother! That most holy name
Which heaven and nature bless,
I may not vilely prostitute to those
Whose infants owe them less
Than the poor caterpillar owes
Its gaudy parent fly.
You were a mother! at your bosom fed
The babes that loved you. You, with laughing eye
Each twilight thought, each nascent feeling read,
Which you yourself created. O! delight!
A second time to be a mother,
Without the mother's bitter groans:
Another thought, and yet another,
By touch or taste, by looks or tones
O'er the growing sense to roll,
The mother of your infant's soul!
The angel of the earth, who, while he guides
His chariot-planet round the goal of day,
All trembling gazes on the eye of God,
A moment turn'd his awful face away;
And as he view'd you, from his aspect sweet
New influences in your being rose,
Blest intuitions and communions fleet
With living nature, in her joys and woes!
Thenceforth your soul rejoiced see
The shrine of social liberty!
O beautiful! O nature's child!
'Twas thence you hail'd the platform wild,
Where once the Austrian fell
Beneath the shaft of Tell!
O lady, nursed in pomp and pleasure!
Thence learnt you that heroic measure.

ODE TO TRANQUILLITY.

Tranquillity! thou better name
Than all the family of fame!
Thou ne'er wilt leave my riper age
To low intrigue, or factious rage;
For O! dear child of thoughtful truth,
To thee I gave my early youth,
And left the bark, and blest the steadfast shore,
Ere yet the tempest rose and scared me with its roar.

Who late and lingering seeks thy shrine,
On him but seldom, power divine,
Thy spirit rests! Satiety
And sloth, poor counterfeits of thee,
Mock the tired worldling. Idle hope
And dire remembrance interlope,
To vex the feverish slumbers of the mind:
The bubble floats before, the spectre stalks behind.

But me thy gentle hand will lead
At morning through th' accustom'd mead
And in the sultry summer's heat
Will build me up a mossy seat;
And when the gust of autumn crowds
And breaks the busy moonlight clouds,
Thou best the thought canst raise, the heart attune,
Light as the busy clouds, calm as the gliding moon.

The feeling heart, the searching soul,
To thee I dedicate the whole!
And while within myself I trace
The greatness of some future race,
Aloof with hermit eye I scan
The present works of present man—
A wild and dreamlike trade of blood and guile,
Too foolish for a tear, too wicked for a smile!

TO A YOUNG FRIEND,

ON HIS PROPOSING TO DOMESTICATE WITH THE AUTHOR.

COMPOSED IN 1796.

A mount, not wearisome and bare and steep,
But a green mountain variously up-piled,
Where o'er the jutting rocks soft mosses creep,
Or colour'd lichens with slow oozing weep;
Where cypress and the darker yew start wild;
And 'mid the summer torrent's gentle dash
Dance brighten'd the red clusters of the ash;
Beneath whose boughs, by those still sounds beguiled,
Calm pensiveness might muse herself to sleep;
Till haply startled by some fleecy dam,
That rustling on the bushy clift above,
With melancholy bleat of anxious love,
Made meek inquiry for her wandering lamb.
Such a green mountain 'twere most sweet to climb,
E'en while the bosom ached with loneliness—
How more than sweet, if some dear friend should bless
Th' adventurous toil, and up the path sublime
Now lead, now follow: the glad landscape round,
Wide and more wide, increasing without bound!

O then 'twere loveliest sympathy, to mark
The berries of the half uprooted ash
Dripping and bright; and list the torrent's dash,—
Beneath the cypress, or the yew more dark,
Seated at ease, on some smooth mossy rock;
In social silence now, and now t' unlock
The treasured heart; arm link'd in friendly arm,
Save if the one, his muse's witching charm
Muttering brow-bent, at unwatch'd distance lag;
Till high o'erhead his beckoning friend appears
And from the forehead of the topmost crag
Shouts eagerly: for haply *there* uprears
That shadowing pine its old romantic limbs,
Which latest shall detain th' enamour'd sight
Seen from below, when eve the valley dims,
Tinged yellow with the rich departing light;
And haply, basin'd in some unsunn'd cleft,
A beauteous spring, the rock's collected tears,
Sleeps shelter'd there, scarce wrinkled by the gale!
Together thus, the world's vain turmoil left,
Stretch'd on the crag, and shadow'd by the pine,
And bending o'er the clear delicious fount,
Ah! dearest youth! it were a lot divine
To cheat our noons in moralizing mood,
While west winds fann'd our temples toil-bedew'd:
Then downwards slope, oft pausing, from the mount,
To some lone mansion, in some woody dale,
Where smiling with blue eye, domestic bliss
Gives *this* the husband's, *that* the brother's kiss!

Thus rudely versed in allegoric lore,
The hill of knowledge I essay'd to trace;
That verdurous hill with many a resting-place,
And many a stream, whose warbling waters pour
To glad and fertilize the subject plains;
That hill with secret springs, and nooks untrod,
And many a fancy-blest and holy sod,
Where inspiration, his diviner strains
Low murmuring, lay; and starting from the rocks
Stiff evergreens, whose spreading foliage mocks
Want's barren soil, and the bleak frosts of age,
And bigotry's mad fire-invoking rage!

O meek retiring spirit! we will climb,
Cheering and cheer'd, this lovely hill sublime;
And from the stirring world uplifted high,
(Whose noises, faintly wafted on the wind,
To quiet musings shall attune the mind,
And oft the melancholy *theme* supply,)
There, while the prospect through the gazing eye
Pours all its healthful greenness on the soul,
We'll smile at wealth, and learn to smile at fame,
Our hopes, our knowledge, and our joys the same,
As neighbouring fountains image, each the whole:
Then, when the mind hath drunk its fill of truth,
We'll discipline the heart to pure delight,
Rekindling sober joy's domestic flame.
They whom I love shall love thee. Honour'd youth!
Now may Heaven realize this vision bright!

LINES TO W. L., ESQ.,

WHILE HE SANG A SONG TO PURCELL'S MUSIC.

While my young cheek retains its healthful hues,
And I have many friends who hold me dear;
L———! methinks, I would not often hear
Such melodies as thine, lest I should lose
All memory of the wrongs and sore distress,
For which my miserable brethren weep!
But should uncomforted misfortunes steep
My daily bread in tears and bitterness;
And if at death's dread moment I should lie
With no beloved face at my bed-side,
To fix the last glance of my closing eye,
Methinks, such strains, breathed by my angel-guide,
Would make me pass the cup of anguish by,
Mix with the blest, nor know that I had died!

ADDRESSED TO A YOUNG MAN OF FORTUNE,

WHO ABANDONED HIMSELF TO AN INDOLENT AND CAUSELESS MELANCHOLY.

Hence that fantastic wantonness of woe,
O youth to partial fortune vainly dear!
To plunder'd want's half-shelter'd hovel go,
Go, and some hunger-bitten infant hear
Moan haply in a dying mother's ear:
Or when the cold and dismal fog-damps brood
O'er the rank churchyard with sere elm leaves strew'd,
Pace round some widow's grave, whose dearer part
Was slaughter'd, where o'er his uncoffin'd limbs
The flocking flesh-birds scream'd! Then, while thy heart
Groans, and thine eye a fiercer sorrow dims,
Know (and the truth shall kindle thy young mind)
What nature makes thee mourn, she bids thee heal!
O abject! if, to sickly dreams resign'd,
All effortless thou leave life's commonweal
A prey to tyrants, murderers of mankind.

SONNET TO THE RIVER OTTER.

Dear native brook! wild streamlet of the west!
How many various-fated years have past,
What happy, and what mournful hours, since last
I skimm'd the smooth thin stone along thy breast,
Numbering its light leaps! yet so deep imprest
Sink the sweet scenes of childhood, that mine eyes
I never shut amid the sunny ray,
But straight with all their tints thy waters rise,
Thy crossing plank, thy marge with willows gray,
And bedded sand that vein'd with various dyes
Gleam'd through thy bright transparence! On my way,
Visions of childhood! oft have ye beguiled
Lone manhood's cares, yet waking fondest sighs:
Ah! that once more I were a careless child!

SONNET.

COMPOSED ON A JOURNEY HOMEWARD; THE AUTHOR HAVING RECEIVED INTELLIGENCE OF THE BIRTH OF A SON, SEPTEMBER 20, 1796.

Oft o'er my brain does that strange fancy roll
Which makes the present (while the flash doth last)
Seem a mere semblance of some unknown past,
Mix'd with such feelings, as perplex the soul
Self-question'd in her sleep; and some have said*
We lived ere yet this robe of flesh we wore.
O my sweet baby! when I reach my door,
If heavy looks shall tell me thou art dead,
(As sometimes, through excess of hope, I fear,)
I think that I should struggle to believe
Thou wert a spirit, to this nether sphere
Sentenced for some more venial crime to grieve;
Didst scream, then spring to meet Heaven's quick reprieve,
While we wept idly o'er thy little bier!

SONNET.

TO A FRIEND WHO ASKED, HOW I FELT WHEN THE NURSE FIRST PRESENTED MY INFANT TO ME.

Charles! my slow heart was only sad, when first
I scann'd that face of feeble infancy:
For dimly on my thoughtful spirit burst
All I had been, and all my child might be!
But when I saw it on its mother's arm,
And hanging at her bosom (she the while
Bent o'er its features with a tearful smile,)
Then I was thrill'd and melted, and most warm
Impress'd a father's kiss: and all beguiled
Of dark remembrance and presageful fear,
I seem'd to see an angel form appear—
'Twas even thine, beloved woman mild!
So for the mother's sake the child was dear,
And dearer was the mother for the child.

THE VIRGIN'S CRADLE HYMN.

COPIED FROM A PRINT OF THE VIRGIN IN A CATHOLIC VILLAGE IN GERMANY.

Dormi, Jesu! Mater ridet,
Quæ tam dulcem somnum videt,
Dormi, Jesu! blandule!
Si non dormis, Mater plorat,
Inter fila cantans orat
Blande, veni, somnule.

ENGLISH.

Sleep, sweet babe! my cares beguiling,
Mother sits beside thee smiling:
Sleep, my darling, tenderly!
If thou sleep not, mother mourneth,
Singing as her wheel she turneth:
Come, soft slumber, balmily!

* Ἡν που ἡμων ἡ ψυχὴ πριν ἐν τωδε τω ἀνθρωπινω εἰδει γενεσθαι. PLAT. *in Phædon*

ON THE CHRISTENING OF A FRIEND'S CHILD.

THIS day among the faithful placed,
And fed with fontal manna;
O with maternal title graced
Dear Anna's dearest Anna!

While others wish thee wise and fair,
A maid of spotless fame,
I'll breathe this more compendious prayer—
Mayst thou deserve thy name!

Thy mother's name, a potent spell,
That bids the virtues hie
From mystic grove and living cell
Confest to fancy's eye;

Meek quietness, without offence;
Content, in homespun kirtle;
True love; and true love's innocence,
White blossom of the myrtle!

Associates of thy name, sweet child!
These virtues mayst thou win;
With face as eloquently mild
To say, they lodge within.

So when, her tale of days all flown,
Thy mother shall be miss'd here;
When Heaven at length shall claim its own,
And angels snatch their sister;

Some hoary-headed friend, perchance,
May gaze with stifled breath,
And oft, in momentary trance,
Forget the waste of death.

E'en thus a lovely rose I view'd
In summer-swelling pride;
Nor mark'd the bud, that green and rude
Peep'd at the rose's side.

It chanced, I pass'd again that way
In autumn's latest hour,
And wondering saw the selfsame spray
Rich with the selfsame flower.

Ah fond deceit! the rude green bud
Alike in shape, place, name,
Had bloom'd, where bloom'd its parent stud,
Another and the same!

EPITAPH ON AN INFANT.

ITS balmy lips the infant blest
Relaxing from its mother's breast,
How sweet it heaves the happy sigh
Of innocent satiety!

And such my infant's latest sigh!
O tell, rude stone! the passer by,
That here the pretty babe doth lie,
Death sang to sleep with lullaby.

MELANCHOLY.

A FRAGMENT.

STRETCH'D on a moulder'd abbey's broadest wall,
Where running ivies propp'd the ruins steep—
Her folded arms wrapping her tatter'd pall,
Had melancholy mused herself to sleep.
The fern was press'd beneath her hair,
The dark green adder's tongue* was there;
And still as past the flagging sea-gale weak,
The long lank leaf bow'd fluttering o'er her cheek.

That pallid cheek was flush'd: her eager look
Beam'd eloquent in slumber! Inly wrought,
Imperfect sounds her moving lips forsook,
And her bent forehead work'd with troubled thought.
Strange was the dream——

A CHRISTMAS CAROL.

THE shepherds went their hasty way,
And found the lowly stable-shed
Where the virgin mother lay:
And now they check'd their eager tread,
For to the babe, that at her bosom clung,
A mother's song the virgin-mother sung.

They told her how a glorious light,
Streaming from a heavenly throng,
Around them shone, suspending night.
While, sweeter than a mother's song,
Blest angels heralded the Saviour's birth,
Glory to God on high! and peace on earth.

She listen'd to the tale divine,
And closer still the babe she press'd;
And while she cried, the babe is mine!
The milk rush'd faster to her breast:
Joy rose within her, like a summer morn;
Peace, peace on earth! the Prince of peace is born.

Thou mother of the Prince of peace,
Poor, simple, and of low estate!
That strife should vanish, battle cease,
O why should this thy soul elate?
Sweet music's loudest note, the poet's story,——
Didst thou ne'er love to hear of fame and glory?

And is not war a youthful king,
A stately hero clad in mail?
Beneath his footsteps laurels spring;
Him earth's majestic monarchs hail
Their friend, their playmate! and his bold bright eye
Compels the maiden's love-confessing sigh.

"Tell this in some more courtly scene,
To maids and youths in robes of state!
I am a woman poor and mean,
And therefore is my soul elate.
War is a ruffian, all with guilt defiled,
That from the aged father tears his child!

* A botanical mistake. The plant which the poet has describes is called the hart's tongue.

"A murderous fiend, by fiends adored,
He kills the sire and starves the son;
The husband kills, and from her board
Steals all his widow's toil had won;
Plunders God's world of beauty; rends away
All safety from the night, all comfort from the day.

"Then wisely is my soul elate,
That strife should vanish, battle cease:
I'm poor and of a low estate,
The mother of the Prince of peace.
Joy rises in me, like a summer's morn:
Peace, peace on earth! the Prince of peace is born!"

TELL'S BIRTHPLACE.

IMITATED FROM STOLBERG.

Mark this holy chapel well!
The birthplace, this, of William Tell.
Here, where stands God's altar dread,
Stood his parents' marriage bed.

Here first, an infant to her breast,
Him his loving mother prest;
And kiss'd the babe, and bless'd the day,
And pray'd as mothers used to pray:

"Vouchsafe him health, O God, and give
The child, thy servant, still to live!"
But God has destined to do more
Through him, than through an armed power.

God gave him reverence of laws,
Yet stirring blood in freedom's cause—
A spirit to his rocks akin,
The eye of the hawk, and the fire therein!

To nature and to holy writ
Alone did God the boy commit:
Where flash'd and roar'd the torrent, oft
His soul found wings, and soar'd aloft!

The straining oar and chamois chase
Had form'd his limbs to strength and grace:
On wave and wind the boy would toss,
Was great, nor knew how great he was!

He knew not that his chosen hand,
Made strong by God, his native land
Would rescue from the shameful yoke
Of *slavery*——the which he broke!

HUMAN LIFE.

ON THE DENIAL OF IMMORTALITY.

If dead, we cease to be; if total gloom
Swallow up life's brief flash for aye, we fare
As summer gusts, of sudden birth and doom,
Whose sound and motion not alone declare,
But *are* their *whole* of being! If the breath
Be life itself, and not its task and tent,
If e'en a soul like Milton's can know death,
O man! thou vessel, purposeless, unmeant,
Yet drone-hive strange of phantom purposes!
Surplus of nature's dread activity,
Which, as she gazed on some nigh-finish'd vase,
Retreating slow, with meditative pause,
She form'd with restless hands unconsciously!
Blank accident! nothing's anomaly!
If rootless thus, thus substanceless thy state,
Go, weigh thy dreams, and be thy hopes, thy fears
The counter-weights!—Thy laughter and thy tears
Mean but themselves, each fittest to create,
And to repay the other! Why rejoices
Thy heart with hollow joy for hollow good?
Why cowl thy face beneath the mourner's hood,
Why waste thy sighs, and thy lamenting voices,
Image of image, ghost of ghostly elf,
That such a thing as thou feel'st warm or cold!
Yet what and whence thy gain if thou withhold
These costless shadows of thy shadowy self?
Be sad! be glad! be neither! seek, or shun!
Thou hast no reason why! Thou canst have none:
Thy being's being is a contradiction.

ELEGY,

IMITATED FROM ONE OF AKENSIDE'S BLANK VERSE INSCRIPTIONS.

Near the lone pile with ivy overspread,
Fast by the rivulet's sleep-persuading sound,
Where "sleeps the moonlight" on yon verdant bed—
O humbly press that consecrated ground!

For there does Edmund rest, the learned swain!
And there his spirit most delights to rove:
Young Edmund! famed for each harmonious strain,
And the sore wounds of ill-requited love.

Like some tall tree that spreads its branches wide,
And loads the west wind with its soft perfume,
His manhood blossom'd: till the faithless pride
Of fair Matilda sank him to the tomb.

But soon did righteous Heaven her guilt pursue!
Where'er with wilder'd steps she wander'd pale
Still Edmund's image rose to blast her view,
Still Edmund's voice accused her in each gale.

With keen regret, and conscious guilt's alarms,
Amid the pomp of affluence she pined:
Nor all that lured her faith from Edmund's arms
Could lull the wakeful horror of her mind.

Go, traveller! tell the tale with sorrow fraught:
Some tearful maid, perchance, or blooming youth
May hold it in remembrance; and be taught
That riches cannot pay for love or truth.

THE VISIT OF THE GODS.

IMITATED FROM SCHILLER.

Never, believe me,
Appear the immortals,
Never alone:
Scarce had I welcomed the sorrow-beguiler,
Iacchus! but in came boy Cupid the smiler;

Lo! Phœbus the glorious descends from his throne!
They advance, they float in, the Olympians all!
With divinities fills my
Terrestrial hall!

How shall I yield you
Due entertainment,
Celestial choir?
Me rather, bright guests! with your wings of upbuoyance
Bear aloft to your homes, to your banquets of joyance,
That the roofs of Olympus may echo my lyre!
Ha! we mount! on their pinions they waft up my soul!

O give me the nectar!
O fill me the bowl!
Give him the nectar!
Pour out for the poet,
Hebe! pour free!
Quicken his eyes with celestial dew,
That Styx the detested no more he may view,
And like one of us gods may conceit him to be!
Thanks, Hebe! I quaff it! Io pæan, I cry!
The wine of th' immortals
Forbids me to die!

KUBLA KHAN;

OR, A VISION IN A DREAM.

[The following fragment is here published at the request of a poet of great and deserved celebrity, and, as far as the author's own opinions are concerned, rather as a psychological curiosity, than on the ground of any supposed *poetic* merits.

In the summer of the year 1797, the author, then in ill health, had retired to a lonely farm-house between Porlock and Linton, on the Exmoor confines of Somerset and Devonshire. In consequence of a slight indisposition, an anodyne had been prescribed, from the effects of which he fell asleep in his chair at the moment that he was reading the following sentence, or words of the same substance, in Purchas's "Pilgrimage:"—"Here the Khan Kubla commanded a palace to be built, and a stately garden thereunto; and thus ten miles of fertile ground were enclosed with a wall." The author continued for about three hours in a profound sleep, at least of the external senses, during which time he has the most vivid confidence that he could not have composed less than from two to three hundred lines; if that indeed can be called composition in which all the images rose up before him as *things* with a parallel production of the correspondent expressions, without any sensation, or consciousness of effort. On awaking he appeared to himself to have a distinct recollection of the whole, and taking his pen, ink, and paper, instantly and eagerly wrote down the lines that are here preserved. At this moment he was unfortunately called out by a person on business from Porlock, and detained by him above an hour, and on his return to his room, found, to his no small surprise and mortification, that though he still retained some vague and dim recollection of the general purport of the vision, yet, with the exception of some eight or ten scattered lines and images, all the rest had passed away like the images on the surface of a stream into which a stone had been cast, but, alas! without the after restoration of the latter.

Then all the charm
Is broken—all that phantom-world so fair
Vanishes, and a thousand circlets spread,
And each misshapes the other. Stay a while,
Poor youth! who scarcely darest lift up thine eyes—
The stream will soon renew its smoothness, soon
The visions will return! And lo, he stays,
And soon the fragments dim of lovely forms
Come trembling back, unite, and now once more
The pool becomes a mirror.

Yet, from the still surviving recollections in his mind, the author has frequently purposed to finish for himself what had been originally, as it were, given to him. Σαμεριον αδιον ασω: but the to-morrow is yet to come.

As a contrast to this vision, I have annexed a fragment of a very different character, describing with equal fidelity the dream of pain and disease. —*Note to the first edition*, 1816.]

In Xanadu did Kubla Khan
A stately pleasure-dome decree;
Where Alph, the sacred river, ran
Through caverns measureless to man,
Down to a sunless sea.
So twice five miles of fertile ground
With walls and towers were girdled round:
And here were gardens bright with sinuous rills,
Where blossom'd many an incense-bearing tree;
And here were forests ancient as the hills,
Infolding sunny spots of greenery.

But O that deep romantic chasm which slanted
Down the green hill athwart a cedarn cover!
A savage place! as holy and enchanted
As e'er beneath a waning moon was haunted
By woman wailing for her demon lover!
And from this chasm, with ceaseless turmoil seething,
As if this earth in fast thick pants were breathing
A mighty fountain momently was forced:
Amid whose swift half-intermitted burst
Huge fragments vaulted like rebounding hail,
Or chaffy grain beneath the thresher's flail:
And 'mid these dancing rocks at once and ever
It flung up momently the sacred river.
Five miles, meandering with a mazy motion,
Through wood and dale the sacred river ran,
Then reach'd the caverns measureless to man,
And sank in tumult to a lifeless ocean:
And 'mid this tumult Kubla heard from far
Ancestral voices prophesying war!

The shadow of the dome of pleasure
Floated midway on the waves;
Where was heard the mingled measure
From the fountain and the caves.
It was a miracle of rare device,
A sunny pleasure-dome with caves of ice!

A damsel with a dulcimer
In a vision once I saw:
It was an Abyssinian maid,
And on her dulcimer she play'd,
Singing of Mount Abora.
Could I revive within me
Her symphony and song,
To such a deep delight 'twould win me,
That with music loud and long,
I would build that dome in air,
That sunny dome! those caves of ice!
And all who heard should see them there,
And all should cry, Beware! Beware!
His flashing eyes, his floating hair!
Weave a circle round him thrice,
And close your eyes with holy dread,
For he on honey-dew hath fed,
And drank the milk of Paradise.

THE PAINS OF SLEEP.

Ere on my bed my limbs I lay,
It hath not been my use to pray
With moving lips or bended knees;
But silently, by slow degrees,
My spirit I to love compose,
In humble trust mine eyelids close,
With reverential resignation,
No wish conceived, no thought express'd!
Only a *sense* of supplication,
A sense o'er all my soul imprest
That I am weak, yet not unblest,
Since in me, round me, everywhere,
Eternal Strength and Wisdom are.

But yesternight I pray'd aloud
In anguish and in agony,
Up-starting from the fiendish crowd
Of shapes and thoughts that tortured me:
A lurid light, a trampling throng,
Sense of intolerable wrong,
And whom I scorn'd, those only strong!
Thirst of revenge, the powerless will
Still baffled, and yet burning still!
Desire with loathing strangely mix'd,
On wild or hateful objects fix'd.
Fantastic passions! maddening brawl!
And shame and terror over all!
Deeds to be hid which were not hid,
Which all confused I could not know,
Whether I suffer'd, or I did:
For all seem'd guilt, remorse, or woe,
My own or others', still the same
Life-stifling fear, soul-stifling shame.

So two nights pass'd: the night's dismay
Sadden'd and stunn'd the coming day.
Sleep, the wide blessing, seem'd to me
Distemper's worst calamity.
The third night, when my own loud scream
Had waked me from the fiendish dream,
O'ercome with sufferings strange and wild,
I wept as I had been a child;
And having thus by tears subdued
My anguish to a milder mood,
Such punishments, I said, were due
To natures deepliest stain'd with sin:
For aye entempesting anew
Th' unfathomable hell within,
The horror of their deeds to view,
To know and loath, yet wish and do.
Such griefs with such men well agree,
But wherefore, wherefore fall on me?
To be beloved is all I need,
And whom I love, I love indeed.

THE RIME OF THE ANCIENT MARINER.

IN SEVEN PARTS.

Facile credo, plures esse Naturas invisibiles quam visibiles in rerum universitate. Sed horum omnium familiam quis nobis enarrabit? et gradus et cognationes et discrimina et singulorum munera? Quid agunt? quæ loca habitant? Harum rerum notitiam semper ambivit ingenium humanum, nunquam attigit. Juvat, interea, non difficor, quandoque in animo, tanquam in tabulâ, majoris et melioris mundi imaginem contemplari: ne mens assuefacta hodiernæ vitæ minutiis se contrahat nimis, et tota subsidat in pusillas cogitationes. Sed veritati interea invigilandum est, modusque servandus, ut certa ab incertis, diem a nocte, distinguamus.—T. Burnet: *Archæol. Phil.* p. 68.

PART I.

An ancient mariner meeteth three gallants bidden to a wedding-feast, and detaineth one.

It is an ancient mariner,
And he stoppeth one of three:
"By thy long gray beard and glittering eye,
Now wherefore stopp'st thou me?

"The bridegroom's doors are open'd wide,
And I am next of kin;
The guests are met, the feast is set:
Mayst hear the merry din."

He holds him with his skinny hand:
"There was a ship," quoth he.
"Hold off! unhand me, gray-beard loon!"
Eftsoons his hand dropt he.

The wedding-guest is spell-bound by the eye of the old seafaring man, and constrained to hear his tale.

He holds him with his glittering eye—
The wedding-guest stood still,
And listens like a three years' child;
The mariner hath his will.

The wedding-guest sat on a stone,
He cannot choose but hear;
And thus spake on that ancient man,
The bright-eyed mariner:—

The ship was cheer'd, the harbour clear'd,
Merrily did we drop
Below the kirk, below the hill,
Below the light-house top.

The mariner tells how the ship sailed southward with a good wind and fair weather, till it reached the line.

The sun came up upon the left,
Out of the sea came he!
And he shone bright, and on the right
Went down into the sea.

Higher and higher every day,
Till over the mast at noon——
The wedding-guest here beat his breast,
For he heard the loud bassoon.

The wedding-guest heareth the bridal music; but the mariner continueth his tale.

The bride hath paced into the hall,
Red as a rose is she;
Nodding their heads before her goes
The merry minstrelsy.

The wedding-guest he beat his breast,
Yet he cannot choose but hear;
And thus spake on that ancient man,
The bright-eyed mariner:—

The ship driven by a storm toward the south pole.

And now the STORM-BLAST came, and he
Was tyrannous and strong;
He struck with his o'ertaking wings,
And chased us south along.

With sloping masts and dripping prow,
As who pursued with yell and blow
Still treads the shadow of his foe,
And forward bends his head,
The ship drove fast, loud roar'd the blast,
And southward aye we fled.

And now there came both mist and snow,
And it grew wondrous cold;
And ice, mast-high, came floating by,
As green as emerald.

The land of ice, and of fearful sounds, where no living thing was to be seen.

And through the drifts the snowy clifts
Did send a dismal sheen:
Nor shapes of men nor beasts we ken—
The ice was all between.

The ice was here, the ice was there,
The ice was all around:
It crack'd and growl'd, and roar'd and howl'd,
Like noises in a swound!

Till a great sea-bird, called the albatross, came through the snow fog, and was received with great joy and hospitality.

At length did cross an albatross:
Thorough the fog it came;
As if it had been a Christian soul,
We hail'd it in God's name.

It ate the food it ne'er had eat,
And round and round it flew.
The ice did split with a thunder-fit;
The helmsman steer'd us through!

And lo! the albatross proveth a bird of good omen, and followeth the ship as it returned northward through fog and floating ice.

And a good south wind sprung up behind;
The albatross did follow,
And every day, for food or play,
Came to the mariner's hollo!

In mist or cloud, on mast or shroud,
It perch'd for vespers nine:
Whiles all the night, through fog-smoke white,
Glimmer'd the white moonshine.

The ancient mariner inhospitably killeth the pious bird of good omen.

"God save thee, ancient mariner!
From the fiends that plague thee thus!
Why look'st thou so?"—With my cross-bow
I shot the ALBATROSS.

PART II.

THE sun now rose upon the right:
Out of the sea came he,
Still hid in mist, and on the left
Went down into the sea.

And the good south wind still blew behind,
But no sweet bird did follow,
Nor any day for food or play
Came to the mariner's hollo!

His shipmates cry out against the ancient mariner, for killing the bird of good luck.

And I had done an hellish thing,
And it would work 'em woe:
For all averr'd, I had kill'd the bird
That made the breeze to blow.
Ah wretch! said they, the bird to slay,
That made the breeze to blow!

But when the fog cleared off, they justify the same, and thus make themselves accomplices in the crime.

Nor dim nor red, like God's own head,
The glorious sun uprist:
Then all averr'd, I had kill'd the bird
That brought the fog and mist.
'Twas right, said they, such birds to slay
That bring the fog and mist.

The fair breeze continues; the ship enters the Pacific Ocean, and sails northward even till it reaches the line.

The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew,
The furrow follow'd free;
We were the first that ever burst
Into that silent sea.

The ship hath been suddenly becalmed.

Down dropt the breeze, the sails dropt down,
'Twas sad as sad could be;
And we did speak only to break
The silence of the sea!

All in a hot and copper sky,
The bloody sun, at noon,
Right up above the mast did stand,
No bigger than the moon.

Day after day, day after day,
We stuck, nor breath nor motion;
As idle as a painted ship
Upon a painted ocean.

And the albatross begins to be avenged.

Water, water, everywhere,
And all the boards did shrink:
Water, water, everywhere,
Nor any drop to drink.

The very deep did rot: O Christ!
That ever this should be!
Yea, slimy things did crawl with legs
Upon the slimy sea.

About, about, in reel and rout
The death-fires danced at night;
The water, like a witch's oils,
Burnt green, and blue, and white.

A spirit had followed them; one of the invisible inhabitants of this planet,—neither departed souls nor angels; concerning whom the learned Jew, Josephus, and the Platonic Constantinopolitan, Michael Psellus, may be consulted. They are very numerous, and there is no climate or element without one or more.

And some in dreams assured were
Of the spirit that plagued us so;
Nine fathom deep he had follow'd us
From the land of mist and snow.

And every tongue, through utter drought,
Was wither'd at the root;
We could not speak, no more than if
We had been choked with soot.

The shipmates, in their sore distress would fain throw the whole guilt on the ancient mariner;—in sign whereof they hang the dead sea-bird round his neck.

Ah! well-a-day! what evil looks
Had I from old and young!
Instead of the cross, the albatross
About my neck was hung.

PART III.

THERE pass'd a weary time. Each throat
Was parch'd, and glazed each eye.
A weary time! a weary time!
How glazed each weary eye,

The ancient mariner beholdeth a sign in the element afar off.

When looking westward, I beheld
A something in the sky.

At first it seem'd a little speck
And then it seem'd a mist;
It moved and moved, and took at last
A certain shape, I wist.

A speck, a mist, a shape, I wist!
And it still near'd and near'd:
As if it dodged a water-sprite,
It plunged and tack'd and veer'd.

At its nearer approach, it seemeth him to be a ship; and at a dear ransom he freeth his speech from the bonds of thirst.

With throats unslaked, with black lips baked,
We could nor laugh nor wail;
Through utter drought all dumb we stood;
I bit my arm, I suck'd the blood,
And cried, A sail! a sail!

With throats unslaked, with black lips baked,
Agape they heard me call;
A flash of joy. Gramercy! they for joy did grin,
And all at once their breath drew in,
As they were drinking all.

And horror follows; for can it be a ship, that comes onward without wind or tide?

See! see! (I cried,) she tacks no more!
Hither to work us weal;
Without a breeze, without a tide,
She steadies with upright keel!

The western wave was all a flame,
The day was wellnigh done,
Almost upon the western wave
Rested the broad bright sun;

When that strange shape drove suddenly
Betwixt us and the sun.

It seemeth him but the skeleton of a ship.

And straight the sun was fleck'd with bars,
(Heaven's mother send us grace!)
As if through a dungeon-grate he peer'd
With broad and burning face.

Alas! (thought I, and my heart beat loud,)
How fast she nears and nears!
Are those *her* sails that glance in the sun,
Like restless gossamers?

And its ribs are seen as bars on the face of the setting sun.

Are those *her* ribs through which the sun
Did peer, as through a grate;
And is that woman all her crew?
Is that a DEATH, and are there two?
Is DEATH that woman's mate?

The spectre-woman and her death-mate, and no other on board the skeleton-ship. Like vessel, like crew!

Her lips were red, *her* looks were free,
Her locks were yellow as gold:
Her skin was as white as leprosy,
The Night-Mare LIFE-IN-DEATH was she,
Who thicks man's blood with cold.

Death and *Life-in-Death* have diced for the ship's crew, and she, the latter, winneth the ancient mariner.

The naked hulk alongside came,
And the twain were casting dice;
"The game is done! I've won, I've won!"
Quoth she, and whistles thrice.

No twilight within the courts of the sun.

The sun's rim dips; the stars rush out:
At one stride comes the dark;
With far-heard whisper, o'er the sea
Off shot the spectre-bark.

At the rising of the moon,

We listen'd and look'd sideways up!
Fear at my heart, as at a cup,
My life-blood seem'd to sip!
The stars were dim, and thick the night,
The steersman's face by his lamp gleam'd white;
From the sails the dew did drip—
Till clomb above the eastern bar
The horned moon, with one bright star
Within the nether tip.

One after another

One after one, by the star-dogg'd moon,
Too quick for groan or sigh,
Each turn'd his face with a ghastly pang,
And cursed me with his eye.

His shipmates drop down dead

Four times fifty living men,
(And I heard nor sigh nor groan,)
With heavy thump, a lifeless lump,
They dropp'd down one by one.

But *Life-in-Death* begins her work on the ancient mariner.

The souls did from their bodies fly,—
They fled to bliss or wo!
And every soul, it pass'd me by
Like the whizz of my CROSS-BOW!

PART IV.

The wedding-guest feareth that a spirit is talking to him;

"I FEAR thee, ancient mariner!
I fear thy skinny hand! [brown,
And thou art long, and lank, and
As is the ribb'd sea-sand.*

"I fear thee and thy glittering eye,
And thy skinny hand so brown."—

But the ancient mariner assureth him of his bodily life, and proceedeth to relate his horrible penance.

Fear not, fear not, thou wedding-guest!
This body dropt not down.

Alone, alone, all, all alone,
Alone on a wide, wide sea!
And never a saint took pity on
My soul in agony.

He despiseth the creatures of the calm.

The many men, so beautiful!
And they all dead did lie:
And a thousand thousand slimy things
Lived on; and so did I.

And envieth that they should live, and so many lie dead.

I look'd upon the rotting sea,
And drew my eyes away;
I look'd upon the rotting deck,
And there the dead men lay.

I look'd to heaven, and tried to pray;
But or ever a prayer had gush'd,
A wicked whisper came, and made
My heart as dry as dust.

I closed my lids, and kept them close,
And the balls like pulses beat;
For the sky and the sea, and the sea and the sky,
Lay like a load on my weary eye
And the dead were at my feet.

But the curse liveth for him in the eye of the dead men.

The cold sweat melted from their limbs,
Nor rot nor reek did they: [me
The look with which they look'd on
Had never pass'd away.

An orphan's curse would drag to hell
A spirit from on high;
But O! more horrible than that
Is a curse in a dead man's eye!
Seven days, seven nights, I saw that curse,
And yet I could not die.

In his loneliness and fixedness he yearneth towards the journeying moon, and the stars that still sojourn, yet still move onward; and everywhere the blue sky belongs to them, and is their appointed rest, and their native country and their own natural homes, which they enter unannounced, as lords that are certainly expected, and yet there is a silent joy at their arrival.

The moving moon went up the sky,
And nowhere did abide:
Softly she was going up,
And a star or two beside—

Her beams bemock'd the sultry main,
Like April hoar-frost spread;
But where the ship's huge shadow lay,
The charmed water burnt alway
A still and awful red.

By the light of the moon he beholdeth God's creatures of the great calm.

Beyond the shadow of the ship
I watch'd the water-snakes;
They moved in tracks of shining white,
And when they rear'd, the elfish light
Fell off in hoary flakes.

Within the shadow of the ship
I watch'd their rich attire;
Blue, glossy green, and velvet black,
They coil'd and swam; and every track
Was a flash of golden fire.

Their beauty and their happiness.

O happy living things! no tongue
Their beauty might declare;
A spring of love gush'd from my heart,

He blesseth them in his heart.

And I bless'd them unaware:
Sure my kind saint took pity on me,
And I bless'd them unaware.

The spell begins to break.

The selfsame moment I could pray;
And from my neck so free
The albatross fell off, and sank
Like lead into the sea.

PART V.

O SLEEP! it is a gentle thing,
Beloved from pole to pole!
To Mary queen the praise be given!
She sent the gentle sleep from heaven,
That slid into my soul.

By grace of the holy mother, the ancient mariner is refreshed with rain.

The silly buckets on the deck,
That had so long remain'd,
I dreamt that they were fill'd with dew;
And when I awoke it rain'd.

My lips were wet, my throat was cold,
My garments all were dank;
Sure I had drunken in my dreams,
And still my body drank.

I moved, and could not feel my limbs:
I was so light—almost
I thought that I had died in sleep,
And was a blessed ghost.

He heareth sounds and seeth strange sights and commotions in the sky and the element.

And soon I heard a roaring wind:
It did not come anear;
But with its sound it shook the sails,
That were so thin and sere.

The upper air burst into life!
And a hundred fire-flags sheen,
To and fro they were hurried about!
And to and fro, and in and out,
The wan stars danced between.

And the coming wind did roar more loud,
And the sails did sigh like sedge;

* For the last two lines of this stanza, I am indebted to Mr. Wordsworth. It was on a delightful walk from Nether Stowey to Dulverton, with him and his sister, in the autumn of 1797 that this poem was planned, and in part composed.

And the rain pour'd down from one black cloud;
The moon was at its edge.

The thick black cloud was cleft, and still
The moon was at its side:
Like waters shot from some high crag,
The lightning fell with never a jag,
A river steep and wide.

The bodies of the ship's crew are inspired, and the ship moves on.

The loud wind never reach'd the ship,
Yet now the ship moved on!
Beneath the lightning and the moon
The dead men gave a groan.

They groan'd, they stirr'd, they all uprose,
Nor spake, nor moved their eyes;
It had been strange, e'en in a dream,
To have seen those dead men rise.

The helmsman steer'd, the ship moved on;
Yet never a breeze up blew;
The mariners all 'gan work the ropes,
Where they were wont to do;
They raised their limbs like lifeless tools—
We were a ghastly crew

The body of my brother's son
Stood by me, knee to knee;
The body and I pull'd at one rope,
But he said naught to me.

But not by the souls of the men, nor by demons of earth or middle air, but by a blessed troop of angelic spirits, sent down by the invocation of the guardian saint.

"I fear thee, ancient mariner!"
Be calm, thou wedding-guest:
'Twas not those souls that fled in pain,
Which to their corses came again,
But a troop of spirits blest:

For when it dawn'd—they dropp'd their arms,
And cluster'd round the mast;
Sweet sounds rose slowly through their mouths,
And from their bodies pass'd.

Around, around, flew each sweet sound,
Then darted to the sun;
Slowly the sounds came back again,
Now mix'd, now one by one.

Sometimes, a-drooping from the sky,
I heard the sky-lark sing;
Sometimes all little birds that are,
How they seem'd to fill the sea and air,
With their sweet jargoning!

And now 'twas like all instruments,
Now like a lonely flute;
And now it is an angel's song,
That makes the heavens be mute.

It ceased; yet still the sails made on
A pleasant noise till noon,
A noise like of a hidden brook
In the leafy month of June,
That to the sleeping woods all night
Singeth a quiet tune.

Till noon we quietly sailed on,
Yet never a breeze did breathe:
Slowly and smoothly went the ship,
Moved onward from beneath.

The lonesome spirit from the south pole carries on the ship as far as the line, in obedience to the angelic troop, but still requireth vengeance.

Under the keel nine fathom deep,
From the land of mist and snow,
The spirit slid: and it was he
That made the ship to go.
The sails at noon left off their tune,
And the ship stood still also.

The sun, right up above the mast,
Had fix'd her to the ocean:
But in a minute she 'gan to stir,
With a short uneasy motion—
Backwards and forwards half her length
With a short uneasy motion.

Then like a pawing horse let go,
She made a sudden bound:
It flung the blood into my head,
And I fell down in a swound.

The polar spirit's fellow demons, the invisible inhabitants of the element, take part in his wrong; and two of them relate, one to the other, that penance long and heavy for the ancient mariner hath been accorded to the polar spirit, who returneth southward.

How long in that same fit I lay,
I have not to declare;
But ere my living life return'd,
I heard and in my soul discern'd
Two voices in the air.

"Is it he?" quoth one, "is this the man?
By Him who died on cross,
With his cruel bow he laid full low
The harmless albatross.

"The spirit who bideth by himself
In the land of mist and snow,
He loved the bird that loved the man
Who shot him with his bow."

The other was a softer voice,
As soft as honey-dew:
Quoth he, "The man hath penance done,
And penance more will do."

PART VI.

FIRST VOICE.

But tell me, tell me! speak again,
Thy soft response renewing—
What makes that ship drive on so fast?
What is the OCEAN doing?

SECOND VOICE.

Still as a slave before his lord,
The OCEAN hath no blast;
His great bright eye most silently
Up to the moon is cast—

If he may know which way to go;
For she guides him smooth or grim.
See, brother, see! how graciously
She looketh down on him.

FIRST VOICE.

The mariner hath been cast into a trance; for the angelic power causeth the vessel to drive northward faster than human life could endure.

But why drives on that ship so fast,
Without or wave or wind?

SECOND VOICE.

The air is cut away before,
And closes from behind.

Fly, brother, fly! more high, more high!
Or we shall be belated:
For slow and slow that ship will go,
When the mariner's trance is abated.

The supernatural motion is retarded; the mariner awakes, and his penance begins anew.

I woke, and we were sailing on
As in a gentle weather:
'Twas night, calm night, the moon was high;
The dead men stood together.

All stood together on the deck
For a charnel-dungeon fitter:
All fix'd on me their stony eyes,
That in the moon did glitter.

The pang, the curse, with which they died,
Had never pass'd away:
I could not draw my eyes from theirs,
Nor turn them up to pray.

The curse is finally expiated.

And now the spell was snapt: once more
I view'd the ocean green,
And look'd far forth, yet little saw
Of what had else been seen—

Like one, that on a lonesome road
Doth walk in fear and dread,
And having once turned round walks on,
And turns no more his head;
Because he knows a frightful fiend
Doth close behind him tread.

But soon there breathed a wind on me,
Nor sound nor motion made:
Its path was not upon the sea,
In ripple or in shade.

It raised my hair, it fann'd my cheek
Like a meadow gale of spring—
It mingled strangely with my fears
Yet it felt like a welcoming.

Swiftly, swiftly flew the ship,
Yet she sail'd softly, too:
Sweetly, sweetly blew the breeze—
On me alone it blew.

And the ancient mariner beholdeth his native country.

O! dream of joy! is this, indeed,
The light-house top I see?
Is this the hill? is this the kirk?
Is this my own countrée?

We drifted o'er the harbour bar,
And I with sobs did pray—
O let me be awake, my God!
Or let me sleep alway.

The harbour bay was clear as glass,
So smoothly it was strewn!
And on the bay the moonlight lay,
And the shadow of the moon.

The rock shone bright, the kirk no less
That stands above the rock:
The moonlight steep'd in silentness,
The steady weathercock.

And the bay was white with silent light,
Till rising from the same,
Full many shapes that shadows were,
In crimson colours came.

The angelic spirits leave the dead bodies.

A little distance from the prow
Those crimson shadows were:
I turn'd my eyes upon the deck—
O, Christ! what saw I there!

And appear in their own forms of light.

Each corse lay flat, lifeless and flat;
And, by the holy rood!
A man all light, a seraph-man,
On every corse there stood.

This seraph band, each waved his hand:
It was a heavenly sight!
They stood as signals to the land,
Each one a lovely light;

This seraph band, each waved his hand,
No voice did they impart—
No voice; but O! the silence sank
Like music on my heart.

But soon I heard the dash of oars,
I heard the pilot's cheer;
My head was turn'd perforce away,
And I saw a boat appear.

The pilot and the pilot's boy,
I heard them coming fast:
Dear Lord in heaven! it was a joy
The dead men could not blast.

I saw a third—I heard his voice:
It is the hermit good!
He singeth loud his godly hymns
That he makes in the wood.
He'll shrive my soul, he'll wash away
The albatross's blood.

PART VII.

The hermit of the wood.

This hermit good lives in that wood
Which slopes down to the sea.
How loudly his sweet voice he rears!
He loves to talk with mariners
That come from a far countrée.

He kneels at morn, and noon, and eve—
He hath a cushion plump:
It is the moss that wholly hides
The rotted old oak stump.

The skiff-boat near'd: I heard them talk,
"Why this is strange, I trow!
Where are those lights, so many and fair,
That signal made but now?"

Approacheth the ship with wonder.

"Strange, by my faith!" the hermit said—
"And they answer not our cheer!
The planks look'd warp'd! and see those sails,
How thin they are and sere!
I never saw aught like to them,
Unless perchance it were

"Brown skeletons of leaves that lag
My forest brook along;
When the ivy-tod is heavy with snow,
And the owlet whoops to the wolf below,
That eats the she-wolf's young."

"Dear Lord! it hath a fiendish look—
(The pilot made reply,)
I am a-fear'd."—"Push on, push on!"
Said the hermit cheerily.

The boat came closer to the ship,
But I nor spake nor stirr'd;
The boat came close beneath the ship,
And straight a sound was heard.

The ship suddenly sinketh.

Under the water it rumbled on,
Still louder and more dread:
It reach'd the ship, it split the bay;
The ship went down like lead.

The ancient mariner is saved in the pilot's boat.

Stunn'd by that loud and dreadful sound,
Which sky and ocean smote,
Like one that hath been seven days drown'd,
My body lay afloat;
But swift as dreams, myself I found
Within the pilot's boat.

Upon the whirl, where sank the ship,
The boat spun round and round;
And all was still, save that the hill
Was telling of the sound.

I moved my lips—the pilot shriek'd,
And fell down in a fit;
The holy hermit raised his eyes,
And pray'd where he did sit.

I took the oars: the pilot's boy,
Who now doth crazy go,
Laugh'd loud and long, and all the while
His eyes went to and fro,

"Ha! ha!" quoth he, "full plain I see,
The devil knows how to row."

And now, all in my own countrée,
I stood on the firm land!
The hermit stepp'd forth from the boat,
And scarcely he could stand.

"O shrive me, shrive me, holy man!"
The hermit cross'd his brow.
"Say quick," quoth he, "I bid thee say—
What manner of man art thou?"

The ancient mariner earnestly entreateth the hermit to shrive him; and the penance of life falls on him

Forthwith this frame of mine was wrench'd
With a woful agony,
Which forced me to begin my tale;
And then it left me free.

And ever and anon throughout his future life an agony constraineth him to travel from land to land.

Since then, at an uncertain hour,
That agony returns:
And till my ghastly tale is told,
This heart within me burns.

I pass, like night, from land to land:
I have strange power of speech;
That moment that his face I see,
I know the man that must hear me:
To him my tale I teach.

What loud uproar bursts from that door!
The wedding-guests are there
But in the garden-bower the bride
And bridemaids singing are:
And hark! the little vesper-bell,
Which biddeth me to prayer.

O wedding-guest! this soul hath been
Alone on a wide, wide sea:
So lonely 'twas, that God himself
Scarce seemed there to be.

O sweeter than the marriage-feast,
'Tis sweeter far to me,
To walk together to the kirk,
With a goodly company!—

To walk together to the kirk,
And all together pray,
While each to his great Father bends,
Old men and babes, and loving friends,
And youths and maidens gay!

And to teach, by his own example, love and reverence to all things that God made and loveth.

Farewell, farewell! but this I tell
To thee, thou wedding-guest!
He prayeth well, who loveth well
Both man, and bird, and beast.

He prayeth best, who loveth best
All things, both great and small;
For the dear God who loveth us,
He made and loveth all.

The mariner, whose eye is bright,
Whose beard with age is hoar,
Is gone: and now the wedding-guest
Turn'd from the bridegroom's door.

He went like one that hath been
stunn'd,
And is of sense forlorn,
A sadder and a wiser man
He rose the morrow morn.

CHRISTABEL.

PREFACE.*

THE first part of the following poem was written in the year one thousand seven hundred and ninety-seven, at Stowey in the county of Somerset. The second part, after my return from Germany, in the year one thousand eight hundred, at Keswick, Cumberland. Since the latter date, my poetic powers have been, till very lately, in a state of suspended animation. But as, in my very first conception of the tale, I had the whole present to my mind, with the wholeness, no less than with the loveliness of a vision, I trust that I shall yet be able to embody in verse the three parts yet to come.

It is probable, that if the poem had been finished at either of the former periods, or if even the first and second part had been published in the year 1800, the impression of its originality would have been much greater than I dare at present expect. But for this, I have only my own indolence to blame. The dates are mentioned for the exclusive purpose of precluding charges of plagiarism or servile imitation from myself. For there is amongst us a set of critics, who seem to hold, that every possible thought and image is traditional; who have no notion that there are such things as fountains in the world, small as well as great; and who would, therefore, charitably derive every rill they behold flowing, from a perforation made in some other man's tank. I am confident, however, that as far as the present poem is concerned, the celebrated poets whose writings I might be suspected of having imitated, either in particular passages, or in the tone and the spirit of the whole, would be among the first to vindicate me from the charge, and who, on any striking coincidence, would permit me to address them in this doggerel version of two monkish Latin hexameters.

'Tis mine, and it is likewise yours;
But an' if this will not do,
Let it be mine, good friend! for I
Am the poorer of the two.

I have only to add, that the metre of the Christabel is not, properly speaking, irregular, though it may seem so from its being founded on a new principle: namely, that of counting in each line the accents, not the syllables. Though the latter may vary from seven to twelve, yet in each line the accents will be found to be only four. Nevertheless, this occasional variation in number of syllables is not introduced wantonly, or for the mere ends of convenience, but in correspondence with some transition, in the nature of the imagery or passion.

* To the edition of 1816.

PART I.

'Tis the middle of night by the castle clock,
And the owls have awaken'd the crowing cock
Tu-whit!——Tu-whoo!
And hark, again! the crowing cock,
How drowsily it crew.

Sir Leoline, the baron rich,
Hath a toothless mastiff, which
From her kennel beneath the rock
Maketh answer to the clock,
Four for the quarters, and twelve for the hour;
Ever and aye, by shine and shower,
Sixteen short howls, not over-loud;
Some say, she sees my lady's shroud.

Is the night chilly and dark?
The night is chilly, but not dark.
The thin gray cloud is spread on high,
It covers but not hides the sky.
The moon is behind, and at the full;
And yet she looks both small and dull.
The night is chill, the cloud is gray:
'Tis a month before the month of May,
And the spring comes slowly up this way.

The lovely lady, Christabel,
Whom her father loves so well,
What makes her in the wood so late,
A furlong from the castle gate?
She had dreams all yesternight
Of her own betrothed knight;
And she in the midnight wood will pray
For the weal of her lover that's far away

She stole along, she nothing spoke,
The sighs she heaved were soft and low,
And naught was green upon the oak,
But moss and rarest misletoe:
She kneels beneath the huge oak tree,
And in silence prayeth she.
The lady sprang up suddenly,
The lovely lady, Christabel!
It moan'd as near as near could be,
But what it is she cannot tell.—
On the other side it seems to be,
Of the huge, broad-breasted, old oak tree

The night is chill; the forest bare;
Is it the wind that moaneth bleak?
There is not wind enough in the air
To move away the ringlet curl
From the lovely lady's cheek—
There is not wind enough to twirl
The one red leaf, the last of its clan,
That dances as often as dance it can,
Hanging so light, and hanging so high,
On the topmost twig that looks up at the sky

Hush, beating heart of Christabel!
Jesu, Maria, shield her well!
She folded her arms beneath her cloak,
And stole to the other side of the oak.
What sees she there?

There she sees a damsel bright,
Drest in a silken robe of white,

That shadowy in the moonlight shone:
The neck that made that white robe wan,
Her stately neck, and arms were bare;
Her blue-vein'd feet unsandall'd were,
And wildly glitter'd here and there
The gems entangled in her hair.
I guess, 'twas frightful there to see
A lady so richly clad as she—
Beautiful exceedingly!

Mary mother, save me now!
(Said Christabel,) And who art thou?
The lady strange made answer meet,
And her voice was faint and sweet:—
Have pity on my sore distress,
I scarce can speak for weariness:
Stretch forth thy hand, and have no fear!
Said Christabel, How camest thou here?
And the lady, whose voice was faint and sweet,
Did thus pursue her answer meet:—

My sire is of a noble line,
And my name is Geraldine;
Five warriors seized me yestermorn,
Me, even me, a maid forlorn:
They choked my cries with force and fright,
And tied me on a palfrey white.
The palfrey was as fleet as wind,
And they rode furiously behind.
They spurr'd amain, their steeds were white;
And once we cross'd the shade of night.
As sure as Heaven shall rescue me,
I have no thought what men they be;
Nor do I know how long it is
(For I have lain entranced I wis)
Since one, the tallest of the five,
Took me from the palfrey's back,
A weary woman, scarce alive.
Some mutter'd words his comrades spoke:
He placed me underneath this oak,
He swore they would return with haste:
Whither they went I cannot tell—
I thought I heard, some minutes past,
Sounds as of a castle-bell.
Stretch forth thy hand, (thus ended she,)
And help a wretched maid to flee.

Then Christabel stretch'd forth her hand,
And comforted fair Geraldine:
O well, bright dame! may you command
The service of Sir Leoline;
And gladly our stout chivalry
Will he send forth and friends withal,
To guide and guard you safe and free
Home to your noble father's hall.

She rose; and forth with steps they pass'd
That strove to be, and were not, fast.
Her gracious STARS the lady blest,
And thus spake on sweet Christabel:—
All our household are at rest,
The hall as silent as the cell;
Sir Leoline is weak in health,
And may not well awaken'd be,
But we will move as if in stealth;
And I beseech your courtesy,
This night, to share your couch with me.

They cross'd the moat, and Christabel
Took the key that fitted well;
A little door she open'd straight,
All in the middle of the gate;
The gate that was iron'd within and without,
Where an army in battle array had march'd out
The lady sank, belike through pain,
And Christabel with might and main
Lifted her up, a weary weight,
Over the threshold of the gate:
Then the lady rose again,
And moved, as she were not in pain.

So free from danger, free from fear,
They cross'd the court: right glad they were
And Christabel devoutly cried
To the lady by her side,
Praise we the Virgin all divine
Who hath rescued thee from thy distress!
Alas, alas! said Geraldine,
I cannot speak for weariness.
So free from danger, free from fear,
They cross'd the court: right glad they were.

Outside her kennel, the mastiff old
Lay fast asleep, in moonshine cold.
The mastiff old did not awake,
Yet she an angry moan did make!
And what can ail the mastiff bitch?
Never till now she utter'd yell
Beneath the eye of Christabel.
Perhaps it is the owlet's scritch;
For what can ail the mastiff bitch?

They pass'd the hall, that echoes still,
Pass as lightly as you will!
The brands were flat, the brands were dying,
Amid their own white ashes lying:
But when the lady pass'd, there came
A tongue of light, a fit of flame;
And Christabel saw the lady's eye,
And nothing else saw she thereby,
Save the boss of the shield of Sir Leoline tall,
Which hung in a murky old niche in the wall
O softly tread! said Christabel,
My father seldom sleepeth well.

Sweet Christabel her feet doth bare;
And, jealous of the listening air,
They steal their way from stair to stair:
Now in glimmer, and now in gloom—
And now they pass the baron's room,
As still as death with stifled breath!
And now have reach'd her chamber-door;
And now doth Geraldine press down
The rushes of the chamber floor.

The moon shines dim in the open air,
And not a moonbeam enters here.
But they without its light can see
The chamber carved so curiously,
Carved with figures strange and sweet,
All made out of the carver's brain,
For a lady's chamber meet:
The lamp with twofold silver chain
Is fasten'd to an angel's feet.

The silver lamp burns dead and dim;
But Christabel the lamp will trim.
She trimm'd the lamp, and made it bright,
And left it swinging to and fro,
While Geraldine, in wretched plight,
Sank down upon the floor below,
O weary lady, Geraldine,
I pray you, drink this cordial wine!
It is a wine of virtuous powers;
My mother made it of wild flowers.

And will your mother pity me,
Who am a maiden most forlorn?
Christabel answer'd—Wo is me!
She died the hour that I was born.
I have heard the gray-hair'd friar tell,
How on her death-bed she did say,
That she should hear the castle-bell
Strike twelve upon my wedding-day.
O mother dear! that thou wert here!
I would, said Geraldine, she were!

But soon, with alter'd voice said she—
"Off, wandering mother! Peak and pine!
I have power to bid thee flee."
Alas! what ails poor Geraldine?
Why stares she with unsettled eye?
Can she the bodiless dead espy?
And why with hollow voice cries she,
"Off, woman, off! this hour is mine—
Though thou her guardian spirit be,
Off, woman, off! 'tis given to me."

Then Christabel knelt by the lady's side,
And raised to heaven her eyes so blue—
Alas! said she, this ghastly ride—
Dear lady! it hath wilder'd you!
The lady wiped her moist cold brow,
And faintly said, "'Tis over now!"

Again the wild-flower wine she drank;
Her fair large eyes 'gan glitter bright,
And from the floor whereon she sank,
The lofty lady stood upright;
She was most beautiful to see,
Like a lady of a far countrée.

And thus the lofty lady spake—
All they, who live in the upper sky,
Do love you, holy Christabel!
And you love them, and for their sake
And for the good which me befell,
Even I in my degrees will try,
Fair maiden! to requite you well.
But now unrobe yourself; for I
Must pray, ere yet in bed I lie.

Quoth Christabel, So let it be!
And as the lady bade, did she,
Her gentle limbs did she undress,
And lay down in her loveliness.

But through her brain of weal and wo
So many thoughts moved to and fro,
That vain it were her lids to close;
So halfway from the bed she rose,
And on her elbow did recline
To look at the Lady Geraldine.

Beneath the lamp the Lady bow'd,
And slowly roll'd her eyes around;
Then drawing in her breath aloud,
Like one that shudder'd, she unbound
The cincture from beneath her breast:
Her silken robe, and inner vest,
Dropt to her feet, and full in view,
Behold! her bosom and half her side——
A sight to dream of, not to tell!
O shield her! shield sweet Christabel.

Yet Geraldine nor speaks nor stirs;
Ah! what a stricken look was hers!
Deep from within she seems halfway
To lift some weight with sick assay,
And eyes the maid and seeks delay;
Then suddenly as one defied
Collects herself in scorn and pride,
And lay down by the maiden's side!—
And in her arms the maid she took,
Ah well-a-day!
And with low voice and doleful look
These words did say:
In the touch of this bosom there worketh a spell
Which is lord of thy utterance, Christabel!
Thou knowest to-night, and wilt know to-morrow
This mark of my shame, this seal of my sorrow;
But vainly thou warrest,
For this is alone in
Thy power to declare,
That in the dim forest
Thou heardest a low moaning,
And foundest a bright lady, surpassingly fair:
And didst bring her home with thee in love and in charity,
To shield her and shelter her from the damp air.

THE CONCLUSION TO PART I.

It was a lovely sight to see
The lady Christabel, when she
Was praying at the old oak tree.
Amid the jagged shadows
Of mossy leafless boughs,
Kneeling in the moonlight,
To make her gentle vows;
Her slender palms together prest,
Heaving sometimes on her breast;
Her face resign'd to bliss or bale—
Her face—O call it fair, not pale!
And both blue eyes more bright than clear,
Each about to have a tear.

With open eyes (ah wo is me!)
Asleep, and dreaming fearfully,
Fearfully dreaming, yet I wis,
Dreaming that alone, which is—
O sorrow and shame! Can this be she,
The lady, who knelt at the old oak tree?
And lo! the worker of these harms,
That holds the maiden in her arms,
Seems to slumber still and mild,
As a mother with her child.

A star hath set, a star hath risen,
O Geraldine! since arms of thine
Have been the lovely lady's prison.
O Geraldine! one hour was thine—
Thou'st had thy will! By tairn and rill,
The night-birds all that hour were still.
But now they are jubilant anew,
From cliff and tower, tu-whoo! tu-whoo!
Tu-whoo! tu-whoo! from wood and fell!

And see! the Lady Christabel
Gathers herself from out her trance;
Her limbs relax, her countenance
Grows sad and soft; the smooth thin lids
Close o'er her eyes; and tears she sheds—
Large tears that leave the lashes bright!
And oft the while she seems to smile
As infants at a sudden light!

Yea, she doth smile, and she doth weep,
Like a youthful hermitess,
Beauteous in a wilderness,
Who, praying always, prays in sleep,
And, if she move unquietly,
Perchance, 'tis but the blood so free,
Comes back and tingles in her feet.
No doubt, she hath a vision sweet:
What if her guardian spirit 'twere,
What if she knew her mother near?
But this she knows, in joys and woes,
That saints will aid if men will call:
For the blue sky bends over all!

PART II.

Each matin-bell, the baron saith,
Knells us back to a world of death.
These words Sir Leoline first said,
When he rose and found his lady dead:
These words Sir Leoline will say,
Many a morn to his dying day!

And hence the custom and law began,
That still at dawn the sacristan,
Who duly pulls the heavy bell,
Five-and-forty beads must tell
Between each stroke—a warning knell,
Which not a soul can choose but hear
From Bratha Head to Wyndermere.

Saith Bracy the bard, So let it knell!
And let the drowsy sacristan
Still count as slowly as he can!
There is no lack of such, I ween,
As well fill up the space between.
In Langdale Pike and Witch's Lair
And dungeon-ghyll so foully rent,
With ropes of rock and bells of air
Three sinful sextons' ghosts are pent,
Who all give back, one after t'other,
The death-note to their living brother;
And oft, too, by the knell offended,
Just as their one! two! three! is ended,
The devil mocks the doleful tale
With a merry peal from Borrowdale.

The air is still! through mist and cloud
That merry peal comes ringing loud;
And Geraldine shakes off her dread,
And rises lightly from the bed;
Puts on her silken vestments white,
And tricks her hair in lovely plight,
And, nothing doubting of her spell,
Awakens the Lady Christabel.
"Sleep you, sweet Lady Christabel?
I trust that you have rested well."

And Christabel awoke, and spied
The same who lay down by her side—
O rather say, the same whom she
Raised up beneath the old oak tree!
Nay, fairer yet! and yet more fair!
For she belike hath drunken deep
Of all the blessedness of sleep!
And while she spake, her looks, her air
Such gentle thankfulness declare,
That (so it seem'd) her girded vests
Grew tight beneath her heaving breasts.
"Sure I have sinn'd," said Christabel,
"Now Heaven be praised, if all be well;
And in low faltering tones, yet sweet,
Did she the lofty lady greet
With such perplexity of mind
As dreams too lively leave behind.

So quickly she rose, and quickly array'd
Her maiden limbs, and having pray'd
That He, who on the cross did groan,
Might wash away her sins unknown,
She forthwith led fair Geraldine
To meet her sire, Sir Leoline.

The lovely maid and the lady tall
Are pacing both into the hall,
And, pacing on through page and groom
Enter the baron's presence-room.

The baron rose, and while he prest
His gentle daughter to his breast,
With cheerful wonder in his eyes
The Lady Geraldine espies,
And gave such welcome to the same,
As might beseem so bright a dame!

But when he heard the lady's tale,
And when she told her father's name,
Why wax'd Sir Leoline so pale,
Murmuring o'er the name again,
Lord Roland de Vaux of Tryermaine?

Alas! they had been friends in youth;
But whispering tongues can poison truth
And constancy lives in realms above,
And life is thorny; and youth is vain:
And to be wroth with one we love,
Doth work like madness in the brain.
And thus it chanced, as I divine
With Roland and Sir Leoline
Each spake words of high disdain
And insult to his heart's best brother:
They parted—ne'er to meet again!
But never either found another
To free the hollow heart from paining—
They stood aloof, the scars remaining,

Like cliffs which had been rent asunder;
A dreary sea now flows between.
But neither heat, nor frost, nor thunder,
Shall wholly do away, I ween,
The marks of that which once hath been.
Sir Leoline, a moment's space,
Stood gazing on the damsel's face:
And the youthful Lord of Tryermaine
Came back upon his heart again.

O then the baron forgot his age!
His noble heart swell'd high with rage;
He swore by the wounds in Jesu's side,
He would proclaim it far and wide
With trump and solemn heraldry,
That they, who thus had wrong'd the dame,
Were base as spotted infamy!
"And if they dare deny the same,
My herald shall appoint a week,
And let the recreant traitors seek
My tourney court—that there and then
I may dislodge their reptile souls
From the bodies and forms of men!"
He spake: his eyes in lightning rolls!
For the lady was ruthlessly seized; and he kenn'd
In the beautiful lady the child of his friend!

And now the tears were on his face,
And fondly in his arms he took
Fair Geraldine, who met th' embrace,
Prolonging it with joyous look.
Which when she view'd, a vision fell
Upon the soul of Christabel,
The vision of fear, the touch and pain!
She shrunk and shudder'd, and saw again—
(Ah, wo is me! Was it for thee,
Thou gentle maid! such sights to see!)

Again she saw that bosom old,
Again she felt that bosom cold,
And drew in her breath with a hissing sound:
Whereat the knight turn'd wildly round,
And nothing saw but his own sweet maid
With eyes upraised, as one that pray'd.

The touch, the sight, had pass'd away,
And in its stead that vision blest,
Which comforted her after-rest,
While in the lady's arms she lay,
Had put a rapture in her breast,
And on her lips and o'er her eyes
Spread smiles like light!

With new surprise,
"What ails then my beloved child?"
The baron said.—His daughter mild
Made answer, "All will yet be well!"
I ween, she had no power to tell
Aught else; so mighty was the spell.

Yet he, who saw this Geraldine,
Had deem'd her sure a thing divine,
Such sorrow with such grace she blended,
As if she fear'd she had offended
Sweet Christabel, that gentle maid!
And with such lowly tones she pray'd,
She might be sent without delay
Home to her father's mansion.

"Nay!
Nay, by my soul!" said Leoline.
"Ho! Bracy the bard, the charge be thine
Go thou, with music sweet and loud,
And take two steeds with trappings proud,
And take the youth whom thou lovest best
To bear thy harp, and learn thy song,
And clothe you both in solemn vest,
And over the mountains haste along,
Lest wandering folk, that are abroad,
Detain you on the valley road.
And when he has cross'd the Irthing flood,
My merry bard! he hastes, he hastes
Up Knorren Moor, through Halegarth wood,
And reaches soon that castle good
Which stands and threatens Scotland's wastes.

"Bard Bracy, bard Bracy, your horses are fleet,
Ye must ride up the hall, your music so sweet,
More loud than your horses' echoing feet!
And loud and loud to Lord Roland call,
Thy daughter is safe in Langdale hall!
Thy beautiful daughter is safe and free—
Sir Leoline greets thee thus through me.
He bids thee come without delay
With all thy numerous array;
And take thy lovely daughter home:
And he will meet thee on the way
With all his numerous array,
White with their panting palfreys' foam:
And by mine honour! I will say
That I repent me of the day
When I spake words of high disdain
To Roland de Vaux of Tryermaine!—
For since that evil hour hath flown,
Many a summer's sun hath shone;
Yet ne'er found I a friend again
Like Roland de Vaux of Tryermaine."

The lady fell, and clasp'd his knees,
Her face upraised, her eyes o'erflowing;
And Bracy replied, with faltering voice,
Her gracious hail on all bestowing:—
Thy words, thou sire of Christabel,
Are sweeter than my heart can tell;
Yet might I gain a boon of thee,
This day my journey should not be,
So strange a dream hath come to me,
That I had vow'd with music loud
To clear yon wood from thing unblest,
Warn'd by a vision in my rest!
For in my sleep I saw that dove,
That gentle bird, whom thou dost love,
And call'st by thy own daughter's name—
Sir Leoline! I saw the same,
Fluttering, and uttering fearful moan,
Among the green herbs in the forest alone.
Which when I saw and when I heard,
I wonder'd what might ail the bird
For nothing near it could I see,
Save the grass and green herbs underneath the old tree.

And in my dreams, methought, I went
To search out what might there be found;
And what the sweet bird's trouble meant,
That thus lay fluttering on the ground.
I went and peer'd, and could descry
No cause for her distressful cry;
But yet for her dear lady's sake
I stoop'd, methought, the dove to take.
When lo! I saw a bright green snake
Coil'd around its wings and neck.
Green as the herbs on which it couch'd,
Close by the dove's its head it crouch'd!
And with the dove it heaves and stirs,
Swelling its neck as she swell'd hers!
I woke; it was the midnight hour,
The clock was echoing in the tower;
But though my slumber was gone by,
This dream it would not pass away—
It seems to live upon my eye!
And thence I vow'd this selfsame day,
With music strong and saintly song
To wander through the forest bare,
Lest aught unholy loiter there.

Thus Bracy said: the baron, the while,
Half-listening heard him with a smile;
Then turn'd to Lady Geraldine,
His eyes made up of wonder and love;
And said in courtly accents fine,
Sweet maid! Lord Roland's beauteous dove,
With arms more strong than harp or song,
Thy sire and I will crush the snake!
He kiss'd her forehead as he spake,
And Geraldine in maiden wise,
Casting down her large bright eyes,
With blushing cheek and courtesy fine
She turn'd her from Sir Leoline;
Softly gathering up her train,
That o'er her right arm fell again
And folded her arms across her chest,
And couch'd her head upon her breast,
And look'd askance at Christabel——
Jesu, Maria, shield her well!

A snake's small eye blinks dull and shy,
And the lady's eyes they shrunk in her head,
Each shrunk up to a serpent's eye,
And with somewhat of malice and more of dread,
At Christabel she look'd askance:—
One moment—and the sight was fled!
But Christabel, in dizzy trance
Stumbling on the unsteady ground,
Shudder'd aloud, with a hissing sound;
And Geraldine again turn'd round,
And like a thing, that sought relief,
Full of wonder and full of grief,
She roll'd her large bright eyes divine
Wildly on Sir Leoline.

The maid, alas! her thoughts are gone,
She nothing sees—no sight but one!
The maid, devoid of guile and sin,
I know not how, in fearful wise
So deeply had she drunken in
That look, those shrunken serpent eyes,
That all her features were resign'd
To this sole image in her mind:
And passively did imitate
That look of dull and treacherous hate!
And thus she stood, in dizzy trance,
Still picturing that look askance
With forced, unconscious sympathy
Full before her father's view——
As far as such a look could be
In eyes so innocent and blue.
And when the trance was o'er, the maid
Paused a while, and inly pray'd:
Then falling at the baron's feet,
"By my mother's soul do I entreat
That thou this woman send away!"
She said: and more she could not say;
For what she knew she could not tell,
O'ermaster'd by the mighty spell.

Why is thy cheek so wan and wild,
Sir Leoline? Thy only child
Lies at thy feet, thy joy, thy pride,
So fair, so innocent, so mild;
The same, for whom thy lady died.
O by the pangs of her dear mother,
Think thou no evil of thy child!
For her, and thee, and for no other,
She pray'd the moment ere she died;
Pray'd that the babe for whom she died
Might prove her dear lord's joy and pride!
That prayer her deadly pangs beguiled,
Sir Leoline!
And wouldst thou wrong thy only child,
Her child and thine?

Within the baron's heart and brain
If thoughts like these had any share,
They only swell'd his rage and pain,
And did but work confusion there.
His heart was cleft with pain and rage,
His cheeks they quiver'd, his eyes were wild,
Dishonour'd thus in his old age;
Dishonour'd by his only child,
And all his hospitality
To the insulted daughter of his friend
By more than woman's jealousy
Brought thus to a disgraceful end—
He roll'd his eye with stern regard
Upon the gentle minstrel bard,
And said in tones abrupt, austere,
Why, Bracy! dost thou loiter here?
I bade thee hence! The bard obey'd;
And, turning from his own sweet maid,
The aged knight, Sir Leoline,
Led forth the Lady Geraldine!

THE CONCLUSION TO PART II

A little child, a limber elf,
Singing, dancing to itself,
A fairy thing with red round cheeks
That always finds and never seeks,
Makes such a vision to the sight
As fills a father's eyes with light;
And pleasures flow in so thick and fast
Upon his heart, that he at last

Must needs express his love's excess
With words of unmeant bitterness.
Perhaps 'tis pretty to force together
Thoughts so all unlike each other;
To mutter and mock a broken charm,
To dally with wrong that does no harm.
Perhaps 'tis tender too and pretty
At each wild word to feel within
A sweet recoil of love and pity.
And what, if in a world of sin
(O sorrow and shame should this be true!)
Such giddiness of heart and brain
Comes seldom, save from rage and pain,
So talks as it's most used to do.

YOUTH AND AGE.

VERSE, a breeze 'mid blossoms straying,
Where Hope clung feeding, like a bee—
Both were mine! Life went a-maying
With Nature, Hope, and Poesy,
When I was young!
When I was young?—Ah, woful *when!*
Ah for the change 'twixt now and then!
This breathing house not built with hands,
This body that does me grievous wrong,
O'er airy cliffs and glittering sands,
How lightly *then* it flash'd along:—
Like those trim skiffs, unknown of yore,
On winding lakes and rivers wide,
That ask no aid of sail or oar,
That fear no spite of wind or tide!
Naught cared this body for wind or weather,
When Youth and I lived in't together.

Flowers are lovely; love is flower-like;
Friendship is a sheltering tree;
O the joys, that came down shower-like,
Of friendship, love, and liberty,
Ere I was old!
Ere I was old? Ah woful *Ere*,
Which tells me, Youth's no longer here!
O Youth! for years so many and sweet,
'Tis known, that thou and I were one,
I'll think it but a fond conceit—
It cannot be that thou art gone!
Thy vesper-bell hath not yet toll'd:—
And thou wert aye a masker bold!
What strange disguise hast now put on,
To *make believe* that thou art gone?
I see these locks in silvery slips,
This drooping gait, this alter'd size:
But springtide blossoms on thy lips,
And tears take sunshine from thine eyes!
Life is but thought: so think I will
That Youth and I are house-mates still.

THE DEVIL'S THOUGHTS.

FROM his brimstone bed at break of day
A-walking the DEVIL is gone,
To visit his little snug farm of the earth,
And see how his stock went on.

Over the hill and over the dale
And he went over the plain,
And backward and forward he swish'd his long tail
As a gentleman swishes his cane.

And how then was the Devil drest?
O! he was in his Sunday's best:
His jacket was red and his breeches were blue,
And there was a hole where the tail came through.

He saw a LAWYER killing a viper
On a dung-heap beside his stable,
And the Devil smiled, for it put him in mind
Of Cain and *his* brother, Abel.

A POTHECARY on a white horse
Rode by on his vocations,
And the Devil thought of his old friend
DEATH in the Revelations.

He saw a cottage with a double coach-house,
A cottage of gentility!
And the Devil did grin, for his darling sin
Is pride that apes humility.

He went into a rich bookseller's shop,
Quoth he! we are both of one college;
For I myself sate like a cormorant once,
Fast by the tree of knowledge.*

Down the river there plied with wind and tide,
A pig, with vast celerity;

---

* And all amid them stood the *Tree of Life*
High eminent, blooming ambrosial fruit
Of vegetable gold (query *paper money?*); and next to Life
Our Death, the *Tree of Knowledge*, grew fast by.—
* * * * * * *
* * * * * * *
So clomb this first grand thief——
Thence up he flew, and on the tree of life
Sat like a cormorant.—*Par. Lost*, IV.

The allegory here is so apt, that in a catalogue of *various readings* obtained from collating the MSS. one might expect to find it noted, that for "*Life*" *Cod. quid habent*, "*Trade.*" Though indeed *the trade*, i. e. the bibliopolic, so called, κατ' εξόχην, may be regarded as *life* sansu *eminentiori:* a suggestion, which I owe to a young retailer in the hosiery line, who on hearing a description of the net profits, dinner parties, country houses, etc. of the trade, exclaimed, "Ay! that's what I call *life* now!" —This "Life, *our* Death," is thus happily contrasted with the fruits of authorship.—Sic nos non nobis mellificamus Apes.

Of this poem, with which the Fire, Famine, and Slaughter first appeared in the Morning Post, the three first stanzas, which are worth all the rest, and the ninth, were dictated by Mr. Southey. Between the ninth and the concluding stanza, two or three are omitted as grounded on subjects that have lost their interest—and for better reasons.

If any one should ask, who General —— meant, the author begs leave to inform him, that he did once see red-faced person in a dream whom by the dress he took for a general; but he might have been mistaken, and most certainly he did not hear any names mentioned. simple verity, the author never meant any one, or indeed any thing but to out a concluding stanza to his doggerel.

And the Devil look'd wise as he saw how the while,
It cut its own throat. There! quoth he, with a smile,
Goes "England's commercial prosperity."

As he went through Cold-Bath Fields, he saw
A solitary cell,
And the Devil was pleased, for it gave him a hint
For improving his prisons in hell.

* * * * *

General ———'s burning face
He saw with consternation,
And back to hell his way did he take,
For the devil thought, by a slight mistake,
It was general conflagration.

EPIGRAMS.

I.

I ASK'D my fair, one happy day,
What I should call her in my lay,
By what sweet name from Rome, or Greece,
Neæra, Laura, Daphne, Chloris,
Carina, Lalage, or Doris,
Dorimene, or Lucrece?

II.

"Ah," replied my gentle fair;
"Dear one, what are names but air?—
Choose thou whatever suits the line;
Call me Laura, call me Chloris,
Call me Lalage, or Doris,
Only—only—call me *thine!*"

SLY Beelzebub took all occasions
To try Job's constancy, and patience.
He took his honour, took his health;
He took his children, took his wealth,
His servants, oxen, horses, cows,—
But cunning Satan did *not* take his spouse.

But Heaven, that brings out good from evil,
And loves to disappoint the devil,
Had predetermined to restore
Twofold all he had before;
His servants, horses, oxen, cows—
Short-sighted devil, *not* to take his spouse!

HOARSE Mævius reads his hobbling verse
To all, and at all times;
And finds them both divinely smooth,
His voice as well as rhymes.

But folks say Mævius is no ass
But Mævius makes it clear
That he's a monster of an ass—
An ass without an ear!

THERE comes from old Avaro's grave
A deadly stench—why, sure, they have
Immured his *soul* within his grave!

LAST Monday all the papers said,
That Mr. ——— was dead;
Why, then, what said the city?
The tenth part sadly shook their head,
And shaking, sigh'd, and sighing said,
"Pity, indeed, 'tis pity!"

But when the said report was found
A rumour wholly without ground,
Why, then, what said the city?
The other *nine* parts shook their head,
Repeating what the tenth had said,
"Pity, indeed, 'tis pity!"

YOUR poem must *eternal* be,
Dear sir!—it cannot fail—
For 'tis incomprehensible,
And wants both *head* and *tail*.

SWANS sing before they die—'twere no bad thing
Did certain persons die before they sing.

THE GARDEN OF BOCCACCIO.

OF late, in one of those most weary hours,
When life seems emptied of all genial powers,
A dreary mood, which he who ne'er has known
May bless his happy lot, I sate alone;
And, from the numbing spell to win relief,
Call'd on the past for thought of glee or grief.
In vain! bereft alike of grief and glee,
I sate and cower'd o'er my own vacancy!
And as I watch'd the dull continuous ache,
Which, all else slumbering, seem'd alone to wake
O friend! long wont to notice yet conceal,
And soothe by silence what words cannot heal,
I but half saw that quiet hand of thine
Place on my desk this exquisite design,
Boccaccio's garden and its faëry,
The love, the joyance, and the gallantry!
An idyl, with Boccaccio's spirit warm
Framed in the silent poesy of form.
Like flocks adown a newly-bathed steep
Emerging from a mist: or like a stream
Of music soft that not dispels the sleep,
But casts in happier moulds the slumberer's dream,
Gazed by an idle eye with silent might
The picture stole upon my inward sight.
A tremulous warmth crept gradual o'er my chest,
As though an infant's finger touch'd my breast.
And one by one (I know not whence) were brought
All spirits of power that most had stirr'd my thought.
In selfless boyhood, on a new world tost
Of wonder, and in its own fancies lost;
Or charm'd my youth, that kindled from above,
Loved ere it loved, and sought a form for love;
Or lent a lustre to the earnest scan
Of manhood, musing what and whence is man!
Wild strain of scalds, that in the sea-worn caves
Rehearsed their war-spell to the winds and waves;

Or fateful hymn of those prophetic maids,
That call'd on Hertha in deep forest glades;
Or minstrel lay, that cheer'd the baron's feast;
Or rhyme of city pomp, of monk and priest,
Judge, mayor, and many a guild in long array,
To high-church pacing on the great saint's day.
And many a verse which to myself I sang,
That woke the tear, yet stole away the pang,
Of hopes which in lamenting I renew'd.
And last, a matron now, of sober mien,
Yet radiant still and with no earthly sheen,
Whom as a fairy child my childhood woo'd
E'en in my dawn of thought—Philosophy.
Though then unconscious of herself, pardie,
She bore no other name than poesy;
And, like a gift from heaven, in lifeful glee,
That had but newly left a mother's knee,
Prattled and play'd with bird, and flower, and stone,
As with elfin playfellows well known,
And life reveal'd to innocence alone.

Thanks, gentle artist! now I can descry
Thy fair creation with a mastering eye,
And *all* awake! And now in fix'd gaze stand,
Now wander through the Eden of thy hand;
Praise the green arches, on the fountain clear
See fragment shadows of the crossing deer,
And with that serviceable nymph I stoop,
The crystal from its restless pool to scoop.
I see no longer! I myself am there,
Sit on the ground-sward, and the banquet share.
'Tis I, that sweep that lute's love-echoing strings,
And gaze upon the maid, who gazing sings:
Or pause and listen to the tinkling bells
From the high tower, and think that there she dwells.
With old Boccaccio's soul I stand possest,
And breathe an air like life, that swells my chest.

The brightness of the world, O thou once free,
And always fair, rare land of courtesy!
O, Florence! with the Tuscan fields and hills!
And famous Arno fed with all their rills;
Thou brightest star of star-bright Italy!
Rich, ornate, populous, all treasures thine,
The golden corn, the olive, and the vine.
Fair cities, gallant mansions, castles old,
And forests, where beside his leafy hold
The sullen boar hath heard the distant horn,
And whets his tusks against the gnarled thorn;
Palladian palace with its storied halls;
Fountains, where love lies listening to their falls;
Gardens, where flings the bridge its airy span,
And nature makes her happy home with man
Where many a gorgeous flower is duly fed
With its own rill, on its own spangled bed,
And wreathes the marble urn, or leans its head,
A mimic mourner, that with veil withdrawn
Weeps liquid gems, the presents of the dawn,
Thine all delights, and every muse is thine:
And more than all, th' embrace and intertwine
Of all with all in gay and twinkling dance!
'Mid gods of Greece and warriors of romance,
See! Boccace sits, unfolding on his knees
The new-found roll of old Maonides;*
But from his mantle's fold, and near the heart,
Peers Ovid's Holy Book of Love's sweet smart!†
O all-enjoying and all-blending sage,
Long be it mine to con thy mazy page,
Where, half-conceal'd, the eye of fancy views
Fauns, nymphs, and winged saints, all gracious to thy muse!

Still in thy garden let me watch their pranks,
And see in Dian's vest between the ranks
Of the trim vines, some maid that half believes
The *vestal* fires, of which her lover grieves,
With that sly satyr peering through the leaves!

* Boccaccio claimed for himself the glory of having first introduced the works of Homer to his country.

† I know few more striking or more interesting proofs of the overwhelming influence which the study of the Greek and Roman classics exercised on the judgments, feelings, and imaginations of the literati of Europe at the commencement of the restoration of literature, than the passage in the Filocopo of Boccaccio: where the sage instructer, Racheo, as soon as the young prince and the beautiful girl, Biancafiore had learned their letters, sets them to study the *Holy Book, Ovid's Art of Love.* "Incominciò Racheo a mettere il suo officio in essecuzione con intera sollecitudine. E loro, in breve tempo, insegnato a conoscer le lettere, *fece legere il santo libro d' Ovidio, nel quale il sommo poeta mostra, come i santi fuochi di Venere si debbano ne freddi cuori accendere.*"

JAMES MONTGOMERY

JAMES MONTGOMERY was born in Irvine, Ayrshire, in 1771. His parents belonged to the church of the United Brethren, commonly called Moravians,—a sect by no means numerous in England, and still more limited in Scotland. Having previously sojourned for a short time at a village in the Irish county of Antrim, they placed the future poet at the school of their society at Fulnick, near Leeds, and embarked for the West Indies as missionaries among the negro slaves. They were the victims of their zeal and humanity; the husband died in Barbadoes, and the wife in Tobago.

After remaining two years at Fulnick, and, like other men of genius, disappointing the expectations of his friends as a student, "from very indolence," he was placed by them in a retail shop at Mirfield near Wakefield. This ungenial employment he considered himself—not being under indentures—at liberty to relinquish at the end of two years, with a view to try his fortune in the great world. After spending other two years at a village near Rotherham, and a few months with a bookseller in London, he engaged as an assistant with Mr. Joseph Gales of Sheffield, who, published a newspaper;—to the management of which, in 1794, he succeeded. This, though conducted with comparative moderation, exposed him to much enmity—rather inherited from his predecessor than actually incurred by himself. The liberty of the press in those days was, like faith, "the substance of things hoped for;" a sentence of condemnation, or even a word of reproach, against men in "high places," was punished as libellous. Montgomery did not indeed share the fate of some of his stern sectarian forefathers; but in lieu of maiming and pillory, he had to endure fine and imprisonment. Within eighteen months, and when he had scarcely arrived at manhood, his exertions in the cause of rational freedom had twice consigned him to a jail. During the thirty years that followed, however, he was permitted to publish his opinions, without being the object of open persecutions. Wearied out, at length, he relinquished his newspaper, in 1825. Recently one of the government grants to British worthies has been conferred upon him; and—it must be recorded to his honour—by Sir Robert Peel.

The poet continues to reside in Sheffield,—esteemed, admired, and beloved: a man of purer mind, or more unsuspected integrity, never existed. He is an honour to the profession of letters; and by the upright and unimpeachable tenor of his life—even more than by his writings—the persuasive and convincing advocate of religion. In his personal appearance, Montgomery is rather below than above the middle stature: his countenance is peculiarly bland and tranquil; and but for the occasional sparklings of a clear gray eye, it could scarcely be described as expressive.

Very early in life, Montgomery published a volume of poems. They were not, it would appear, favourably received by the public; and he writes, the disappointment of his premature poetical hopes brought with it a blight which his mind has never recovered. "For many years," he adds, "I was as mute as a moulting bird; and when the power of song returned, it was without the energy, self-confidence, and freedom which happier minstrels among my contemporaries have manifested." The Wanderer of Switzerland was published in 1806; the West Indies, in 1810; the World before the Flood, in 1813; Greenland in 1819; the Pelican Island, in 1827: he has since contented himself with the production of occasional verses.

Those who can distinguish the fine gold from the "sounding brass" of poetry, must place the name of James Montgomery high in the list of British poets; and those who consider that the chiefest duty of such is to promote the cause of religion, virtue, and humanity, must acknowledge in him one of their most zealous and efficient advocates. He does not, indeed, often aim at bolder flights of imagination; but if he seldom rises above, he never sinks beneath, the object of which he desires the attainment. If he rarely startles us, he still more rarely leaves us dissatisfied; he does not attempt that to which his powers are unequal, and therefore is at all times successful. To the general reader, it will seem as if the early bias of his mind and his first associations had tinged—we may not say tainted—the source from whence he drew his inspirations, and that his poems are "sicklied o'er" with peculiar impressions and opinions which fail to excite the sympathy of the great mass of mankind. We should, however, recollect, that, although he has chiefly addressed himself to those who think with him, his popularity is by no means confined to them; but that those who read poetry for the delight it affords them, and without any reference to his leading design, acknowledge his merit, and contribute to his fame.

THE WANDERER OF SWITZERLAND.

IN SIX PARTS.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE historical facts alluded to in The Wanderer of Switzerland may be found in the supplement to Coxe's Travels, in Planta's History of the Helvetic Confederacy, and in Zschokke's Invasion of Switzerland by the French, in 1798, translated by Dr. Aikin.

PART I.

A Wanderer of Switzerland and his family, consisting of his wife, his daughter, and her young children, emigrating from their country, in consequence of its subjugation by the French, in 1798, arrive at the cottage of a shepherd, beyond the frontiers, where they are hospitably entertained.

SHEPHERD.

"WANDERER, whither dost thou roam?
Weary wanderer, old and gray;
Wherefore hast thou left thine home
In the sunset of thy day?"

WANDERER.

"In the sunset of my day,
Stranger! I have lost my home:
Weary, wandering, old, and gray—
Therefore, therefore do I roam.

"Here mine arms a wife enfold,
Fainting in their weak embrace;*
There my daughter's charms behold,
Withering in that widow'd face.

"These her infants—O their sire,
Worthy of the race of Tell,
In the battle's fiercest fire,
In his country's battle fell!"

SHEPHERD.

"Switzerland, then, gave thee birth?"

WANDERER.

"Ay—'twas Switzerland of yore;
But, degraded spot of earth,
Thou art Switzerland no more:

"O'er thy mountains sunk in blood,
Are the waves of ruin hurl'd;
Like the waters of the flood
Rolling round a buried world."

SHEPHERD.

"Yet will time the deluge stop;
Then may Switzerland be blest
On St. Gothard's* hoary top
Shall the ark of Freedom rest.'

WANDERER.

"No!—irreparably lost,
On the day that made us slaves,
Freedom's ark, by tempest tost,
Founder'd in the swallowing waves."

SHEPHERD.

"Welcome, wanderer as thou art,
All my blessings to partake;
Yet thrice welcome to my heart,
For thine injured country's sake.

"On the western hills afar
Evening lingers with delight,
While she views her favourite star
Brightening on the brow of night.

"Here, though lowly be my lot,
Enter freely, freely share
All the comforts of my cot,
Humble shelter, homely fare.

"Spouse, I bring a suffering guest,
With his family of grief;
Give the weary pilgrims rest,
Yield the exiles sweet relief."

SHEPHERD'S WIFE.

"I will yield them sweet relief:
Weary pilgrims! welcome here;
Welcome, family of grief,
Welcome to my warmest cheer."

WANDERER.

"When in prayer the broken heart
Asks a blessing from above,
Heaven shall take the wanderer's part,
Heaven reward the stranger's love."

SHEPHERD.

"Haste, recruit the failing fire,
High the winter-fagots raise;
See the crackling flames aspire;
O how cheerfully they blaze!

"Mourners, now forget your cares,
And, till supper-board be crown'd,
Closely draw your fireside chairs;
Form the dear domestic round."

WANDERER.

"Host, thy smiling daughters bring,
Bring those rosy lads of thine;
Let them mingle in the ring
With these poor lost babes of mine."

SHEPHERD.

"Join the ring, my girls and boys;
This enchanting circle, this
Binds the social loves and joys:
'Tis the fairy ring of bliss!"

WANDERER.

"O ye loves and joys! that sport
In the fairy ring of bliss,
Oft with me ye held your court:
I had once a home like this!

"Bountiful my former lot
As my native country's rills;
The foundations of my cot
Were her everlasting hills.

"But those streams no longer pour
Rich abundance round my lands;
And my father's cot no more
On my father's mountain stands.

* St. Gothard is the name of the highest mountain in the canton of Uri, the birthplace of Swiss independence.

"By a hundred winters piled,
When the glaciers,* dark with death,
Hang o'er precipices wild,
Hang—suspended by a breath:

"If a pulse but throb alarm,
Headlong down the steeps they fall;
For a pulse will break the charm,—
Bounding, bursting, burying all.

"Struck with horror stiff and pale,
When the chaos breaks on high,
All that view it from the vale,
All that hear it coming, die:—

"In a day and hour accurst,
O'er the wretched land of Tell,
Thus the Gallic ruin burst,
Thus the Gallic glacier fell!"

SHEPHERD.

"Hush that melancholy strain;
Wipe those unavailing tears.

WANDERER.

"Nay—I must, I will complain;
'Tis the privilege of years:

"'Tis the privilege of wo
Thus her anguish to impart:
And the tears that freely flow
Ease the agonizing heart."

SHEPHERD.

"Yet suspend thy griefs a while;
See the plenteous table crown'd;
And my wife's endearing smile
Beams a rosy welcome round.

"Cheese, from mountain dairies prest,
Wholesome herbs, nutritious roots,
Honey, from the wild-bee's nest,
Cheering wine and ripen'd fruits:

"These, with soul-sustaining bread,
My paternal fields afford:—
On such fare our fathers fed;
Holy pilgrim! bless the board."

PART II.

After supper, the Wanderer, at the desire of his host, relates the sorrows and sufferings of his country during the invasion and conquest of it by the French, in connexion with his own story.

SHEPHERD.

"WANDERER! bow'd with griefs and years,
Wanderer, with the cheek so pale,
O give language to those tears!
Tell their melancholy tale."

WANDERER.

"Stranger-friend, the tears that flow
Down the channels of this cheek,
Tell a mystery of wo
Which no human tongue can speak.

"Not the pangs of 'hope deferr'd'
My tormented bosom tear:—
On the tomb of hope interr'd
Scowls the spectre of despair.

"Where the Alpine summits rise,
Height o'er height stupendous hurl'd;
Like the pillars of the skies,
Like the ramparts of the world:

"Born in freedom's eagle nest,
Rock'd by whirlwinds in their rage,
Nursed at freedom's stormy breast,
Lived my sires from age to age.

"High o'er Underwalden's vale,
Where the forest fronts the morn;
Whence the boundless eye might sail
O'er a sea of mountains borne;

"There my little native cot
Peep'd upon my father's farm:—
O! it was a happy spot,
Rich in every rural charm!

"There, my life, a silent stream,
Glid along, yet seem'd at rest;
Lovely as an infant's dream
On the waking mother's breast.

"Till the storm that wreck'd the world,
In its horrible career,
Into hopeless ruin hurl'd
All this aching heart held dear.

"On the princely towers of Berne
Fell the Gallic thunder-stroke;
To the lake of poor Lucerne,
All submitted to the yoke.

"REDING then his standard raised,
Drew his sword on Brunnen's plain;*
But in vain his banner blazed,
Reding drew his sword in vain.

"Where our conquering fathers died,
Where their awful bones repose,
Thrice the battle's fate he tried,
Thrice o'erthrew his country's foes.†

"Happy then were those who fell
Fighting on their father's graves!
Wretched those who lived to tell
Treason made the victors slaves!‡

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* More properly the avalanches; immense accumulations of ice and snow, balanced on the verge of the mountains in such subtle suspense, that, in the opinion of the natives, the tread of the traveller may bring them down in destruction upon him. The glaciers are more permanent masses of ice, and formed rather in the valleys than on the summits of the Alps.

* Brunnen, at the foot of the mountains, on the borders of the Lake of Uri, where the first Swiss patriots, Walter Furst of Uri, Werner Stauffacher of Schwitz, and Arnold of Melchtal in Underwalden, conspired against the tyranny of Austria in 1307, again in 1798, became the seat of the diet of these three forest cantons.

† On the plains of Morgarthen, where the Swiss gained their first decisive victory over the force of Austria, and thereby secured the independence of their country; Aloys Reding, at the head of the troops of the little cantons, Uri, Schwitz, and Underwalden, repeatedly repulsed the invading army of France.

‡ By the resistance of these small cantons, the French General Schawenbourg was compelled to respect their independence, and gave them a solemn pledge to that

"Thus my country's life retired,
Slowly driven from part to part;
Underwalden last expired,
Underwalden was the heart.*

"In the valley of their birth,
Where our guardian mountains stand;
In the eye of heaven and earth,
Met the warriors of our land.

"Like their sires in olden time,
Arm'd they met in stern debate;
While in every breast sublime
Glow'd the spirit of the state.

"Gallia's menace fired their blood:
With one heart and voice they rose;
Hand in hand the heroes stood,
And defied their faithless foes.

"Then to heaven, in calm despair,
As they turn'd the tearless eye,
By their country's wrongs they sware
With their country's rights to die.

"Albert from the council came—
(My poor daughter was his wife;
All the valley loved his name;
Albert was my staff of life.)

"From the council field he came:
All his noble visage burn'd;
At his look I caught the flame;
At his voice my youth return'd.

"Fire from heaven my heart renew'd,
Vigour beat through every vein;
All the powers, that age had hew'd,
Started into strength again.

"Sudden from my couch I sprang,
Every limb to life restored;
With the bound my cottage rang,
As I snatch'd my fathers' sword.

'This the weapon they did wield
On Morgarthen's dreadful day;
And through Sempach's† iron field
This the ploughshare of their way.

"Then, my spouse! in vain thy fears
Strove my fury to restrain;
O my daughter! all thy tears,
All thy children's, were in vain.

"Quickly from our hastening foes,
Albert's active care removed,
Far amidst th' eternal snows,
Those who loved us,—those beloved.*

"Then our cottage we forsook;
Yet as down the steeps we pass'd,
Many an agonizing look
Homeward o'er the hills we cast.

"Now we reach'd the nether glen,
Where in arms our brethren lay;
Thrice five hundred fearless men,
Men of adamant were they!

"Nature's bulwarks, built by time,
'Gainst eternity to stand,
Mountains, terribly sublime,
Girt the camp on either hand.

"Dim behind, the valley brake
Into rocks that fled from view;
Fair in front the gleaming lake
Roll'd its waters bright and blue.

"Midst the hamlets of the dale,
Stantz,† with simple grandeur crown'd,
Seem'd the mother of the vale,
With her children scatter'd round.

"Midst the ruins of the dale
Now she bows her hoary head,
Like the widow of the vale
Weeping o'er her children dead.

"Happier then had been her fate,
Ere she fell by such a foe,
Had an earthquake sunk her state,
Or the lightning laid her low!"

SHEPHERD.

"By the lightning's deadly flash
Would her foes had been consumed!
Or amidst the earthquake's crash
Suddenly, alive, entomb'd!

"Why did justice not prevail?"

WANDERER.

"Ah! it was not thus to be!"

SHEPHERD.

"Man of grief! pursue thy tale
To the death of liberty."

PART III.

The Wanderer continues his narrative, and describes the battle and massacre of Underwalden.

WANDERER.

"From the valley we descried,
As the Gauls approach'd our shores,
Keels that darken'd all the tide,
Tempesting the lake with oars.

purport; but no sooner had they disarmed, on the faith of this engagement, than the enemy came suddenly upon them with an immense force; and with threats of extermination compelled them to take the civic oath to the new constitution, imposed upon all Switzerland.

* The inhabitants of the lower valley of Underwalden alone resisted the French message, which required submission to the new constitution, and the immediate surrender, *alive* or *dead*, of nine of their leaders. When the demand, accompanied by a menace of destruction, was read in the assembly of the district, all the men of the valley, fifteen hundred in number, took up arms, and devoted themselves to perish in the ruins of their country.

† At the battle of Sempach, the Austrians presented so impenetrable a front with their projected spears, that the Swiss were repeatedly compelled to retire from the attack, till a native of Underwalden, named Arnold de Winkelried, commending his family to his countrymen, sprung upon the enemy, and burying as many of their spears as he could grasp in his body, made a breach in their line; the Swiss rushed in, and routed the Austrians with a terrible slaughter.

* Many of the Underwalders, on the approach of the French army, removed their families and cattle among the higher Alps; and themselves returned to join their brethren, who had encamped in their native valley, on the borders of the lake, and awaited the attack of the enemy

† The capital of Underwalden.

"Then the mountain echoes rang
With the clangour of alarms:
Shrill the signal trumpet sang;
All our warriors leapt to arms.

"On the margin of the flood,
While the frantic foe drew nigh,
Grim as watching wolves we stood,
Prompt as eagles stretch'd to fly.

"In a deluge upon land
Burst their overwhelming might;
Back we hurl'd them from the strand,
Oft returning to the fight.

"Fierce and long the combat held—
Till the waves were warm with blood,
Till the booming waters swell'd
As they sank beneath the flood.*

"For on that triumphant day
Underwalden's arms once more
Broke oppression's black array,
Dash'd invasion from her shore.

"Gaul's surviving barks retired,
Muttering vengeance as they fled;
Hope in us, by conquest fired,
Raised our spirits from the dead.

"From the dead our spirits rose,
To the dead they soon return'd;
Bright, on its eternal close,
Underwalden's glory burn'd.

"Star of Switzerland! whose rays
Shed such sweet expiring light,
Ere the Gallic comet's blaze
Swept thy beauty into night:—

"Star of Switzerland! thy fame
No recording bard hath sung;
Yet be thine immortal name
Inspiration to my tongue!†

"While the lingering moon delay'd
In the wilderness of night,
Ere the morn awoke the shade
Into loveliness and light:—

"Gallia's tigers, wild for blood,
Darted on our sleeping fold:
Down the mountains, o'er the flood,
Dark as thunder clouds they roll'd.

'By the trumpet's voice alarm'd,
All the valley burst awake;
All were in a moment arm'd,
From the barriers to the lake.

"In that valley, on that shore,
When the graves give up their dead,
At the trumpet's voice once more
Shall those slumberers quit their bed

"For the glen that gave them birth
Hides their ashes in its womb:
O! 'tis venerable earth,
Freedom's cradle, freedom's tomb.

"Then on every side begun
That unutterable fight;
Never rose th' astonish'd sun
On so horrible a sight.

"Once an eagle of the rock
('Twas an omen of our fate)
Stoop'd, and from my scatter'd flock
Bore a lambkin to his mate.

"While the parents fed their young,
Lo! a cloud of vultures lean,
By voracious famine stung,
Wildly screaming, rush'd between.

"Fiercely fought the eagle-twain,
Though by multitudes opprest,
Till their little ones were slain,
Till they perish'd on their nest.

'More unequal was the fray
Which our band of brethren waged;
More insatiate o'er their prey
Gaul's remorseless vultures raged.

"In innumerable waves,
Swoln with fury, grim with blood,
Headlong roll'd the hordes of slaves,
And ingulf'd us with a flood.

"In the whirlpool of that flood,
Firm in fortitude divine,
Like th' eternal rocks we stood,
In the cataract of the Rhine.*

"Till by tenfold force assail'd,
In a hurricane of fire,
When at length our phalanx fail'd,
Then our courage blazed the higher.

"Broken into feeble bands,
Fighting in dissever'd parts,
Weak and weaker grew our hands,
Strong and stronger still our hearts.

"Fierce amid the loud alarms,
Shouting in the foremost fray,
Children raised their little arms
In their country's evil day.

"On their country's dying bed,
Wives and husbands pour'd their breath;
Many a youth and maiden bled,
Married at thine altar, Death.†

* The French made their first attack on the valley of Underwalden from the lake: but, after a desperate conflict, they were victoriously repelled, and two of their vessels, containing five hundred men, perished in the engagement.

† In the last and decisive battle, the Underwalders were overpowered by two French armies, which rushed upon them from the opposite mountains, and surrounded their camp, while an assault, at the same time, was made upon them from the lake.

* At Schaffhausen.—See Coxe's Travels.

† In this miserable conflict, many of the women and children of the Underwalders fought in the ranks by their husbands, and fathers, and friends, and fell gloriously for their country.

"Wildly scatter'd o'er the plain,
Bloodier still the battle grew;—
O ye spirits of the slain,
Slain on those your prowess slew:

"Who shall now your deeds relate?
Ye that fell unwept, unknown;
Mourning for your country's fate,
Not rejoicing in your own.

"Virtue, valour, naught avail'd
With so merciless a foe;
When the nerves of heroes fail'd,
Cowards then could strike a blow.

"Cold and keen th' assassin's blade
Smote the father to the ground;
Through the infant's breast convey'd
To the mother's heart a wound.*

"Underwalden thus expired;
But at her expiring flame,
With fraternal feeling fired,
Lo, a band of Switzers came.†

"From the steeps beyond the lake,
Like a winter's weight of snow,
When the huge lavanges break,
Devastating all below.‡

"Down they rush'd with headlong might,
Swifter than the panting wind;
All before them fear and flight,
Death and silence all behind.

"How the forest of the foe
Bow'd before the thunder strokes,
When they laid the cedars low,
When they overwhelm'd the oaks.

"Thus they hew'd their dreadful way;
Till, by numbers forced to yield,
Terrible in death they lay,
The AVENGERS OF THE FIELD."

PART IV.

The Wanderer relates the circumstances attending the death of Albert.

SHEPHERD.

"PLEDGE the memory of the brave,
And the spirits of the dead;
Pledge the venerable grave,
Valour's consecrated bed.

"Wanderer, cheer thy drooping soul,
This inspiring goblet take;
Drain the deep delicious bowl,
For thy martyr'd brethren's sake.

WANDERER.

"Hail!—all hail! the patriot's grave,
Valour's venerable bed:
Hail! the memory of the brave,
Hail! the spirits of the dead.

"Time their triumphs shall proclaim,
And their rich reward be this,—
Immortality of fame,
Immortality of bliss."

SHEPHERD.

"On that melancholy plain,
In that conflict of despair,
How was noble Albert slain?
How didst thou, old warrior, fare?"

WANDERER.

"In the agony of strife,
Where the heart of battle bled
Where his country lost her life,
Glorious Albert bow'd his head.

"When our phalanx broke away,
And our stoutest soldiers fell,
Where the dark rocks dimm'd the day,
Scowling o'er the deepest dell;

"There, like lions old in blood,
Lions rallying round their den,
Albert and his warriors stood;
We were few, but we were men.

"Breast to breast we fought the ground,
Arm to arm repell'd the foe;
Every motion was a wound,
And a death was every blow.

"Thus the clouds of sunset beam
Warmer with expiring light;
Thus autumnal meteors stream
Redder through the darkening night.

"Miracles our champions wrought—
Who their dying deeds shall tell!
O how gloriously they fought!
How triumphantly they fell!

"One by one gave up the ghost,
Slain, not conquer'd,—they died free.
Albert stood,—himself a host:
Last of all the Swiss was he.

"So, when night with rising shade
Climbs the Alps from steep to steep
Till, in hoary gloom array'd,
All the giant mountains sleep;

"High in heaven their monarch* stands,
Bright and beauteous from afar,
Shining unto distant lands
Like a new-created star.

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* An indiscriminate massacre followed the battle.

† Two hundred self-devoted heroes from the canton of Switz arrived, at the close of the battle, to the aid of their brethren of Underwalden; and perished to a man, after having slain thrice their number.

‡ The lavanges are tremendous torrents of melting snow that tumble from the tops of the Alps, and deluge all the country before them.

* Mont Blanc; which is so much higher than the surrounding Alps, that it catches and retains the beams of the sun *twenty minutes* earlier and later than they, and, crowned with eternal ice, may be seen from an immense distance purpling with his eastern light, or crimsoned with his setting glory while mist and obscurity rest on the mountains below.

"While I struggled through the fight,
Albert was my sword and shield;
Till strange horror quench'd my sight,
And I fainted on the field.

"Slow awakening from that trance,
When my soul return'd to day,
Vanish'd were the fiends of France,—
But in Albert's blood I lay.

"Slain for me, his dearest breath
On my lips he did resign;
Slain for me, he snatch'd his death
From the blow that menaced mine.

"He had raised his dying head,
And was gazing on my face;
As I woke,—the spirit fled,
But I *felt* his last embrace."

SHEPHERD.

"Man of suffering! such a tale
Would bring tears from marble eyes!"

WANDERER.

"Ha! my daughter's cheek grows pale!"

WANDERER'S WIFE.

"Help! O help! my daughter dies!"

WANDERER.

"Calm thy transports, O my wife!
Peace! for these dear orphans' sake!"

WANDERER'S WIFE.

"O my joy, my hope, my life,
O my child, my child, awake!"

WANDERER.

"God! O God, whose goodness gives;
God! whose wisdom takes away—
Spare my child."

SHEPHERD.

"She lives, she lives!"

WANDERER.

"Lives?—my daughter, didst thou say?

"God Almighty, on my knees,
In the dust will I adore
Thine unsearchable decrees;
—She was dead:—she lives once more."

WANDERER'S DAUGHTER.

"When poor Albert died, no prayer
Call'd him back to hated life:
O that I had perish'd there,
Not his widow, but his wife!"

WANDERER.

"Dare my daughter thus repine?
Albert, answer from above;
Tell me,—are these infants thine,
Whom their mother does not love?"

WANDERER'S DAUGHTER.

"Does not love!—my father, hear;
Hear me, or my heart will break;
Deaf is life, but only dear
For my parents', children's sake.

"Bow'd to Heaven's mysterious will,
I am worthy yet of you;
Yes!—I am a mother still,
Though I feel a widow, too."

WANDERER.

"Mother, widow, mourner, all,
All kind names in one,—my child;
On thy faithful neck I fall;
Kiss me,—are we reconciled?"

WANDERER'S DAUGHTER.

"Yes, to Albert I appeal:
Albert, answer from above,
That my father's breast may feel
All his daughter's heart of love."

SHEPHERD'S WIFE.

"Faint and wayworn as they be
With the day's long journey, sire,
Let thy pilgrim family
Now with me to rest retire."

WANDERER.

"Yes, the hour invites to sleep;
Till the morrow we must part:—
Nay, my daughter, do not weep,
Do not weep and break my heart.

"Sorrow-soothing sweet repose
On your peaceful pillows light;
Angel hands your eyelids close—
Dream of Paradise to-night."

PART V.

The Wanderer, being left alone with the shepherd, relates his adventures after the battle of Underwalden.

SHEPHERD.

"When the good man yields his breath,
(For the good man never dies,)
Bright, beyond the gulf of death,
Lo! the land of promise lies.

"Peace to Albert's awful shade,
In that land where sorrows cease;
And to Albert's ashes, laid
In the earth's cold bozom, peace."

WANDERER.

"On the fatal field I lay,
Till the hour when twilight pale,
Like the ghost of dying day,
Wander'd down the darkening vale.

"Then in agony I rose,
And with horror look'd around,
Where, embracing friends and foes,
Dead and dying, strew'd the ground.

"Many a widow fix'd her eye,
Weeping, where her husband bled,
Heedless, though her babe was by,
Prattling to his father dead

"Many a mother, in despair,
Turning up the ghastly slain,
Sought her son, her hero there,
Whom she long'd to seek in vain.

"Dark the evening shadows roll'd
On the eye that gleam'd in death;
And the evening dews fell cold
On the lip that gasp'd for breath.

"As I gazed, an ancient dame,
—She was *childless* by her look,—
With refreshing cordials came;
Of her bounty I partook.

"Then, with desperation bold,
Albert's precious corpse I bore
On these shoulders weak and old,
Bow'd with misery before.

"Albert's angel gave me strength,
As I stagger'd down the glen;
And I hid my charge at length
In its wildest, deepest den.

"Then, returning through the shade
To the battle scene, I sought,
'Mongst the slain, an axe and spade;
With such weapons FREEMEN fought.

"Scythes for swords our youth did wield,
In that execrable strife:
Ploughshares in that horrid field
Bled with slaughter, breathed with life.

"In a dark and lonely cave,
While the glimmering moon arose,
Thus I dug my Albert's grave;
There his hallow'd limbs repose.

"Tears then, tears too long represt,
Gush'd:—they fell like healing balm,
Till the whirlwind in my breast
Died into a dreary calm.

"On the fresh earth's humid bed,
Where my martyr lay enshrined,
This forlorn, unhappy head,
Crazed with anguish, I reclined.

"But while o'er my weary eyes
Soothing slumbers seem'd to creep.
Forth I sprang, with strange surprise,
From the clasping arms of sleep.

"For the bones of Albert dead
Heaved the turf with horrid throes,
And his grave beneath my head,
Burst asunder;—Albert rose!

"'Ha! my son—my son,' I cried,
'Wherefore hast thou left thy grave?'
'Fly, my father,' he replied;
'Save my wife—my children save.'

"In the passing of a breath
This tremendous scene was o'er:
Darkness shut the gates of death,
Silence seal'd them as before.

"One pale moment fix'd I stood
In astonishment severe;
Horror petrified my blood,—
I was wither'd up with fear.

"Then a sudden trembling came
O'er my limbs; I felt on fire,
Burning, quivering like a flame
In the instant to expire."

SHEPHERD.

"Rather like the mountain oak,
Tempest-shaken, rooted fast,
Grasping strength from every stroke,
While it wrestles with the blast."

WANDERER.

"Ay!—my heart, unwont to yield,
Quickly quell'd the strange affright,
And undaunted o'er the field
I began my lonely flight.

"Loud the gusty night-wind blew,
Many an awful pause between,
Fits of light and darkness flew,
Wild and sudden o'er the scene.

"For the moon's resplendent eye
Gleams of transient glory shed;
And the clouds, athwart the sky
Like a routed army, fled.

"Sounds and voices fill'd the vale,
Heard alternate loud and low;
Shouts of victory swell'd the gale,
But the breezes murmur'd wo.

"As I climb'd the mountain's side,
Where the lake and valley meet,
All my country's power and pride
Lay in ruins at my feet.

"On that grim and ghastly plain
Underwalden's heart-strings broke,
When she saw her heroes slain,
And her rocks receive the yoke.

"On that plain, in childhood's hours,
From their mother's arms set free,
Oft those heroes gather'd flowers,
Often chased the wandering bee.

"On that plain, in rosy youth,
They had fed their father's flocks,
Told their love, and pledged their truth,
In the shadow of those rocks.

"There, with shepherd's pipe and song,
In the merry mingling dance,
Once they led their brides along,
Now!——Perdition seize thee, France

SHEPHERD.

"Heard not Heaven th' accusing cries
Of the blood that smoked around,
While the life-warm sacrifice
Palpitated on the ground?"

WANDERER.

"Wrath in silence heaps his store,
To confound the guilty foe;
But the thunder will not roar
Till the flash has struck the blow.

"Vengeance, vengeance will not stay:
It shall burst on Gallia's head,
Sudden as the judgment-day
To the unexpecting dead.

"From the Revolution's flood
Shall a fiery dragon start;
He shall drink his mother's blood,
He shall eat his father's heart.

"Nurst by anarchy and crime,
He——but distance mocks my sight,
O thou great avenger, TIME!
Bring thy strangest birth to light."

SHEPHERD.

"Prophet! thou hast spoken well,
And I deem thy words divine:
Now the mournful sequel tell
Of thy country's woes and thine."

WANDERER.

"Though the moon's bewilder'd bark,
By the midnight tempest tost,
In a sea of vapours dark,
In a gulf of clouds was lost;

"Still my journey I pursued,
Climbing many a weary steep,
Whence the closing scene I view'd
With an eye that could not weep.

"Stantz—a melancholy pyre—
And her hamlets blazed behind,
With ten thousand tongues of fire
Writhing, raging in the wind.*

"Flaming piles, where'er I turn'd,
Cast a grim and dreadful light;
Like funereal lamps they burn'd
In the sepulchre of night;

"While the red illumined flood,
With a hoarse and hollow roar,
Seem'd a lake of living blood,
Wildly weltering on the shore.

"Midst the mountains far away
Soon I spied the sacred spot,
Whence a slow consuming ray
Glimmer'd from my native cot.

"At the sight my brain was fired,
And afresh my heart's wounds bled;
Still I gazed:——the spark expired—
Nature seem'd extinct:—I fled.

"Fled; and, ere the noon of day,
Reach'd the lonely goat-herd's nest,
Where my wife, my children lay—
Husband—father——think the rest."

* The town of Stantz, and the surrounding villages, were burnt by the French on the night after the battle of Underwalden, and the beautiful valley was converted into a wilderness.

PART VI.

The Wanderer informs the shepherd that, after the example of many of his countrymen flying from the tyranny of France, it is his intention to settle in some remote province of America.

SHEPHERD.

"WANDERER, whither wouldst thou roam
To what region far away
Bend thy steps to find a home,
In the twilight of thy day?"

WANDERER.

"In the twilight of my day,
I am hastening to the West;
There my weary limbs to lay,
Where the sun retires to rest.

"Far beyond th' Atlantic floods,
Stretch'd beneath the evening sky,
Realms of mountains, dark with woods
In Columbia's bosom lie.

"There, in glens and caverns rude,
Silent since the world began,
Dwells the virgin Solitude,
Unbetray'd by faithless man;

"Where a tyrant never trod,
Where a slave was never known,
But where Nature worships God
In the wilderness alone:

"—Thither, thither would I roam;
There my children may be free;
I for them will find a home,
They shall find a grave for me.

"Though my fathers' bones afar
In their native land repose,
Yet beneath the twilight star
Soft on mine the turf shall close.

"Though the mould that wraps my clay
When this storm of life is o'er,
Never since creation lay
On a human breast before;—

"Yet in sweet communion there,
When she follows to the dead,
Shall my bosom's partner share
Her poor husband's lowly bed.

"Albert's babes shall deck our grave
And my daughter's duteous tears
Bid the flowery verdure wave
Through the winter waste of years.

SHEPHERD.

"Long before thy sun descend,
May thy woes and wanderings cease,
Late and lovely be thine end;
Hope and triumph, joy and peace!

"As our lakes, at day's decline,
Brighten through the gathering gloom,
May thy latest moments shine
Through the nightfall of the tomb."

WANDERER.

"Though our parents perish'd here,
Like the phœnix on her nest,
Lo! new-fledged her wings appear,
Hovering in the golden West.

"Thither shall her sons repair,
And beyond the roaring main
Find their native country there,
Find their Switzerland again.

"Mountains, can ye chain the will?
Ocean, canst thou quench the heart?
No; I feel my country still,
LIBERTY! where'er thou art.

"Thus it was in hoary time,
When our fathers sallied forth,
Full of confidence sublime,
From the famine-wasted North.*

"'Freedom, in a land of rocks
Wild as Scandinavia, give,
Power Eternal! where our flocks
And our little ones may live.'

"Thus they pray'd;——a sacred hand
Led them by a path unknown,
To that dear delightful land
Which I yet must call my own.

"To the vale of Switz they came,
Soon their meliorating toil
Gave the forests to the flame,
And their ashes to the soil.

"'Thence their ardent labours spread,
Till above the mountain snows
Towering beauty show'd her head,
And a new creation rose!

"So, in regions wild and wide,
We will pierce the savage woods,
Clothe the rocks in purple pride,
Plough the valleys, tame the floods;

"Till a beauteous inland isle,
By a forest sea embraced,
Shall make desolation smile
In the depth of his own waste.

"There, unenvied and unknown,
We shall dwell secure and free,
In a country all our own,
In a land of liberty."

SHEPHERD.

"Yet the woods, the rocks, the streams,
Unbeloved, shall bring to mind,
Warm with evening's purple beams,
Dearer objects left behind;

"And thy native country's song,
Caroll'd in a foreign clime,
When new echoes shall prolong,—
Simple, tender, and sublime;

"How will thy poor cheek turn pale,
And, before thy banish'd eyes,
Underwalden's charming vale
And thine own sweet cottage rise!"

WANDERER.

"By the glorious ghost of TELL;
By Mogarthen's awful fray;
By the field where Albert fell
In thy last and bitter day;

"Soul of Switzerland, arise!
——Ha! the spell has waked the dead:
From her ashes to the skies
Switzerland exalts her head.

"See the queen of mountains stand
In immortal mail complete,
With the lightning in her hand,
And the Alps beneath her feet.

"Hark! her voice:—'My sons, awake:
Freedom dawns, behold the day:
From the bed of bondage break,
'Tis your mother calls,—obey.'

"At the sound, our fathers' graves,
On each ancient battle-plain,
Utter groans, and toss like waves
When the wild blast sweeps the main.

"Rise, my brethren! cast away
All the chains that bind you slaves:
Rise,—your mother's voice obey,
And appease your fathers' graves.

"Strike!—the conflict is begun;
Freemen, soldiers, follow me.
Shout! the victory is won,—
SWITZERLAND AND LIBERTY!"

SHEPHERD.

"Warrior, warrior, stay thine arm!
Sheathe, O sheathe thy frantic sword!"

WANDERER.

"Ah! I rave—I faint—the charm
Flies,——and memory is restored.

"Yes, to agony restored
From the too transporting charm:—
Sleep for ever, O my sword!
Be thou wither'd, O mine arm!

* There is a tradition among the Swiss, that they are descended from the ancient Scandinavians; among whom, in a remote age, there arose so grievous a famine, that it was determined in the assembly of the nation, that every tenth man and his family should quit their country, and seek a new possession. Six thousand, chosen by lot, thus emigrated at once from the North. They prayed to God to conduct them to a land like their own, where they might dwell in freedom and quiet, finding food for their families, and pasture for their cattle. God, says the tradition, led them to a valley among the Alps, where they cleared away the forests, built the town of Switz, and afterwards peopled and cultivated the cantons of Uri and Underwalden.

"Switzerland is but a name:
——Yet I feel, where'er I roam,
That my heart is still the same,
Switzerland is still my home."

THE GRAVE.

THERE is a calm for those who weep,
A rest for weary pilgrims found,
They softly lie and sweetly sleep
Low in the ground.

The storm that wrecks the winter sky
No more disturbs their deep repose,
Than summer evening's latest sigh
That shuts the rose.

I long to lay this painful head
And aching heart beneath the soil,
To slumber in that dreamless bed
From all my toil.

For misery stole me at my birth,
And cast me helpless on the wild:
I perish;—O my mother earth,
Take home thy child.

On thy dear lap these limbs reclined,
Shall gently moulder into thee:
Nor leave one wretched trace behind
Resembling me.

Hark!—a strange sound affrights mine ear;
My pulse,—my brain runs wild,—I rave;
—Ah! who art thou whose voice I hear?
—"I am THE GRAVE!"

"The GRAVE, that never spake before,
Hath found at length a tongue to chide:
O listen!—I will speak no more:—
Be silent, pride!

"Art thou a WRETCH of hope forlorn,
The victim of consuming care?
Is thy distracted conscience torn
By fell despair?

"Do foul misdeeds of former times
Wring with remorse thy guilty breast?
And ghosts of unforgiven crimes
Murder thy rest!

"Lash'd by the furies of the mind,
From wrath and vengeance wouldst thou flee?
Ah! think not, hope not, fool, to find
A friend in me.

"By all the terrors of the tomb,
Beyond the power of tongue to tell;
By the dread secrets of my womb;
By death and hell;

"I charge thee LIVE!—repent and pray,
In dust thine infamy deplore;
There yet is mercy—go thy way,
And sin no more.

"Art thou a MOURNER?—Hast thou known
The joy of innocent delights,
Endearing days for ever flown,
And tranquil nights?

"O LIVE!—and deeply cherish still
The sweet remembrance of the past:
Rely on Heaven's unchanging will
For peace at last.

"Art thou a WANDERER?—Hast thou seen
O'erwhelming tempests drown thy bark?
A shipwreck'd sufferer, hast thou been
Misfortune's mark?

"Though long of winds and waves the sport,
Condemn'd in wretchedness to roam,
LIVE!—thou shalt reach a sheltering port,
A quiet home.

"To FRIENDSHIP didst thou trust thy fame,
And was thy friend a deadly foe,
Who stole into thy breast to aim
A surer blow?

"LIVE!—and repine not o'er his loss,
A loss unworthy to be told:
Thou hast mistaken sordid dross
For friendship's gold.

"Seek the true treasure, seldom found,
Of power the fiercest griefs to calm,
And soothe the bosom's deepest wound
With heavenly balm.

"Did WOMAN's charms thy youth beguile,
And did the fair one faithless prove?
Hath she betray'd thee with a smile,
And sold thy love?

"LIVE! 'Twas a false bewildering fire:
Too often love's insidious dart
Thrills the fond soul with wild desire,
But kills the heart.

"Thou yet shalt know, how sweet, how dear
To gaze on listening beauty's eye;
To ask,—and pause in hope and fear
Till she reply.

"A nobler flame shall warm thy breast,
A brighter maiden faithful prove;
Thy youth, thine age, shall yet be blest
In woman's love.

"—Whate'er thy lot,—whoe'er thou be,—
Confess thy folly, kiss the rod,
And in thy chastening sorrows see
The hand of GOD.

"A bruised reed he will not break;
Afflictions all his children feel;
He wounds them for his mercy's sake,
He wounds to heal.

"Humbled beneath his mighty hand,
Prostrate his providence adore:
'Tis done!—Arise! HE bids thee stand,
To fall no more.

"Now, traveller in the vale of tears,
To realms of everlasting light,
Through time's dark wilderness of years,
Pursue thy flight.

"There is a calm for those who weep,
A rest for weary pilgrims found;
And while the mouldering ashes sleep
Low in the ground,

"The soul, of origin divine,
God's glorious image, freed from clay,
In heaven's eternal sphere shall shine
A star of day.

"The SUN is but a spark of fire,
A transient meteor in the sky
The SOUL, immortal as its Sire,
SHALL NEVER DIE."

ODE TO THE VOLUNTEERS OF BRITAIN,

ON THE PROSPECT OF INVASION.

O FOR the death of those
Who for their country die,
Sink on her bosom to repose,
And triumph where they lie!

How beautiful in death
The warrior's corpse appears,
Embalm'd by fond affection's breath,
And bathed in woman's tears!

Their loveliest native earth
Enshrines the fallen brave;
In the dear land that gave them birth
They find their tranquil grave.

—But the wild waves shall sweep
Britannia's foes away,
And the blue monsters of the deep
Be surfeited with prey.—

No!—they have 'scaped the waves,
'Scaped the sea-monsters' maws;
They come! but O, shall Gallic slaves
Give English freemen laws?

By Alfred's spirit, No!
—Ring, ring the loud alarms;
Ye drums, awake,—ye clarions, blow,
Ye heralds, shout "To arms!"

To arms our heroes fly;
And, leading on their lines,
The British banner, in the sky,
The star of conquest shines.

The lowering battle forms
Its terrible array;
Like clashing clouds in mountain storms,
That thunder on their way.

The rushing armies meet;
And while they pour their breath,
The strong earth shudders at their feet,
The day grows dim with death.

—Ghosts of the mighty dead!
Your children's hearts inspire;
And while they on your ashes tread,
Rekindle all your fire.

The dead to life return;
Our fathers' spirits rise;
—My brethren, in your breasts they burn,
They sparkle in your eyes.

Now launch upon the foe
The lightning of your rage;
Strike, strike th' assailing giants low,
The Titans of the age.

They yield,—they break,—they fly,
The victory is won;
Pursue!—they faint—they fall,—they die—
O stay!—the work is done.

Spirit of vengeance! rest:
Sweet mercy cries, "Forbear!"
She clasps the vanquish'd to her breast;
Thou wilt not pierce them there?

—Thus vanish Britain's foes
From her consuming eye;
But rich be the reward of those
Who conquer,—those who die.

O'ershadowing laurels deck
The living hero's brows;
But lovelier wreaths entwine his neck,
His children and his spouse.

Exulting o'er his lot,
The dangers he has braved,
He clasps the dear ones, hails the cot,
Which his own valour saved.

Daughters of Albion, weep:
On this triumphant plain
Your fathers, husbands, brethren sleep
For you and freedom slain.

O gently close the eye
That loved to look on you;
O seal the lip whose earliest sigh,
Whose latest breath was true:

With knots of sweetest flowers
Their winding-sheet perfume;
And wash their wounds with true-love showers
And dress them for the tomb.

For beautiful in death
The warrior's corpse appears,
Embalm'd by fond affection's breath,
And bathed in woman's tears.

—Give me the death of those
Who for their country die;
And O be mine like their repose,
When cold and low they lie!

Their loveliest mother earth,
Enshrines the fallen brave;
In her sweet lap who gave them birth
They find their tranquil grave.

HANNAH.

At fond sixteen my roving heart
Was pierced by love's delightful dart:
Keen transport throbb'd through every vein,
—I never felt so sweet a pain!

Where circling woods embower'd the glade,
I met the dear romantic maid:
I stole her hand,—it shrunk,—but no;
I would not let my captive go.

With all the fervency of youth,
While passion told the tale of truth,
I mark'd my Hannah's downcast eye,
'Twas kind, but beautifully shy.

Not with a warmer, purer ray,
The sun, enamour'd, woos young May;
Nor May, with softer maiden grace,
Turns from the sun her blushing face;

But, swifter than the frighted dove,
Fled the gay morning of my love;
Ah! that so bright a morn, so soon,
Should vanish in so dark a noon.

The angel of affliction rose,
And in his grasp a thousand woes;
He pour'd his vial on my head,
And all the heaven of rapture fled.

Yet, in the glory of my pride,
I stood,—and all his wrath defied;
I stood,—though whirlwinds shook my brain,
And lightnings cleft my soul in twain.

I shunn'd my nymph;—and knew not why
I durst not meet her gentle eye;
I shunn'd her—for I could not bear
To marry her to my despair.

Yet, sick at heart with hope delay'd,
Oft the dear image of that maid
Glanced, like the rainbow, o'er my mind,
And promised happiness behind.

The storm blew o'er, and in my breast
The halcyon peace rebuilt her nest:
The storm blew o'er, and clear and mild
The sea of youth and pleasure smiled.

'Twas on a merry morn of May,
To Hannah's cot I took my way:
My eager hopes were on the wing,
Like swallows sporting in the spring,

Then as I climb'd the mountains o'er,
I lived my wooing days once more;
And fancy sketch'd my married lot,
My wife, my children, and my cot.

I saw the village steeple rise,—
My soul sprang, sparkling, in my eyes;
The rural bells rang sweet and clear,—
My fond heart listen'd in mine ear.

I reach'd the hamlet:—all was gay;
I love a rustic holiday.
I met a wedding,—stepp'd aside;
It pass'd—my Hannah was the bride.

——There is a grief that cannot feel;
It leaves a wound that will not heal;
——My heart grew cold,—it felt not then:
When shall it cease to feel again?

THE OCEAN.

WRITTEN AT SCARBOROUGH, IN THE SUMMER OF 1805.

All hail to the ruins,* the rocks and the shores!
Thou wide-rolling ocean, all hail!
Now brilliant with sunbeams, and dimpled with oars,
Now dark with the fresh blowing gale,
While soft o'er thy bosom the cloud shadows sail,
And the silver-wing'd sea-fowl on high,
Like meteors bespangle the sky,
Or dive in the gulf, or triumphantly ride,
Like foam on the surges, the swans of the tide.

From the tumult and smoke of the city set free,
With eager and awful delight;
From the crest of the mountain I gaze upon thee;
I gaze,—and am changed at the sight;
For mine eye is illumined, my genius takes flight,
My soul, like the sun, with a glance
Embraces the boundless expanse,
And moves on thy waters, wherever they roll,
From the day-darting zone to the night-shadow'd pole.

My spirit descends where the day-spring is born,
Where the billows are rubies on fire,
And the breezes that rock the light cradle of morn
Are sweet as the phœnix's pyre:
O regions of beauty, of love, and desire!
O gardens of Eden! in vain
Placed far on the fathomless main,
Where nature with innocence dwelt in her youth,
When pure was her heart, and unbroken her truth.

But now the fair rivers of Paradise wind
Through countries and kingdoms o'erthrown;
Where the giant of tyranny crushes mankind,
Where he reigns,—and will soon reign alone;
For wide and more wide, o'er the sunbeaming zone
He stretches his hundred-fold arms,
Despoiling, destroying its charms;
Beneath his broad footstep the Ganges is dry,
And the mountains recoil from the flash of his eye.

Thus the pestilent Upas, the demon of trees,
Its boughs o'er the wilderness spreads,
And with livid contagion polluting the breeze,
Its mildewing influence sheds:
The birds on the wing, and the flowers in their beds,
Are slain by its venomous breath,
That darkens the noonday with death,
And pale ghosts of travellers wander around,
While their mouldering skeletons whiten the ground.

Ah! why hath Jehovah, in forming the world,
With the waters divided the land,
His ramparts of rocks round the continent hurl'd,
And cradled the deep in his hand,
If man may transgress his eternal command,

* Scarborough Castle.

And leap o'er the bounds of his birth,
To ravage the uttermost earth,
And violate nations and realms that should be
Distinct as the billows, yet one as the sea?

There are, gloomy ocean, a brotherless clan,
Who traverse thy banishing waves,
The poor disinherited outcasts of man,
Whom avarice coins into slaves.
From the homes of their kindred, their forefathers' graves,
Love, friendship, and conjugal bliss,
They are dragg'd on the hoary abyss;
The shark hears their shrieks, and ascending to-day,
Demands of the spoiler his share of the prey.

Then joy to the tempest that whelms them beneath,
And makes their destruction its sport;
But wo to the winds that propitiously breathe,
And waft them in safety to port,
Where the vultures and vampires of Mammon resort;
Where Europe exultingly drains
The life-blood from Africa's veins;
Where man rules o'er man with a merciless rod,
And spurns at his footstool the image of God.

The hour is approaching—a terrible hour!
And Vengeance is bending her bow;
Already the clouds of the hurricane lower,
And the rock-rending whirlwinds blow:
Back rolls the huge ocean, hell opens below:
The floods return headlong,—they sweep
The slave-cultured lands to the deep,
In a moment entomb'd in the horrible void,
By their Maker himself in his anger destroy'd.

Shall this be the fate of the cane-planted isles,
More lovely than clouds in the west,
When the sun o'er the ocean descending in smiles,
Sinks softly and sweetly to rest?
—No!—Father of mercy! befriend the opprest;
At the voice of thy gospel of peace
May the sorrows of Africa cease;
And slave and his master devoutly unite
To walk in thy freedom, and dwell in thy light!*

As homeward my weary-wing'd fancy extends,
Her star-lighted course through the skies,
High over the mighty Atlantic ascends,
And turns upon Europe her eyes:
Ah, me! what new prospects, new horrors arise?
I see the war-tempested flood
All foaming, and panting with blood;
The panic-struck ocean in agony roars,
Rebounds from the battle, and flies to his shores.

For Britannia is wielding the trident to-day
Consuming her foes in her ire,
And hurling her thunder with absolute sway
From her wave-ruling chariots of fire:
—She triumphs;—the winds and the waters conspire,
To spread her invincible name;
—The universe rings with her fame;
—But the cries of the fatherless mix with her praise,
And the tears of the widow are shed on her bays.

O Britain! dear Britain! the land of my birth:
O isle, most enchantingly fair!
Thou pearl of the ocean! thou gem of the earth!
O my mother! my mother! beware;
For wealth is a phantom, and empire a snare;
O let not thy birthright be sold
For reprobate glory and gold:
Thy distant dominions like wild graftings shoot,
They weigh down thy trunk,—they will tear up thy root:—

The root of thine OAK, O my country! that stands
Rock-planted and flourishing free;
Its branches are stretch'd o'er the uttermost lands
And its shadow eclipses the sea:
The blood of our ancestors nourish'd the tree;
From their tombs, from their ashes it sprung;
Its boughs with their trophies are hung;
Their spirit dwells in it:—and, hark! for it spoke;
The voice of our fathers ascends from their oak:—

"Ye Britons, who dwell where we conquer'd of old,
Who inherit our battle-field graves;
Though poor were your fathers,—gigantic and bold,
We were not, we could not be, slaves;
But firm as our rocks, and as free as our waves,
The spears of the Romans we broke,
We never stoop'd under their yoke;
In the shipwreck of nations we stood up alone,—
The world was great Cæsar's—but Britain our own.

"For ages and ages, with barbarous foes,
The Saxon, Norwegian, and Gaul,
We wrestled, were foil'd, were cast down, but we rose
With new vigour, new life, from each fall:
By all we were conquer'd—WE CONQUER'D THEM ALL.
—The cruel, and cannibal mind,
We soften'd, subdued, and refined;
Bears, wolves, and sea-monsters, they rush'd from their den;
We taught them, we tamed them, we turn'd them to men.

"Love led the wild hordes in his flower-woven bands,
The tenderest, strongest of chains;
Love married our hearts, he united our hands,
And mingled the blood in our veins;
One race we became:—on the mountains and plains,
Where the wounds of our country were closed,
The ark of religion reposed,
The unquenchable altar of liberty blazed,
And the temple of justice in mercy was raised.

"Ark, altar, and temple, we left with our breath
To our children, a sacred bequest;
O guard them, O keep them, in life and in death!
So the shades of your fathers shall rest,
And your spirits with ours be in Paradise blest:
—Let ambition, the sin of the brave,
And avarice, the soul of a slave,
No longer seduce your affections to roam
From liberty, justice, religion, AT HOME."

* Alluding to the glorious success of the Moravian missionaries among the Negroes in the West Indies.

THE COMMON LOT.

ONCE in the flight of ages past,
There lived a man;—and WHO WAS HE?
—Mortal! howe'er thy lot be cast,
That man resembled thee.

Unknown the region of his birth,
The land in which he died unknown:
His name has perish'd from the earth,
This truth survives alone:—

That joy and grief, and hope and fear,
Alternate triumph'd in his breast:
His bliss and wo,—a smile, a tear!
—Oblivion hides the rest.

The bounding pulse, the languid limb,
The changing spirits' rise and fall;
We know that these were felt by him,
For these are felt by all.

He suffer'd,—but his pangs are o'er;
Enjoy'd,—but his delights are fled;
Had friends,—his friends are now no more;
And foes,—his foes are dead.

He loved,—but whom he loved, the grave
Hath lost in its unconscious womb:
O she was fair—but naught could save
Her beauty from the tomb.

He saw whatever thou hast seen;
Encounter'd all that troubles thee;
He was—whatever thou hast been;
He is—what thou shalt be.

The rolling seasons, day and night,
Sun, moon, and stars, the earth and main,
Erewhile his portion, life, and light,
To him exist in vain.

The clouds and sunbeams, o'er his eye
That once their shades and glory threw,
Have left in yonder silent sky
No vestige where they flew.

The annals of the human race,
Their ruins, since the world began,
Of HIM afford no other trace
Than this,—THERE LIVED A MAN!

THE HARP OF SORROW.

I GAVE my harp to Sorrow's hand,
And she has ruled the chords so long,
They will not speak at my command;—
They warble only to *her* song.

Of dear, departed hours,
Too fondly loved to last,
The dew, the breath, the bloom of flowers,
Snapt in their freshness by the blast:

Of long, long years of future care,
Till lingering nature yields her breath,
And endless ages of despair,
Beyond the judgment-day of death:—

The weeping minstrel sings,
And, while her numbers flow,
My spirit trembles with the strings,
Responsive to the notes of wo.

Would gladness move a sprightlier strain,
And wake his wild harp's clearest tones,
The chords, impatient to complain,
Are dumb, or only utter moans.

And yet, to soothe the mind
With luxury of grief,
The soul to suffering all resign'd
In sorrow's music feels relief.

Thus o'er the light Æolian lyre
The winds of dark November stray,
Touch the quick nerve of every wire,
And on its magic pulses play;

Till all the air around
Mysterious murmurs fill,
A strange bewildering dream of sound,
Most heavenly sweet,—yet mournful still.

O! snatch the harp from Sorrow's hand,
Hope! who hast been a stranger long;
O! strike it with sublime command,
And be the poet's life thy song.

Of vanish'd troubles sing,
Of fears for ever fled,
Of flowers that hear the voice of spring,
And burst and blossom from the dead:

Of home, contentment, health, repose,
Serene delights, while years increase;
And weary life's triumphant close
In some calm sunset hour of peace;

Of bliss that reigns above,
Celestial May of youth,
Unchanging as Jehovah's love,
And everlasting as his truth:

Sing, heavenly Hope!—and dart thine hand
O'er my frail harp, untuned so long;
That harp shall breathe, at thy command,
Immortal sweetness through thy song.

Ah! then, this gloom control,
And at thy voice shall start
A new creation in my soul,
A native Eden in my heart.

POPE'S WILLOW.

Verses written for an urn, made out of the trunk of the weeping willow, imported from the East, and planted by Pope in his grounds at Twickenham, where it flourished many years; but, falling into decay, it was lately cut down.

ERE Pope resign'd his tuneful breath,
And made the turf his pillow,
The minstrel hung his harp in death
Upon the drooping willow;

That willow from Euphrates' strand,
Had sprung beneath his training hand.

Long as revolving seasons flew,
From youth to age it flourish'd;
By vernal winds and starlight dew,
By showers and sunbeams nourish'd;
And while in dust the poet slept,
The willow o'er his ashes wept.

Old Time beheld his silvery head
With graceful grandeur towering,
Its pensile boughs profusely spread,
The breezy lawn embowering,
Till arch'd around, there seem'd to shoot
A grove of scions from one root.

Thither, at summer noon, he view'd
The lovely Nine retreating,
Beneath its twilight solitude
With songs their poet greeting.
Whose spirit in the willow spoke,
Like Jove's from dark Dodona's oak.

By harvest moonlight there he spied
The fairy bands advancing;
Bright Ariel's troops, on Thames's side,
Around the willow dancing;
Gay sylphs among the foliage play'd,
And glow-worms glitter'd in the shade.

One morn, while Time thus mark'd the tree
In beauty green and glorious,
"The hand," he cried, "that planted thee
O'er mine was oft victorious;
Be vengeance now my calm employ,—
One work of Pope's I *will* destroy."

He spake, and struck a silent blow
With that dread arm whose motion
Lays cedars, thrones, and temples low,
And wields o'er land and ocean
The unremitting axe of doom,
That fells the forest of the tomb.

Deep to the willow's root it went,
And cleft the core asunder,
Like sudden secret lightning, sent
Without recording thunder:
—From that sad moment, slow away
Began the willow to decay.

In vain did spring those bowers restore,
Where loves and graces revell'd,
Autumn's wild gales the branches tore,
The thin gray leaves dishevell'd,
And every wasting winter found
The willow nearer to the ground.

Hoary, and weak, and bent with age,
At length the axe assail'd it:
It bow'd before the woodman's rage;
—The swans of Thames bewail'd it,
With softer tones, with sweeter breath,
Than ever charm'd the ear of death.

O Pope! hadst thou, whose lyre so long
The wondering world enchanted,
Amidst thy paradise of song
This weeping willow planted;
Among thy loftiest laurels seen,
In deathless verse for ever green—

Thy chosen tree had stood sublime,
The storm of ages braving,
Triumphant o'er the wrecks of time
Its verdant banner waving,
While regal pyramids decay'd,
And empires perish'd in its shade.

An humbler lot, O tree! was thine,
—Gone down in all thy glory;
The sweet, the mournful task be mine,
To sing thy simple story;
Though verse like mine in vain would raise
The fame of thy departed days.

Yet, fallen willow! if to me
Such power of song were given,
My lips should breathe a soul through thee,
And call down fire from heaven,
To kindle in this hallow'd urn
A flame that would for ever burn.

THE SWISS COWHERD'S SONG IN A FOREIGN LAND.

IMITATED FROM THE FRENCH.

O, WHEN shall I visit the land of my birth,
The loveliest land on the face of the earth?
When shall I those scenes of affection explore,
Our forests, our fountains,
Our hamlets, our mountains,
With the pride of our mountains, the maid I adore?
O, when shall I dance on the daisy-white mead,
In the shade of an elm, to the sound of the reed?

When shall I return to that lowly retreat,
Where all my fond objects of tenderness meet,—
The lambs and the heifers that follow my call,
My father, my mother,
My sister, my brother,
And dear Isabella, the joy of them all?
O, when shall I visit the land of my birth?
—'Tis the loveliest land on the face of the earth

THE DIAL.

THIS shadow on the dial's face,
That steals from day to day,
With slow, unseen, unceasing pace,
Moments, and months, and years away;
This shadow, which, in every clime,
Since light and motion first began,
Hath held its course sublime—
What is it?—Mortal man!
It is the scythe of time:
—A shadow only to the eye;
Yet, in its calm career,
It levels all beneath the sky;
And still, through each succeeding year
Right onward, with resistless power,
Its stroke shall darken every hour,
Till nature's race be run,
And time's last shadow shall eclipse the sun

Nor only o'er the dial's face,
This silent phantom, day by day,
With slow, unseen, unceasing pace,
Steals moments, months, and years away;
From hoary rock and aged tree,
From proud Palmyra's mouldering walls,
From Teneriffe, towering o'er the sea,
From every blade of grass it falls.
For still, where'er a shadow sweeps,
The scythe of Time destroys.
And man at every footstep weeps
O'er evanescent joys;
Like flow'rets glittering with the dews of morn
Fair for a moment, then for ever shorn.
—Ah! soon, beneath th' inevitable blow,
I, too, shall lie in dust and darkness low.

Then Time, the conqueror, will suspend
His scythe, a trophy, o'er my tomb,
Whose moving shadow shall portend
Each frail beholder's doom.
O'er the wide earth's illumined space,
Though time's triumphant flight be shown,
The truest index on its face
Points from the churchyard stone.

A MOTHER'S LOVE.

A MOTHER'S love,—how sweet the name!
What *is* a mother's love?
—A noble, pure, and tender flame,
Enkindled from above,
To bless a heart of earthly mould;
The warmest love that *can* grow cold;
This is a mother's love.

To bring a helpless babe to light,
Then, while it lies forlorn,
To gaze upon that dearest sight,
And feel herself new-born,
In its existence lose her own,
And live and breathe in it alone;
This is a mother's love.

Its weakness in her arms to bear;
To cherish on her breast,
Feed it from love's own fountain there,
And lull it there to rest;
Then while it slumbers watch its breath,
As if to guard from instant death;
This is a mother's love.

To mark its growth from day to day,
Its opening charms admire,
Catch from its eye the earliest ray
Of intellectual fire;
To smile and listen while it talks,
And lend a finger when it walks;
This is a mother's love.

And can a mother's love grow cold?
Can she forget her boy?
His pleading innocence behold,
Nor weep for grief—for joy!
A mother may forget her child,
While wolves devour it on the wild;
—Is *this* a mother's love?

Ten thousand voices answer, "No!"
Ye clasp your babes and kiss;
Your bosoms yearn, your eyes o'erflow;
Yet, ah! remember this;
The infant, rear'd alone for earth,
May live, may die,—to curse his birth;
—Is *this* a mother's love?

A parent's heart may prove a snare;
The child she loves so well,
Her hand may lead, with gentlest care,
Down the smooth road to hell;
Nourish its frame,—destroy its mind:
Thus do the blind mislead the blind,
Even with a mother's love.

Blest infant! whom his mother taught
Early to seek the Lord,
And pour'd upon his dawning thought
The day-spring of the word;
This was the lesson to her son,
—Time is eternity begun:
Behold that mother's love.*

Blest mother! who, in wisdom's path,
By her own parent trod,
Thus taught her son to flee the wrath,
And know the fear of God:
Ah! youth, like him enjoy your prime,
Begin eternity in time,
Taught by that mother's love.

That mother's love!—how sweet the name!
What *was* that mother's love?
—The noblest, purest, tenderest flame,
That kindles from above
Within a heart of earthly mould,
As much of heaven as heart can hold,
Nor through eternity grows cold:
This was that mother's love.

THE GLOW-WORM.

The male of this insect is said to be a fly, which the female caterpillar attracts in the night by the lustre of her train.

WHEN evening closes nature's eye,
The glow-worm lights her little spark,
To captivate her favourite fly,
And tempt the rover through the dark.

Conducted by a sweeter star
Than all that deck the fields above,
He fondly hastens from afar,
To soothe her solitude with love.

Thus in this wilderness of tears,
Amidst the world's perplexing gloom,
The transient torch of Hymen cheers
The pilgrim journeying to the tomb.

Unhappy he whose hopeless eye
Turns to the light of love in vain;
Whose cynosure is in the sky,
He on the dark and lonely main.

* 2 Tim. i. 5, and iii. 14, 15.

A MOTHER'S LOVE

THE OAK.

IMITATED FROM THE ITALIAN OF METASTASIO.

The tall oak, towering to the skies,
The fury of the wind defies,
From age to age, in virtue strong,
Inured to stand, and suffer wrong.

O'erwhelm'd at length upon the plain,
It puts forth wings, and sweeps the main;
The selfsame foe undaunted braves,
And fights the winds upon the waves.

THE WIDOW AND THE FATHERLESS.

Well, thou art gone, and I am left:
But O! how cold and dark to me
This world, of every charm bereft,
Where all was beautiful with thee!

Though I have seen thy form depart
For ever from my widow'd eye,
I hold thee in mine inmost heart;
There, there at least thou canst not die.

Farewell on earth: Heaven claim'd its own;
Yet, when from me thy presence went,
I was exchanged for God alone:
Let dust and ashes learn content.

Ha! those small voices, silver sweet!
Fresh from the fields my babes appear;
They fill my arms, they clasp my feet:
—"O! could your father see us here!"

HUMAN LIFE.

Job xiv.

How few and evil are thy days,
Man, of a woman born!
Trouble and peril haunt thy ways:
—Forth like a flower at morn,
The tender infant springs to light,
Youth blossoms with the breeze,
Age, withering age, is crept ere night;
—Man like a shadow flees.

And dost Thou look on such a one?
Will God to judgment call
A worm, for what a worm hath done
Against the Lord of all?
As fail the waters from the deep,
As summer brooks run dry,
Man lieth down in dreamless sleep;
—Our life is vanity.

Man lieth down, no more to wake,
Till yonder arching sphere
Shall with a roll of thunder break,
And nature disappear.
—O! hide me, till thy wrath be past,
Thou, who canst kill or save;
Hide me, where hope may anchor fast
In my Redeemer's grave.

THE BIBLE.

What is the world?—A wildering maze,
Where sin hath track'd ten thousand ways
Her victims to ensnare;
All broad, and winding, and aslope,
All tempting with perfidious hope,
All ending in despair.

Millions of pilgrims throng those roads,
Bearing their baubles, or their loads,
Down to eternal night:
—*One* humble path, that never bends,
Narrow, and rough, and steep, ascends
From darkness into light.

Is there a guide to show that path?
The Bible:—He alone, who hath
The Bible, need not stray:
Yet he who hath, and will not give
That heavenly guide to all that live,
Himself shall lose the way.

THE DAISY IN INDIA.

Supposed to be addressed by the Rev. Dr. Carey, the learned and illustrious Baptist missionary at Serampore, to the first plant of this kind, which sprang up unexpectedly in his garden, out of some English earth, in which other seeds had been conveyed to him from this country. With great care and nursing, the doctor has been enabled to perpetuate the daisy in India, as an annual only, raised by seed preserved from season to season.

Thrice welcome, little English flower!
My mother country's white and red,
In rose or lily, till this hour,
Never to me such beauty spread:
Transplanted from thine island-bed,
A treasure in a grain of earth,
Strange as a spirit from the dead,
Thine embryo sprang to birth.

Thrice welcome, little English flower!
Whose tribes, beneath our natal skies,
Shut close their leaves while vapours lower;
But, when the sun's gay beams arise,
With unabash'd but modest eyes,
Follow his motion to the west,
Nor cease to gaze till daylight dies,
Then fold themselves to rest.

Thrice welcome, little English flower,
To this resplendent hemisphere,
Where Flora's giant offspring tower
In gorgeous liveries all the year;
Thou, only thou, art little here,
Like worth unfriended and unknown,
Yet to my British heart more dear
Than all the torrid zone.

Thrice welcome, little English flower!
Of early scenes beloved by me,
While happy in my father's bower,
Thou shalt the blithe memorial be;

The fairy sports of infancy,
Youth's golden age, and manhood's prime,
Home, country, kindred, friends,—with thee,
I find in this far clime.

Thrice welcome, little English flower!
I'll rear thee with a trembling hand:
O, for the April sun and shower,
The sweet May dews of that fair land,
Where daisies, thick as starlight, stand
In every walk!—that here may shoot
Thy scions, and thy buds expand,
A hundred from one root.

Thrice welcome, little English flower!
To me the pledge of hope unseen;
When sorrow would my soul o'erpower
For joys that were, or might have been,
I'll call to mind how, fresh and green,
I saw thee waking from the dust;
Then turn to heaven with brow serene,
And place in God my trust.

THE STRANGER AND HIS FRIEND.

"Ye have done it unto me."—Matt. xxv. 40.

A poor wayfaring man of grief
Hath often cross'd me on my way,
Who sued so humbly for relief,
That I could never answer, "Nay;"
I had not power to ask his name,
Whither he went, or whence he came,
Yet was there something in his eye,
That won my love, I knew not why.

Once, when my scanty meal was spread,
He enter'd;—not a word he spake:—
Just perishing for want of bread;
I gave him all; he bless'd it, brake,
And ate,—but gave me part again;
Mine was an angel's portion then,
For while I fed with eager haste,
That crust was manna to my taste.

I spied him, where a fountain burst
Clear from the rock; his strength was gone;
The heedless water mock'd his thirst,
He heard it, saw it hurrying on:
I ran to raise the sufferer up;
Thrice from the stream he drain'd my cup,
Dipt, and return'd it running o'er;
I drank, and never thirsted more.

'Twas night; the floods were out; it blew
A winter hurricane aloof;
I heard his voice abroad, and flew
To bid him welcome to my roof;
I warm'd, I clothed, I cheer'd my guest,
Laid him on my own couch to rest;
Then made the hearth my bed, and seem'd
In Eden's garden while I dream'd.

Stript, wounded, beaten, nigh to death,
I found him by the highway side:
I roused his pulse, brought back his breath,
Revived his spirit, and supplied
Wine, oil, refreshment; he was heal'd;
I had myself a wound conceal'd;
But from that hour forgot the smart,
And peace bound up my broken heart.

In prison I saw him next, condemn'd
To meet a traitor's doom at morn;
The tide of lying tongues I stemm'd,
And honour'd him midst shame and scorn:
My friendship's utmost zeal to try,
He ask'd, if I for him would die;
The flesh was weak, my blood ran chill,
But the free spirit cried, "I will."

Then in a moment to my view
The Stranger darted from disguise,
The tokens in his hands I knew,
My Saviour stood before mine eyes:
He spake; and my poor name He named;
"Of me thou hast not been ashamed:
These deeds shall thy memorial be;
Fear not, thou didst them unto Me."

VIA CRUCIS, VIA LUCIS.

Night turns to day:—
When sullen darkness lowers,
And heaven and earth are hid from sight
Cheer up, cheer up!
Ere long the opening flowers,
With dewy eyes, shall shine in light

Storms die in calms:—
When over land and ocean
Roll the loud chariots of the wind,
Cheer up, cheer up!
The voice of wild commotion
Proclaims tranquillity behind.

Winter wakes spring:—
When icy blasts are blowing
O'er frozen lakes, through naked trees
Cheer up, cheer up!
All beautiful and glowing,
May floats in fragrance on the breeze.

War ends in peace:—
Though dread artillery rattle,
And ghastly corpses load the ground,
Cheer up, cheer up!
Where groan'd the field of battle,
The song, the dance, the feast go round.

Toil brings repose:—
With noontide fervours beating,
When droop thy temples o'er thy breast,
Cheer up, cheer up!
Gray twilight, cool and fleeting,
Wafts on its wing the hour of rest.

Death springs to life:—
Though brief and sad thy story,
Thy years all spent in care and gloom,
Look up, look up!
Eternity and glory
Dawn through the portals of the tomb

THE AGES OF MAN.

Youth, fond youth! to thee in life's gay morning,
New and wonderful are heaven and earth;
Health the hills, content the fields adorning,
Nature rings with melody and mirth;
Love invisible, beneath, above,
Conquers all things; all things yield to love.

Time, swift time, from years their motion stealing,
Unperceived hath sober manhood brought:
Truth, her pure and humble forms revealing,
Peoples fancy's fairy-land with thought;
Then the heart, no longer prone to roam,
Loves, loves best, the quiet bliss of home.

Age, old age, in sickness, pain, and sorrow,
Creeps with lengthening shadow o'er the scene;
Life was yesterday, 'tis death to-morrow,
And to-day the agony between:
Then how longs the weary soul for thee,
Bright and beautiful eternity!

ASPIRATIONS OF YOUTH.

Higher, higher will we climb
Up the mount of glory,
That our names may live through time
In our country's story:
Happy, when her welfare calls,
He who conquers, he who falls,

Deeper, deeper let us toil
In the mines of knowledge—
Nature's wealth and learning's spoil
Win from school and college;
Delve we there for richer gems
Than the stars of diadems.

Onward, onward will we press
Through the path of duty;
Virtue is true happiness,
Excellence true beauty:
Minds are of supernal birth,
Let us make a heaven of earth.

Close and closer then we knit
Hearts and hands together,
Where our fireside comforts sit
In the wildest weather:
O! they wander wide, who roam
For the joys of life, from home.

Nearer, dearer bands of love
Draw our souls in union,
To our Father's house above,
To the saints' communion;
Thither every hope ascend,
There may all our labours end.

THE FALLING LEAF.

Were I a trembling leaf,
On yonder stately tree,
After a season gay and brief,
Condemn'd to fade and flee;
I should be loath to fall
Beside the common way,
Weltering in mire, and spurn'd by all,
Till trodden down to clay.

Nor would I choose to die
All on a bed of grass,
Where thousands of my kindred lie
And idly rot in mass.

Nor would I like to spread
My thin and wither'd face
In *hortus siccus*, pale and dead,
A mummy of my race.

No,—on the wings of air
Might I be left to fly,
I know not and I heed not where,
A waif of earth and sky!

Or flung upon the stream,
Curl'd like a fairy-boat,
As through the changes of a dream,
To the world's end to float!

Who that hath ever been,
Could bear to be no more?
Yet who would tread again the scene
He trod through life before?

On, with intense desire,
Man's spirit will move on;
It seems to die, yet like Heaven's fire,
It is not quench'd, but gone.

THE ADVENTURE OF A STAR.

ADDRESSED TO A YOUNG LADY.

A star would be a flower;
So down from heaven it came,
And in a honeysuckle bower
Lit up its little flame.
There on a bank, beneath the shade,
By sprays, and leaves, and blossoms made
It overlook'd the garden ground,
—A landscape stretching ten yards round;
O what a change of place
From gazing through eternity of space!

Gay plants on every side
Unclosed their lovely blooms,
And scatter'd far and wide
Their ravishing perfumes:
The butterfly, the bee,
And many an insect on the wing,
Full of the spirit of the spring,
Flew round and round in endless glee,
Alighting here, ascending there,
Ranging and revelling everywhere.

Now all the flowers were up, and drest
In robes of rainbow-colour'd light;
The pale primroses look'd their best,
Peonies blush'd with all their might;
Dutch tulips from their beds
Flaunted their stately heads;
Auriculas, like belles and beaux,
Glittering with birth-night splendour, rose;

And polyanthuses display'd
The brilliance of their gold brocade:
Here hyacinths of heavenly blue
Shook their rich tresses to the morn,
While rose-buds scarcely show'd their hue,
But coyly linger'd on the thorn,
Till their loved nightingale, who tarried long,
Should wake them into beauty with his song.
The violets were past their prime,
Yet their departing breath
Was sweeter, in the blast of death,
Than all the lavish fragrance of the thyme.

Amidst this gorgeous train,
Our truant star shone forth in vain;
Though in a wreath of periwinkle,
Through whose fine gloom it strove to twinkle,
It seem'd no bigger to the view
Than the light-spangle in a drop of dew.
—Astronomers may shake their polls,
And tell me,—every orb that rolls
Through heaven's sublime expanse
Is sun or world, whose speed and size
Confound the stretch of mortal eyes,
In nature's mystic dance:
It may be so
For aught I know,
Or aught indeed that they can show;
Yet till they prove what they aver,
From this plain truth I will not stir,
—A star's a star!—but when I think
Of sun or world, the star I sink;
Wherefore in verse, at least in mine,
Stars, like themselves, in spite of fate, shall shine.

Now, to return (for we have wander'd far)
To what was nothing but a simple star;
—Where all was jollity around,
No fellowship the stranger found.
Those lowliest children of the earth,
That never leave their mother's lap,
Companions in their harmless mirth,
Were smiling, blushing, dancing there,
Feasting on dew, and light, and air,
And fearing no mishap,
Save from the hand of lady fair,
Who, on her wonted walk,
Pluck'd one and then another,
A sister or a brother,
From its elastic stalk;
Happy, no doubt, for one sharp pang, to die
On her sweet bosom, withering in her eye.

Thus all day long that star's hard lot,
While bliss and beauty ran to waste,
Was but to witness on the spot
Beauty and bliss it could not taste,
At length the sun went down, and then
Its faded glory came again,
With brighter, bolder, purer light,
It kindled through the deepening night,
Till the green bower, so dim by day,
Glow'd like a fairy-palace with its beams;
In vain, for sleep on all the borders lay,
The flowers were laughing in the land of dreams.

Our star, in melancholy state,
Still sigh'd to find itself alone,
Neglected, cold, and desolate,
Unknowing and unknown.
Lifting at last an anxious eye,
It saw that circlet empty in the sky
Where it was wont to roll,
Within a hair-breadth of the pole:
In that same instant, sore amazed,
On the strange blank all nature gazed;
Travellers, bewilder'd for their guide,
In glens and forests lost their way;
And ships, on ocean's trackless tide,
Went fearfully astray.
The star, now wiser for its folly, knew
Its duty, dignity, and bliss at home;
So up to heaven again it flew,
Resolved no more to roam.
One hint the humble bard may send
To her for whom these lines are penn'd:
—O may it be enough for her
To shine in her own character!
O may she be content to grace,
On earth, in heaven, her proper place!

MAKE WAY FOR LIBERTY.

On the exploit of Arnold Winkelried at the battle of Sempach, in which the Swiss, fighting for their independence, totally defeated the Austrians, in the fourteenth century.

"MAKE way for liberty!"—he cried;
Made way for liberty, and died!

In arms the Austrian phalanx stood,
A living wall, a human wood!
A wall, where every conscious stone
Seem'd to its kindred thousands grown;
A rampart all assaults to bear,
Till time to dust their frames should wear;
A wood like that enchanted grove*
In which with fiends Rinaldo strove,
Where every silent tree possess'd
A spirit prison'd in its breast,
Which the first stroke of coming strife
Would startle into hideous life,
So dense, so still, the Austrians stood,
A living wall, a human wood!
Impregnable their front appears,
All horrent with projected spears,
Whose polish'd points before them shine,
From flank to flank, one brilliant line,
Bright as the breakers' splendours run
Along the billows, to the sun.

Opposed to these a hovering band
Contended for their native land:
Peasants, whose new-found strength had broke
From manly necks th' ignoble yoke,
And forged their fetters into swords,
On equal terms to fight their lords:
And what insurgent rage had gain'd,
In many a mortal fray maintain'd;

* See *Tasso's Jerusalem Delivered*, canto xviii.

Marshall'd once more at freedom's call,
They came to conquer or to fall,
Where he who conquer'd, he who fell,
Was deem'd a dead, or living Tell!
Such virtue had that patriot breathed,
So to the soil his soul bequeathed,
That wheresoe'er his arrows flew,
Heroes in his own likeness grew,
And warriors sprang from every sod
Which his awakening footstep trod.

And now the work of life and death
Hung on the passing of a breath;
The fire of conflict burnt within,
The battle trembled to begin;
Yet, while the Austrians held their ground,
Point for attack was nowhere found,
Where'er the impatient Switzers gazed,
The unbroken line of lances blazed;
That line 'twere suicide to meet,
And perish at their tyrants' feet,—
How could they rest within their graves,
And leave their homes, the homes of slaves?
Would they not feel their children tread
With clanging chains above their head?

It must not be: This day, this hour,
Annihilates th' oppressor's power;
All Switzerland is in the field,
She will not fly, she cannot yield—
She must not fall; her better fate
Here gives her an immortal date.
Few were the number she could boast;
But every freeman was a host,
And felt as though himself were he
On whose sole arm hung victory.

It did depend on *one*, indeed;
Behold him,—Arnold Winkelried!
There sounds not to the trump of fame
The echo of a nobler name.
Unmark'd he stood amid the throng,
In rumination deep and long,
Till you might see, with sudden grace,
The very thought come o'er his face,
And by the motion of his form
Anticipate the bursting storm;
And by th' uplifting of his brow
Tell where the bolt would strike, and how.

But 'twas no sooner thought than done,
The field was in a moment won:—

"Make way for liberty!" he cried,
Then ran, with arms extended wide,
As if his dearest friend to clasp;
Ten spears he swept within his grasp.

"Make way for liberty!" he cried;
Their keen points met from side to side:
He bow'd amongst them like a tree,
And thus made way for liberty.

Swift to the breach his comrades fly;
"Make way for liberty!" they cry,
And through the Austrian phalanx dart,
As rush'd the spears through Arnold's heart;
While, instantaneous as his fall,
Rout, ruin, panic, scatter'd all:
An earthquake could not overthrow
A city with a surer blow.

Thus Switzerland again was free:
Thus death made way for liberty!

FOR THE FIRST LEAF OF A LADY'S ALBUM.

Flower after flower comes forth in spring,
Bird after bird begins to sing;
Till copse and field in richest bloom,
Sparkle with dew, and breathe perfume,—
While hill and valley, all day long,
And half the night, resound with song,
So may acquaintance, one by one,
Come like spring-flowers to meet the sun,
And o'er these pages pure and white,
Kind words, kind thoughts, kind prayers indite
Which sweeter odour shall dispense
Than vernal blossoms to the sense;
Till woods and streams less fair appear
Than autographs and sketches here:
—Or like the minstrels of the grove,
Pour strains of harmony and love,
The music made by heart to heart,
In which the least can bear a part,
More exquisite than all the notes
Of nightingales' and thrushes' throats.
Thus shall this book, from end to end,
Show in succession friend on friend,
By their own living hands portray'd,
In prose and verse, in light and shade,
By pen and pencil,—till *her* eye,
Who owns the volume shall descry
On many a leaf some lovely trace,
Reminding of a lovelier face!
With here and there the humbler line,
Recalling such a phiz as mine.

THE FIRST LEAF OF AN ALBUM.

Ut pictura, poesis.—*Hor. de Art. Poet.*

Two lovely sisters here unite
To blend improvement with delight;
Painting and poetry engage
By turns to deck the Album's page.

Here may each glowing picture be
The quintessence of poesy,
With skill so exquisitely wrought,
As if the colours were pure thought,—
Thought from the bosom's inmost cell,
By magic tints made visible,
That, while the eye admires, the mind
Itself, as in a glass, may find.

And may the poet's verse, alike,
With all the power of painting strike;
So freely, so divinely trace,
In every line the line of grace;
And beautify, with such sweet art,
The image-chamber of the heart,

That fancy here may gaze her fill,
Forming fresh scenes and shapes at will,
Where silent words alone appear,
Or, borrowing voice, but touch the ear.

Yet humble prose with these shall stand,
Friends, kindred, comrades, hand in hand,
All in this fair enclosure meet,
The lady of the book to greet,
And, with the pen or pencil, make
These leaves love-tokens, for her sake.
Sheffield, 1822.

TIME EMPLOYED, TIME ENJOYED.

ADDRESSED TO A YOUNG LADY FROM WHOM THE AUTHOR HAD RECEIVED AN ELEGANTLY WROUGHT WATCH-POCKET.

Within this curious case
Time's sentinel I place,
Who, while calm unconscious slumber
Shuts creation from mine eyes,
Through the silent gloom shall number
Every moment as it flies,
And record, at dawn of day,
Thrice ten thousand pass'd away.

On each of these my breath
May pause 'twixt life and death;
By a subtler line depending
Than the ray of twinkling light
Which the smallest star is sending
Every moment through the night;
For, on films more finely spun,
All things hang beneath the sun.

Rapt through a wildering dream,
Awake in sleep I seem;
Sorrow wrings my soul with anguish,
Joy expands my throbbing breast;
Now overwhelm'd with care I languish,
Now serene and tranquil rest:
Morning comes; and all between
Is as though it ne'er had been.

But time has daylight hours,
And man immortal powers;
Waking joys and sleepless sorrow,
Worldly care, celestial peace;
Life renewing every morrow,
Not with death itself shall cease:
Man, through all eternity,
What he here hath been shall be!

May she, whose skilful hand
This fairy net-work plann'd,
Still in innocent employment,
Far from vanity and vice,
Seek the pearl of true enjoyment,
On her path to Paradise:
Time, for earth or heaven employ'd,
(Both have claims,) is time enjoy'd.

Every day to her in flight
Bequeath a gem at night,—
Some sweet hope, some hallow'd pleasure,
From remembrance ne'er to part;
Hourly blessings swell the treasure
Hidden in her grateful heart;
And may every moment cast
Brighter glory on her last!

A VOYAGE ROUND THE WORLD.

Emblem of eternity,
Unbeginning, endless sea!
Let me launch my soul on thee.

Sail, nor keel, nor helm, nor oar,
Need I, ask I, to explore
Thine expanse from shore to shore.

By a single glance of thought,
Thy whole realm's before me brought
Like the universe, from naught.

All thine aspects now I view,
Ever old, yet ever new;
Time nor tide thy powers subdue.

All thy voices now I hear;
Sounds of gladness, grandeur, fear
Meet and mingle in mine ear.

All thy wonders are reveal'd:
Treasures hidden in thy field!
From the birth of nature seal'd.

But thy depths I search not now,
Nor thy limpid surface plough
With a foam-repelling prow.

Eager fancy, unconfined,
In a voyage of the mind
Sweeps along thee like the wind.

Here a breeze, I skim thy plain;
There a tempest, pour amain
Thunder, lightning, hail, and rain.

Where the billows cease to roll,
Round the silence of the pole,
Thence set out my venturous soul:

See, by Greenland cold and wild
Rocks of ice eternal piled;
Yet the mother loves her child;

And the wildernesses drear
To the native's heart are dear;
All life's charities dwell here.

Next, on lonely Labrador,
Let me hear the snow-falls roar,
Devastating all before.

Yet even here, in glens and coves,
Man, the heir of all things, roves,
Feasts and fights, and laughs and loves.

But a brighter vision breaks
O'er Canadian woods and lakes;
—These my spirit soon forsakes.

Land of exiled liberty,
Where our fathers once were free;
Brave New England, hail to thee!

Pennsylvania, while thy flood
Waters fields unbought with blood,
Stand for peace as thou hast stood.

The West Indies I behold,
Like the Hesperides of old,
—Trees of life, with fruits of gold.

No—a curse is on the soil,
Bonds and scourges, tears and toil,
Man degrade, and earth despoil.

Horror-struck, I turn away,
Coasting down the Mexique bay;
Slavery there has lost the day.

Loud the voice of Freedom spoke;
Every accent split a yoke,
Every word a dungeon broke.

South America expands
Mountain forests, river lands,
And a nobler race demands.

And a nobler race arise,
Stretch their limbs, unclose their eyes,
Claim the earth, and seek the skies.

Gliding through Magellan's Straits,
Where two oceans ope their gates,
What a spectacle awaits!

The immense Pacific smiles
Round ten thousand little isles,
—Haunts of violence and wiles.

But the powers of darkness yield,
For the cross is in the field,
And the light of life reveal'd.

Rays from rock to rock it darts,
Conquers adamantine hearts,
And immortal bliss imparts.

North and west, receding far
From the evening's downward star,
Now I mount Aurora's car,—

Pale Siberia's deserts shun,
From Kamtschatka's headlands run,
South and east, to meet the sun.

Jealous China, strange Japan,
With bewilder'd thought I scan,
—They are but dead seas of man.

Ages in succession find.
Forms unchanging, stagnant mind;
And the same they leave behind.

Lo! the eastern Cyclades,
Phœnix nests, and halcyon seas;
But I tarry not with these.

Pass we low New Holland's shoals,
Where no ample river rolls;
—World of undiscover'd souls!

Bring them forth—'tis Heaven's decree:
Man, assert thy dignity!
Let not brutes look down on thee.

Either India next is seen,
With the Ganges stretch'd between:
Ah! what horrors there have been!

War, disguised as commerce, came;
Britain, carrying sword and flame,
Won an empire, lost her name.

But that name shall be restored,
Law and justice wield her sword,
And her God be here adored.

By the Gulf of Persia sail,
Where the true-love nightingale
Woos the rose in every vale.

Though Arabia charge the breeze
With the incense of her trees,
On I press o'er southern seas.

Cape of storms! thy spectre's fled,
And the angel hope, instead,
Lights from heaven upon thy head.

Where thy table mountain stands,
Barbarous hordes, from dreary sands,
Bless the sight, with lifted hands.

St. Helena's dungeon-keep
Scowls defiance o'er the deep—
There a hero's relics sleep.

Who he was and how he fell,
Europe, Asia, Afric, tell;
On that theme all times shall dwell.

But, henceforth, till nature dies,
These three simple words comprise
All the future—"Here he lies."

Mammon's plague-ships throng the waves;
O 'twere mercy to the slaves
Were the maws of sharks their graves!

Not for all the gems and gold
Which thy streams and mountains hold,
Or for which thy sons are sold,—

Land of negroes! would I dare
In this felon trade to share,
Or its infamy to spare.

Hercules, thy pillars stand,
Sentinels of sea and land;
Cloud-capt Atlas towers at hand.

Where, at Cato's word of fate,
Fell the Carthaginian state,
And where exiled Marius sate,—

Mark the dens of caitiff Moors;
Ha! the pirates seize the oars—
Fly the desecrated shores.

Egypt's hieroglyphic realm
Other floods than Nile's o'erwhelm—
Slaves turn'd despots hold the helm.

Judah's cities are forlorn,
Lebanon and Carmel shorn,
Zion trampled down with scorn.

Greece! thine ancient lamp is spent;
Thou art thine own monument;
But the sepulchre is rent,

And a wind is on the wing,
At whose breath new heroes spring,
Sages teach, and poets sing.

Italy, thy beauties shroud
In a gorgeous evening cloud:
Thy refulgent head is bow'd.

Rome, in ruins, lovely still,
From her Capitolian hill
Bids thee, mourner! weep thy fill.

Yet where Roman genius reigns,
Roman blood must warm the veins;
—Look well, tyrants! to your chains.

Feudal realm of old romance!
Spain, thy lofty front advance,
Grasp thy shield, and couch thy lance.

At the fire-flash of thine eye
Giant bigotry shall fly;
At thy voice, oppression die.

Lusitania! from the dust
Shake thy locks; thy cause is just-
Strike for freedom, strike and trust.

France! I hurry from thy shore;
Thou art not the France of yore;
Thou art new-born France no more.

Great thou wast, and who like thee?
Then mad-drunk with liberty;
Now, thou'rt neither great nor free.

Sweep by Holland, like the blast;
One quick glance at Denmark cast,
Sweden, Russia;—all is past.

Elbe nor Weser tempt my stay;
Germany! beware the day
When thy schoolmen bear the sway.

Now to thee, to thee I fly,
Fairest isle beneath the sky,
To my heart as in mine eye!

I have seen them one by one,
Every shore beneath the sun,
And my voyage now is done.

While I bid them all be blest,
Britain! thou'rt my home—my rest;
My own land, I love *thee* best.

SIR WALTER SCOTT.

WALTER SCOTT was born in Edinburgh, on the 15th of August, 1771. His father was a writer to the signet, and of ancient and honourable descent. Almost from his birth until the age of sixteen, he was afflicted with ill health; and either from the weakness of his constitution, or, as some assert, from an accident occasioned by the carelessness of his nurse, his right foot was injured, and he was lame during his life. His early days were passed among the hills and dales of the borders—"famous in war and verse"—"where," we quote from Allan Cunningham, "almost every stone that stands above the ground is the record of some skirmish, or single combat; and every stream, although its waters be so inconsiderable as scarcely to moisten the pasture through which they run, is renowned in song and in ballad." Perhaps to the happy chance of his residence in a district so fertile in legendary lore, the world is indebted for the vast legacy of wealth he bequeathed to it. In 1783, he entered the University of Edinburgh; and in 1792, became an advocate at the Scottish bar: but after a few years' attendance at the courts, quitted it, in order to devote himself to literature. He had, however, reached his 25th year, before he manifested any desire, or rather intention, to contend for fame in a path so intricate; and as he himself states, his first attempt ended in a transfer of his printed sheets to the service of the trunk-maker. Though discouraged, he was not disheartened. In 1802, "The Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border" obtained a more fortunate destiny; and about three years afterwards the publication of The Lay of the Last Minstrel completely established the fame of the writer. From the appearance of this poem, the life of the poet, until towards the close of it, is little else than a history of his writings. Marmion issued from the press in 1808; The Lady of the Lake, in 1810; Don Roderick, in 1811; Rokeby, in 1813; The Lord of the Isles, in 1814; The Bridal of Triermain, and Harold the Dauntless, appeared anonymously; the former, in 1813, and the latter, in 1817. The publication of his novels and romances commenced with Waverley, in 1814. In 1820, Walter Scott was created a baronet of the United Kingdom. In January, 1826, his publishers became bankrupts; it produced a feeling of the deepest sorrow,—not only in Edinburgh, but throughout the kingdom, when it was ascertained that, through their failure, he was involved in pecuniary responsibilities to a ruinous extent. He encountered adversity with manly fortitude; asked and obtained from his creditors no other boon than time; and in about four years had actually paid off nearly £70,000 of the debt. The price of almost superhuman labour was, however, to be exacted. In 1831 he was attacked with gradual paralysis: in the autumn of that year he was prevailed upon to visit the more genial climate of the south of Europe;—the experiment was unsuccessful in restoring him to health: he returned to Abbotsford, and died there on the 21st of September, 1832. His loss was mourned, not only by his own country, but in every portion of the civilized globe; for his fame had spread throughout all parts of it: and there is scarcely a language into which his works have not been translated. The kindness of his heart, the benevolence of his disposition, the thorough goodness of his nature, were appreciated by all who had the privilege of his acquaintance; but his genius is the vast and valuable property of mankind.

In person, he was tall, and had the appearance of a powerful and robust man. His countenance has been rendered familiar by artists in abundance; the justest notion of it is conveyed by the bust of Chantry. Its expression was peculiarly benevolent; his forehead was broad, and remarkably high.

We have left ourselves but little space to comment upon the poetry of Sir Walter Scott; his fame as a poet was eclipsed by his reputation as a novelist; and the appearance of a star of greater magnitude drew from him, by degrees, the popularity he had so long engrossed. Yet we venture to hazard an opinion, that if it be possible for either to be forgotten, his poems will outlive his prose; and that Waverley and Ivanhoe will perish before Marmion and The Lady of the Lake. We can find no rare and valuable quality in the former that we may not find in the latter. A deeply interesting and exciting story, glorious and true pictures of scenery, fine and accurate portraits of character, clear and impressive accounts of ancient customs, details of battles—satisfying to the fancy; yet capable of enduring the sternest test of truth—are to be found in the one class as well as in the other. In addition, we have the most graceful and harmonious verse; and the style is undoubtedly such as equally to delight those who possess and those who are without a refined poetical taste.

THE

LAY OF THE LAST MINSTREL.

Dum relego, scripsisse, pudet, quia plurima cerno,
Me quoque, qui feci, judice, digna lini.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE CHARLES, EARL OF DALKEITH,

THIS POEM IS INSCRIBED, BY THE AUTHOR.

THE poem, now offered to the public, is intended to illustrate the customs and manners which anciently prevailed on the borders of England and Scotland. The inhabitants, living in a state partly pastoral and partly warlike, and combining habits of constant depredation with the influence of a rude spirit of chivalry, were often engaged in scenes highly susceptible of poetical ornament. As the description of scenery and manners was more the object of the author, than a combined and regular narrative, the plan of the ancient Metrical Romance was adopted, which allows greater latitude in this respect than would be consistent with the dignity of a regular poem. The same model offered other facilities, as it permits an occasional alteration of measure, which, in some degree, authorizes the change of rhythm in the text. The machinery also, adopted from popular belief, would have seemed puerile in a poem which did not partake of the rudeness of the old ballad, or Metrical Romance.

For these reasons, the poem was put into the mouth of an ancient minstrel, the last of the race, who, as he is supposed to have survived the Revolution, might have caught somewhat of the refinement of modern poetry, without losing the simplicity of his original model. The date of the tale itself is about the middle of the sixteenth century, when most of the personages actually flourished. The time occupied by the action is three nights and three days.

INTRODUCTION.

THE way was long, the wind was cold
The minstrel was infirm and old;
His wither'd cheek, and tresses gray,
Seem'd to have known a better day;
The harp, his sole remaining joy,
Was carried by an orphan boy.
The last of all the bards was he,
Who sung of Border chivalry;
For, well-a-day! their date was fled,
His tuneful brethren all were dead;
And he, neglected and oppress'd,
Wish'd to be with them, and at rest.
No more, on prancing palfrey borne,
He caroll'd, light as lark at morn;
No longer courted and caress'd,
High placed in hall, a welcome guest,
He pour'd, to lord and lady gay
The unpremeditated lay:
Old times were changed, old manners gone;
A stranger fill'd the Stuart's throne;
The bigots of the iron time
Had call'd his harmless art a crime.
A wandering harper, scorn'd and poor,
He begg'd his bread from door to door;
And tuned, to please a peasant's ear,
The harp a king had loved to hear.

He pass'd where Newark's stately tower
Looks out from Yarrow's birchen bower:
The minstrel gazed with wishful eye—
No humbler resting place was nigh.
With hesitating step, at last,
The embattled portal-arch he pass'd,
Whose ponderous grate and massy bar
Had oft roll'd back the tide of war,
But never closed the iron door
Against the desolate and poor.
The dutchess* mark'd his weary pace,
His timid mien, and reverend face,
And bade her page the menials tell,
That they should tend the old man well:
For she had known adversity,
Though born in such a high degree;
In pride of power, in beauty's bloom,
Had wept o'er Monmouth's bloody tomb.

When kindness had his wants supplied,
And the old man was gratified,
Began to rise his minstrel pride:
And he began to talk anon,
Of good Earl Francis,† dead and gone,
And of Earl Walter,‡ rest him God!
A braver ne'er to battle rode:
And how full many a tale he knew
Of the old warriors of Buccleuch;
And, would the noble dutchess deign
To listen to an old man's strain,
Though stiff his hand, his voice though weak
He thought, e'en yet, the sooth to speak,
That if she loved the harp to hear,
He could make music to her ear.

The humble boon was soon obtain'd;
The aged minstrel audience gain'd.
But, when he reach'd the room of state,
Where she, with all her ladies, sate,
Perchance he wish'd his boon denied:
For, when to tune his harp he tried,
His trembling hand had lost the ease,
Which marks security to please:
And scenes, long past, of joy and pain,
Came wildering o'er his aged brain—
He tried to tune his harp in vain.
The pitying duchess praised its chime,
And gave him heart, and gave him time,
Till every string's according glee
Was blended into harmony.
And then, he said, he would full fain
He could recall an ancient strain,
He never thought to sing again.

* Anne, Dutchess of Buccleuch and Monmouth, representative of the ancient lords of Buccleuch, and widow of the unfortunate James, Duke of Monmouth, who was beheaded in 1685.

† Francis Scott, Earl of Buccleuch, father to the dutchess

‡ Walter, Earl of Buccleuch, grandfather to the dutchess and a celebrated warrior.

It was not framed for village churls,
But for high dames and mighty earls;
He had play'd it to King Charles the good,
When he kept court in Holyrood;
And much he wish'd, yet fear'd, to try
The long forgotten melody.
Amid the strings his fingers stray'd,
And an uncertain warbling made,
And oft he shook his hoary head.
But when he caught the measure wild,
The old man raised his face and smiled;
And lighten'd up his faded eye,
With all a poet's ecstasy!
In varying cadence, soft or strong,
He swept the sounding chords along:
The present scene, the future lot,
His toils, his wants, were all forgot;
Cold diffidence, and age's frost,
In the full tide of song were lost;
Each blank, in faithless memory void,
The poet's glowing thought supplied;
And, while his harp responsive rung,
'Twas thus the LATEST MINSTREL sung.

CANTO I

I.

THE feast was over in Branksome tower,
And the ladye had gone to her secret bower;
Her bower that was guarded by word and by spell,
Deadly to hear, and deadly to tell—
Jesu Maria, shield us well!
No living wight, save the ladye alone,
Had dared to cross the threshold stone.

II.

The tables were drawn, it was idlesse all;
Knight, and page, and household squire,
Loiter'd through the lofty hall,
Or crowded round the ample fire;
The stag hounds, weary with the chase,
Lay stretch'd upon the rushy floor,
And urged, in dreams, the forest race,
From Teviotstone to Eskdale-moor.

III.

Nine-and-twenty knights of fame
Hung their shields in Branksome hall;
Nine-and-twenty squires of name
Brought them their steeds from bower to stall;
Nine-and-twenty yeomen tall
Waited duteous on them all:
They were all knights of metal true,
Kinsmen to the bold Buccleuch.

IV.

Ten of them were sheathed in steel,
With belted sword, and spur on heel:
They quitted not their harness bright,
Neither by day, nor yet by night:
They lay down to rest,
With corslet laced,
Pillow'd on buckler cold and hard;
They carved at the meal
With gloves of steel,
And they drank the red wine through the helmet barr'd.

V.

Ten squires, ten yeomen, mailclad men,
Waited the beck of the warders ten;
Thirty steeds, both fleet and wight,
Stood saddled in stable day and night,
Barbed with frontlet of steel, I trow,
And with Jedwood axe at saddle bow,
A hundred more fed free in stall:
Such was the custom of Branksome hall.

VI.

Why do these steeds stand ready dight?
Why watch these warriors, arm'd, by night?
They watch to hear the bloodhound baying;
They watch to hear the warhorn braying;
To see Saint George's red cross streaming;
To see the midnight beacon gleaming;
They watch 'gainst Southern force and guile;
Lest Scroop, or Howard, or Percy's powers,
Threaten Branksome's lordly towers,
From Warkworth, or Naworth, or merry Carlisle.

VII.

Such is the custom of Branksome hall.—
Many a valiant knight is here;
But he, the chieftain of them all,
His sword hangs rusting on the wall
Beside his broken spear.
Bards long shall tell,
How Lord Walter fell!
When startled burghers fled afar,
The furies of the border war;
When the streets of high Dunedin
Saw lances gleam, and falchions redden,
And heard the slogan's* deadly yell—
Then the chief of Branksome fell.

VIII.

Can piety the discord heal,
Or stanch the death-feud's enmity?
Can Christian lore, can patriot zeal,
Can love of blessed charity?
No! vainly to each holy shrine,
In mutual pilgrimage they drew,
Implored, in vain, the grace divine
For chiefs their own red falchions slew;
While Cessford owns the rule of Car,
While Ettrick boasts the line of Scott,
The slaughter'd chiefs, the mortal jar,
The havoc of the feudal war,
Shall never, never be forgot!

IX.

In sorrow o'er Lord Walter's bier
The warlike foresters had bent;
And many a flower, and many a tear,
Old Teviot's maids and matrons lent;
But o'er her warrior's bloody bier
The ladye dropp'd nor flower nor tear:
Vengeance deep brooding o'er the slain,
Had lock'd the source of softer wo;
And burning pride and high disdain,
Forbade the rising tear to flow;

* The war cry, or gathering word of a Border clan.

Until, amid his sorrowing clan,
Her son lisp'd from the nurse's knee—
"And if I live to be a man,
My father's death revenged shall be!"
Then fast the mother's tears did seek
To dew the infant's kindling cheek.

X.

All loose her negligent attire,
All loose her golden hair,
Hung Margaret o'er her slaughter'd sire,
And wept in wild despair.
But not alone the bitter tear
Had filial grief supplied;
For hopeless love, and anxious fear,
Had lent their mingled tide:
Nor in her mother's alter'd eye
Dared she to look for sympathy.
Her lover, 'gainst her father's clan,
With car in arms had stood,
When Mathouse-burn to Melrose ran
All purple with their blood;
And well she knew, her mother dread,
Before Lord Cranstoun she would wed,
Would see her on her dying bed.

XI.

Of noble race the ladye came;
Her father was a clerk of fame,
Of Bethune's line of Picardie;
He learn'd the art that none may name,
In Padua, far beyond the sea.
Men said he changed his mortal frame
By feat of magic mystery;
For when, in studious mood, he paced
Saint Andrew's cloister'd hall,
His form no darkening shadow traced
Upon the sunny wall!

XII.

And of his skill, as bards avow,
He taught that ladye fair,
Till to her bidding she could bow
The viewless forms of air.
And now she sits in secret bower,
In old Lord David's western tower,
And listens to a heavy sound,
That moans the mossy turrets round.
Is it the roar of Teviot's tide,
That chafes against the scaur's* red side?
Is it the wind that swings the oaks?
Is it the echo from the rocks?
What may it be, the heavy sound,
That moans old Branksome's turrets round?

XIII.

At the sullen moaning sound,
The bandogs bay and howl;
And, from the turrets round,
Loud whoops the startled owl.
In the hall, both squire and knight
Swore that a storm was near,
And looked forth to view the night,
But the night was still and clear!

* *Scaur*, a precipitous bank of earth.

XIV.

From the sound of Teviot's tide,
Chafing with the mountain's side,
From the groan of the windswung oak,
From the sullen echo of the rock,
From the voice of the coming storm,
The lady knew it well!
It was the spirit of the flood that spoke,
And he call'd on the spirit of the fell.

XV.

RIVER SPIRIT.

"Sleep'st thou, brother?"

MOUNTAIN SPIRIT.

"Brother, nay—
On my hills the moonbeams play.
From Craig-cross to Skelfhillpen,
By every rill, in every glen,
Merry elves their morrice pacing,
To aërial minstrelsy,
Emerald rings on brown heath tracing,
Trip it deft and merrily.
Up, and mark their nimble feet!
Up, and list their music sweet!"

XVI.

RIVER SPIRIT.

"Tears of an imprison'd maiden
Mix with my polluted stream;
Margaret of Branksome, sorrow laden,
Mourns beneath the moon's pale beam.
Tell me, thou, who view'st the stars,
When shall cease these feudal jars,
What shall be the maiden's fate?
Who shall be the maiden's mate?"

XVII.

MOUNTAIN SPIRIT.

"Arthur's slow wain his course doth roll
In utter darkness round the pole;
The northern bear lowers black and grim;
Orion's studded belt is dim:
Twinkling faint, and distant far,
Shimmers through mist each planet star;
Ill may I read their high decree!
But no kind influence deign they shower
On Teviot's tide, and Branksome's tower,
Till pride be quell'd, and love be free."

XVIII.

The unearthly voices ceased,
And the heavy sound was still
It died on the river's breast,
It died on the side of the hill,
But round Lord David's tower
The sound still floated near;
For it rung in the ladye's bower,
And it rung in the ladye's ear.
She raised her stately head,
And her heart throbb'd high with pride:—
"Your mountains shall bend,
And your streams ascend,
Ere Margaret be our foeman's bride!

XIX.

The ladye sought the lofty hall,
Where many a bold retainer lay,
And, with jocund din, among them all,
Her son pursued his infant play,
A fancied mosstrooper, the boy
The truncheon of a spear bestrode,
And round the hall, right merrily,
In mimic foray* rode.
E'en bearded knights, in arms grown old,
Share in his frolic gambols bore,
Albeit their hearts, of rugged mould,
Were stubborn as the steel they wore.
For the gray warriors prophesied,
How the brave boy, in future war,
Should tame the unicorn's pride,
Exalt the crescent and the star.

XX.

The ladye forgot her purpose high,
One moment, and no more;
One moment gazed with a mother's eye,
As she paused at the arched door;
Then, from amid the armed train,
She call'd to her William of Deloraine.

XXI.

A stark mosstrooping Scott was he,
As e'er couch'd border lance by knee;
Through Solway sands, through Tarras moss,
Blindfold he knew the paths to cross;
By wily turns, by desperate bounds,
Had baffled Percy's best bloodhounds;
In Eske, or Liddel, fords were none,
But he would ride them one by one;
Alike to him was time or tide,
December's snow, or July's pride;
Alike to him was tide or time,
Moonless midnight, or matin prime:
Steady of heart, and stout of hand,
As ever drove prey from Cumberland;
Five times outlawed had he been,
By England's king, and Scotland's queen.

XXII.

"Sir William of Deloraine, good at need
Mount thee on the wightest steed;
Spare not to spur, nor stint to ride,
Until you come to fair Tweed side;
And in Melrose's holy pile
Seek thou the monk of St. Mary's aisle.
Greet the father well from me;
Say that the fated hour is come,
And to-night he shall watch with thee,
To win the treasure of the tomb:
For this will be Saint Michael's night,
And, though stars be dim, the moon is bright;
And the cross of bloody red,
Will point to the grave of the mighty dead.

XXIII.

"What he gives thee, see thou keep;
Stay not thou for food or sleep;
Be it scroll, or be it book,
Into it, knight, thou must not look;
If thou readest, thou art lorn!
Better thou hadst ne'er been born."

XXIV.

"O swiftly can speed my dapplegray steed,
Which drinks of the Teviot clear;
Ere break of day," the warrior 'gan say,
"Again will I be here:
And safer by none may thy errand be done,
Than, noble dame, by me;
Letter nor line know I never a one,
Wer't my neck-verse at Haribee."*

XXV.

Soon in his saddle sate he fast,
And soon the deep descent he pass'd,
Soon cross'd the sounding barbican,†
And soon the Teviot's side he won.
Eastward the wooded path he rode,
Green hazels o'er his basnet nod:
He pass'd the peel‡ of Goldiland,
And cross'd old Borthwick's roaring strand
Dimly he view'd the moathill's mound,
Where Druid shades still flitted round:
In Hawick twinkled many a light;
Behind him soon they set in night;
And soon he spurr'd his courser keen
Beneath the tower of Hazeldean.

XXVI.

The clattering hoofs the watchmen mark;—
"Stand, ho! thou courier of the dark."
"For Branksome, ho!" the knight rejoin'd,
And left the friendly tower behind.
He turn'd him now from Teviot side,
And, guided by the tinkling rill,
Northward the dark ascent did ride,
And gain'd the moor at Horslie hill;
Broad on the left before him lay,
For many a mile the Roman way.§

XXVII.

A moment now he slack'd his speed,
A moment breathed his panting steed;
Drew saddle-girth and corslet-band,
And loosen'd in the sheath his brand.
On Mintocrags the moonbeams glint,
Where Barnhill hew'd his bed of flint;
Who flung his outlaw'd limbs to rest,
Where falcons hang their giddy nest,
'Mid cliffs, from whence his eagle eye,
For many a league, his prey could spy;
Cliffs doubling, on their echoes borne,
The terrors of the robber's horn;
Cliffs, which, for many a later year,
The warbling Doric reed shall hear,
When some sad swain shall teach the grove,
Ambition is no cure for love.

* *Foray*, a predatory inroad.

* *Haribee*, the place of executing the Border marauders at Carlisle. The *neck-verse* is the beginning of the fifty first psalm, *Miserere mei*, &c. anciently read by criminals, claiming the benefit of clergy.

† *Barbican*, the defence of the outer gate of a feudal castle.

‡ *Peel*, a Border tower.

§ An ancient Roman road, crossing through part of Roxburghshire.

XXVIII.

Unchallenged, thence past Deloraine
To ancient Riddell's fair domain,
Where Aill, from mountains freed,
Down from the lakes did raving come,
Cresting each wave with tawny foam,
Like the mane of a chestnut steed.
In vain! no torrent, deep or broad,
Might bar the bold mosstrooper's road.

XXIX.

At the first plunge the horse sunk low,
And the water broke o'er the saddle-bow:
Above the foaming tide, I ween,
Scarce half the charger's neck was seen;
For he was barded* from counter to tail,
And the rider was arm'd complete in mail;
Never heavier man and horse
Stemmed a midnight torrent's force.
The warrior's very plume, I say,
Was daggled by the dashing spray;
Yet, through good heart, and our ladye's grace,
At length he gain'd the landing place.

XXX.

Now Bowden moor the marchman won,
And sternly shook his plumed head,
As glanced his eye o'er Halidon,
For on his soul the slaughter red
Of that unhallow'd morn arose,
When first the Scott and Car were foes;
When royal James beheld the fray,
Prize to the victor of the day;
When Home and Douglas, in the van,
Bore down Buccleuch's retiring clan,
Till gallant Cessford's heartblood dear
Reek'd on dark Elliot's border spear.

XXXI.

In bitter mood he spurred fast,
And soon the hated heath was past;
And far beneath, in lustre wan,
Old Melros' rose, and fair Tweed ran;
Like some tall rock, with lichens gray,
Rose, dimly huge, the dark abbaye.
When Hawick he pass'd, had curfew rung,
Now midnight lauds† were in Melrose sung.
The sound upon the fitful gale
In solemn wise did rise and fail,
Like that wild harp whose magic tone
Is waken'd by the winds alone.
But when Melrose he reach'd, 'twas silence all;
He meetly stabled his steed in stall,
And sought the convent's lonely wall.

Here paused the harp; and with its swell
The master's fire and courage fell:
Dejectedly, and low, he bow'd,
And, gazing timid on the crowd,
He seem'd to seek, in every eye,
If they approved his minstrelsy:
And, diffident of present praise,
Somewhat he spoke of former days,
And how old age, and wandering long,
Had done his hand and harp some wrong.
The dutchess and her daughters fair,
And every gentle ladye there,
Each after each, in due degree,
Gave praises to his melody;
His hand was true, his voice was clear,
And much they longed the rest to hear.
Encouraged thus, the aged man,
After meet rest, again began.

Canto II.

I.

If thou wouldst view fair Melrose aright,
Go visit it by the pale moonlight;
For the gay beams of lightsome day
Gild, but to flout, the ruins gray.
When the broken arches are black in night
And each shafted oriel glimmers white;
When the cold light's uncertain shower
Streams on the ruin'd central tower:
When buttress and buttress, alternately,
Seem'd framed of ebon and ivory:
When silver edges the imagery,
And the scrolls that teach thee to live and die;
When distant Tweed is heard to rave,
And the owlet to hoot o'er the dead man's grave
Then go—but go alone the while—
Then view Saint David's ruin'd pile;
And, home returning, soothly swear
Was never scene so sad and fair!

II.

Short halt did Deloraine make there;
Little reck'd he of the scene so fair:
With dagger's hilt, on the wicket strong,
He struck full loud, and struck full long.
The porter hurried to the gate—
"Who knocks so loud, and knocks so late?"
"From Branksome I," the warrior cried;
And straight the wicket open'd wide:
For Branksome's chiefs had in battle stood,
To fence the rights of fair Melrose;
And lands and livings, many a rood,
Had gifted the shrine for their soul's repose.

III.

Bold Deloraine his errand said;
The porter bent his humble head;
With torch in hand, and feet unshod,
And noiseless step, the path he trod;
The arched cloisters, far and wide,
Rang to the warrior's clanking stride;
Till, stooping low his lofty crest,
He enter'd the cell of the ancient priest,
And lifted his barred aventayle,*
To hail the monk of St. Mary's aisle.

IV.

"The Ladye of Branksome greets thee by me;
Says that the fated hour is come,

---

* *Barded*, or barbed, applied to a horse accoutred with defensive armour.

† *Lauds*, the midnight service of the Catholic church.

* *Aventayle*, visor of the helmet.

And that to-night I shall watch with thee,
To win the treasure of the tomb."
From sackcloth couch the monk arose,
With toil his stiffen'd limbs he rear'd;
A hundred years had flung their snows
On his thin locks and floating beard.

V.

And strangely on the knight look'd he,
And his blue eyes gleam'd wild and wide;
"And, darest thou, warrior! seek to see
What heaven and hell alike would hide?
My breast, in belt of iron pent,
With shirt of hair and scourge of thorn:
For threescore years, in penance spent,
My knees those flinty stones have worn;
Yet all too little to atone
For knowing what should ne'er be known
Wouldst thou thy every future year,
In ceaseless prayer and penance drie,
Yet wait thy latter end with fear—
Then, daring warrior, follow me!"

VI.

"Penance, father, will I none;
Prayer know I hardly one;
For mass or prayer can I rarely tarry,
Save to patter an Ave Mary,
When I ride on a Border foray:
Other prayer can I none;
So speed me my errand, and let me be gone."

VII.

Again on the knight look'd the churchman old,
And again he sigh'd heavily;
For he had himself been a warrior bold,
And fought in Spain and Italy.
And he thought on the days that were long since by,
When his limbs were strong, and his courage was high:—
Now, slow and faint, he led the way,
Where, cloister'd round, the garden lay:
The pillard arches were over their head,
And beneath their feet were the bones of the dead.

VIII.

Spreading herbs, and flow'rets bright,
Glisten'd with the dew of night;
Nor herb, nor flow'ret, glisten'd there,
But was carved in the cloister'd arches as fair.
The monk gazed long on the lovely moon,
Then into the night he look'd forth;
And red and bright the streamers light
Were dancing in the glowing north.
So had he seen, in fair Castile,
The youth in glitt'ring squadrons start;
Sudden the flying gennet wheel,
And hurl the unexpected dart.
He knew, by the streamers that shot so bright,
That spirits were riding the northern light.

IX.

By a steel-clench'd postern door,
They enter'd now the chancel tall:
The darken'd roof rose high aloof
On pillars, lofty, and light, and small;
The keystone, that lock'd each ribbed aisle,
Was a fleur-de-lys, or a quatre-feuille:
The corbells* were carved grotesque and grim;
And the pillars, with cluster'd shafts so trim,
With base and with capital flourish'd around,
Seem'd bundles of lances which garlands had bound.

X.

Full many a scutcheon and banner riven,
Shook to the cold night wind of heaven,
Around the screened altar's pale;
And there the dying lamps did burn,
Before thy low and lonely urn,
O gallant chief of Otterburne!
And thine, dark knight of Liddesdale!
O fading honours of the dead!
O high ambition, lowly laid!

XI.

The moon on the east oriel shone
Through slender shafts of shapely stone,
By foliaged tracery combined:
Thou would'st have thought some fairy's hand
'Twixt poplars straight the osier wand,
In many a freakish knot had twined;
Then framed a spell, when the work was done,
And changed the willow wreaths to stone.
The silver light, so pale and faint,
Show'd many a prophet, and many a saint,
Whose image on the glass was died;
Full in the midst, his cross of red
Triumphant Michael brandished,
And trampled the apostate's pride.
The moonbeam kiss'd the holy pane,
And threw on the pavement a bloody stain.

XII.

They sate them down on a marble stone;
(A Scottish monarch slept below;)
Thus spoke the monk, in solemn tone;
"I was not always a man of wo;
For Paynim countries I have trod,
And fought beneath the cross of God:
Now, strange to my eyes thine arms appear,
And their iron clang sounds strange to my ear.

XIII.

"In these far climes, it was my lot
To meet the wondrous Michael Scott;
A wizard of such dreaded fame,
That when, in Salamanca's cave,
Him listed his magic wand to wave,
The bells would ring in Notre Dame!
Some of his skill he taught to me;
And, warrior, I could say to thee
The words that cleft Eildon hills in three,
And bridled the Tweed with a curb of stone;
But to speak them were a deadly sin;
And for having but thought them my heart within,
A treble penance must be done.

XIV.

"When Michael lay on his dying bed,
His conscience was awakened;

* *Corbells*, the projections from which the arches spring, usually cut in a fantastic face or mask.

He bethought him of his sinful deed,
And he gave me a sign to come with speed;
I was in Spain when the morning rose,
But I stood by his bed ere evening close.
The words may not again be said,
That he spoke to me, on death-bed laid:
They would rend this abbaye's massy nave,
And pile it in heaps above his grave.

XV.

"I swore to bury his mighty book,
That never mortal might therein look;
And never to tell where it was hid,
Save at the chief of Branksome's need;
And when that need was past and o'er,
Again the volume to restore.
I buried him on Saint Michael's night,
When the bell tolled one, and the moon rose bright;
And I dug his chamber among the dead,
When the floor of the chancel was stain'd red,
That his patron's cross might o'er him wave,
And scare the fiends from the wizard's grave.

XVI.

"It was a night of wo and dread,
When Michael in the tomb I laid!
Strange sounds along the chancel past;
The banners waved without a blast:"—
—Still spoke the monk, when the bell toll'd one.
I tell you, that a braver man
Than William of Deloraine, good at need,
Against a foe ne'er spurr'd a steed;
Yet somewhat was he chill'd with dread,
And his hair did bristle upon his head.

XVII.

"Lo, warrior! now, the cross of red
Points to the grave of the mighty dead;
Within it burns a wondrous light,
To chase the spirits that love the night;
That lamp shall burn unquenchably,
Until the eternal doom shall be."
Slow moved the monk to the broad flag-stone,
Which the bloody cross was traced upon;
He pointed to a secret nook;
An iron bar the warrior took;
And the monk made a sign with his wither'd hand,
The grave's huge portal to expand.

XVIII.

With beating heart, to the task he went;
His sinewy frame o'er the grave-stone bent,
With bar of iron heaved amain,
Till the toil drops fell from his brows, like rain.
It was by dint of passing strength,
That he moved the massy stone at length.
I would you had been there, to see
How the light broke forth so gloriously,
Stream'd upward to the chancel roof,
And through the galleries far aloof!
No earthly flame blazed e'er so bright;
It shone like heaven's own blessed light;
And, issuing from the tomb,
Show'd the monk's cowl and visage pale,
Danced on the dark brow'd warrior's mail,
And kiss'd his waving plume.

XIX.

Before their eyes the wizard lay,
As if he had not been dead a day.
His hoary beard in silver roll'd,
He seem'd some seventy winters old;
A palmer's amice wrapp'd him round,
With a wrought Spanish baldric bound,
Like a pilgrim from beyond the sea;
His left hand held his book of might;
A silver cross was in his right;
The lamp was placed beside his knee:
High and majestic was his look;
At which the fellest fiends had shook,
And all unruffled was his face—
They trusted his soul had gotten grace.

XX.

Often had William of Deloraine
Rode through the battle's bloody plain,
And trampled down the warriors slain,
And neither known remorse nor awe;
Yet now remorse and awe he own'd:
His breath came thick, his head swam round,
When this strange scene of death he saw.
Bewilder'd and unnerved he stood,
And the priest pray'd fervently and loud:
With eyes averted, prayed he;
He might not endure the sight to see,
Of the man he had loved so brotherly.

XXI.

And when the priest his death-prayer had pray'd,
Thus unto Deloraine he said;—
"Now, speed thee what thou hast to do,
Or, warrior, we may dearly rue;
For those, thou may'st not look upon,
Are gathering fast round the yawning stone!"—
Then Deloraine, in terror, took
From the cold hand the mighty book,
With iron clasp'd, and with iron bound;
He thought, as he took it, the dead man frown'd:
But the glare of the sepulchral light,
Perchance, had dazzled the warrior's sight.

XXII.

When the huge stone sunk o'er the tomb,
The night return'd in double gloom;
For the moon had gone down, and the stars were few:
And, as the knight and priest withdrew,
With wavering steps and dizzy brain,
They hardly might the postern gain.
'Tis said, as through the aisles they pass'd,
They heard strange noises on the blast;
And through the cloister-galleries small,
Which at mid-height thread the chancel wall
Loud sobs, and laughter louder, ran,
And voices unlike the voice of man;
As if the fiends kept holiday,
Because these spells were brought to day.
I cannot tell how the truth may be;
I say the tale as 'twas said to me.

XXIII.

"Now, hie thee hence," the father said;
"And, when we are on death-bed laid,

O may our dear Ladye, and sweet Saint John,
Forgive our souls for the deed we have done!"
The monk return'd him to his cell,
And many a prayer and penance sped;
When the convent met at the noontide bell,
The monk of Saint Mary's aisle was dead!
Before the cross was the body laid,
With hands clasp'd fast, as if still he pray'd

XXIV.

The knight breath'd free in the morning wind,
And strove his hardihood to find;
He was glad when he pass'd the tombstones gray
Which girdle round the fair Abbaye;
For the mystic book, to his bosom prest,
Felt like a load upon his breast;
And his joints, with nerves of iron twined,
Shook, like the aspen leaves in wind.
Full fain was he when the dawn of day
Began to brighten Cheviot gray;
He joy'd to see the cheerful light,
And he said Ave Mary, as well as he might.

XXV.

The sun had brighten'd Cheviot gray,
The sun had brighten'd the Carter's* side,
And soon beneath the rising day
Smiled Branksome towers and Teviot tide.
The wild birds told their warbling tale;
And awaken'd every flower that blows;
And peep'd forth the violet pale,
And spread her breast the mountain rose;
And lovelier than the rose so red,
Yet paler than the violet pale,
She early left her sleepless bed,
The fairest maid of Teviotdale.

XXVI.

Why does fair Margaret so early awake,
And don her kirtle so hastilie:
And the silken knots, which in hurry she would make,
Why tremble her slender fingers to tie?
Why does she stop, and look often around,
As she glides down the secret stair;
And why does she pat the shaggy bloodhound,
As he rouses him up from his lair:
And, though she passes the postern alone,
Why is not the watchman's bugle blown?

XXVII.

The ladye steps in doubt and dread,
Lest her watchful mother hear her tread;
The ladye caresses the rough bloodhound,
Lest his voice should waken the castle round;
The watchman's bugle is not blown,
For he was her foster-father's son;
And she glides through the greenwood at dawn of light,
To meet baron Henry, her own true knight.

XXVIII.

The knight and ladye fair are met,
And under the hawthorn's boughs are set.
A fairer pair were never seen
To meet beneath the hawthorn green.
He was stately, and young, and tall,
Dreaded in battle, and loved in hall:
And she, when love, scarce told, scarce hid
Lent to her cheek a livelier red;
When the half sigh her swelling breast
Against the silken riband prest;
When her blue eyes their secret told,
Though shaded by her locks of gold,—
Where would you find the peerless fair
With Margaret of Branksome might compare!

XXIX.

And now, fair dames, methinks I see
You listen to my minstrelsy:
Your waving locks ye backward throw,
And sidelong bend your necks of snow:
Ye ween to hear a melting tale
Of two true lovers in a dale;
And how the knight, with tender fire,
To paint his faithful passion strove;
Swore he might at her feet expire,
But never, never cease to love;
And how she blush'd, and how she sigh'd
And, half consenting, half denied,
And said that she would die a maid;
Yet, might the bloody feud be stay'd,
Henry of Cranstoun, and only he,
Margaret of Branksome's choice should be

XXX.

Alas! fair dames, your hopes are vain!
My harp has lost th' enchanting strain;
Its lightness would my age reprove:
My hairs are gray, my limbs are old,
My heart is dead, my veins are cold;—
I may not, must not, sing of love.

XXXI.

Beneath an oak, moss'd o'er by eld,
The baron's dwarf his courser held,
And held his crested helm and spear:
That dwarf was scarce an earthly man,
If the tales were true, that of him ran
Through all the Border, far and near.
'Twas said, when the baron a hunting rode,
Through Redesdale's glen, but rarely trod,
He heard a voice cry, "Lost! lost! lost!"
And, like a tennis-ball by racquet tost,
A leap, of thirty feet and three,
Made from the gorse this elfin shape,
Distorted like some dwarfish ape,
And lighted at Lord Cranstoun's knee.
Lord Cranstoun was somewhit dismay'd;
'Tis said that five good miles he rade
To rid him of his company;
But where he rode one mile, the dwarf ran four,
And the dwarf was first at the castle door.

XXXII.

Use lessens marvel, it is said:
This elfish dwarf with the baron staid;
Little he ate, and less he spoke,
Nor mingled with the menial flock:
And oft apart his arms he toss'd,
And often murmur'd, "Lost! lost! lost!"

* A mountain on the border of England, above Jedburgh.

He was waspish, arch, and litherlie,
But well Lord Cranstoun served he;
And he of his service was full fain;
For once he had been ta'en or slain,
An' had it not been his ministry.
All, between home and and hermitage,
Talk'd of Lord Cranstoun's goblin page.

XXXIII.

For the baron went on pilgrimage,
And took with him this elfish page,
To Mary's chapel of the Lowes;
For there, beside our lady's lake,
An offering he had sworn to make,
And he would pay his vows.
But the ladye of Branksome gather'd a band
Of the best that would ride at her command;
The trysting place was Newark Lee.
Wat of Harden came thither amain,
And thither came John of Thirlestane,
And thither came William of Deloraine;
They were three hundred spears and three.
Through Douglas-burn, up Yarrow stream,
Their horses prance, their lances gleam,
They came to Saint Mary's lake ere day;
But the chapel was void, and the baron away.
They burn'd the chapel for very rage,
And cursed Lord Cranstoun's goblin page.

XXXIV.

And now, in Branksome's good green wood,
As under the aged oak he stood,
The baron's courser pricks his ears,
As if a distant noise he hears;
The dwarf waves his long lean arm on high,
And signs to the lovers to part and fly;
No time was then to vow or sigh.
Fair Margaret, through the hazel grove,
Flew like the startled cushat dove;*
The dwarf the stirrup held and rein;
Vaulted the knight on his steed amain,
And, pondering deep that morning's scene,
Rode eastward through the hawthorns green.

While thus he pour'd the lengthen'd tale,
The minstrel's voice began to fail;
Full slyly smiled the observient page,
And gave the wither'd hand of age
A goblet, crown'd with mighty wine,
The blood of Velez' scorched vine.
He raised the silver cup on high,
And, while the big drop fill'd his eye,
Pray'd God to bless the dutchess long,
And all who cheer'd a son of song.
The attending maidens smiled to see,
How long, how deep, how zealously,
The precious juice the minstrel quaff'd;
And he, embolden'd by the draught,
Look'd gayly back to them and laugh'd.
The cordial nectar of the bowl
Swell'd his old veins, and cheer'd his soul;
A lighter, livelier prelude ran,
Ere thus his tale again began.

* Wood pigeon.

Canto III.

I.

And said I that my limbs were old;
And said I that my blood was cold,
And that my kindly fire was fled,
And my poor wither'd heart was dead
And that I might not sing of love?
How could I, to the dearest theme
That ever warm'd a minstrel's dream,
So foul, so false a recreant prove!
How could I name love's very name,
Nor wake my harp to notes of flame!

II.

In peace, love tunes the shepherd's reed,
In war, he mounts the warrior's steed;
In halls, in gay attire is seen;
In hamlets, dances on the green.
Love rules the court, the camp, the grove,
And men below and saints above;
For love is heaven, and heaven is love.

III.

So thought Lord Cranstoun, as I ween,
While pondering deep the tender scene,
He rode through Branksome's hawthorn green.
But the page shouted wild and shrill,—
And scarce his hemlet could he don,
When downward from the shady hill
A stately knight came pricking on.
That warrior's steed, so dapple-gray,
Was dark with sweat, and splash'd with clay:
His armour red with many a stain:
He seem'd in such a weary plight,
As if he had ridden the livelong night;
For it was William of Deloraine.

IV.

But no whit weary did he seem,
When, dancing in the sunny beam,
He mark'd the crane on the baron's crest;
For his ready spear was in his rest.
Few were the words, and stern, and high,
That mark'd the foeman's feudal hate;
For question fierce, and proud reply,
Gave signal soon of dire debate.
Their very coursers seem'd to know,
That each was other's mortal foe;
And snorted fire, when wheel'd around,
To give each knight his vantage ground.

V.

In rapid round the baron bent;
He sigh'd a sigh, and pray'd a prayer:
The prayer was to his patron saint,
The sigh was to his ladye fair.
Stout Deloraine nor sigh'd, nor pray'd,
Nor saint nor ladye call'd to aid;
But he stoop'd his head, and couch'd his spear,
And spurr'd his steed to full career.
The meeting of these champions proud
Seem'd like the bursting thunder cloud.

VI.

Stern was the dint the borderer lent;
The stately baron backwards bent;

Bent backwards to his horse's tail,
And his plumes went scattering on the gale;
The tough ash spear, so stout and true,
Into a thousand flinders flew.
But Cranstoun's lance, of more avail,
Pierced through, like silk, the Borderer's mail:
Through shield, and jack, and acton past,
Deep in his bosom, broke at last.
Still sate the warrior saddle fast,
Till stumbling in the mortal shock,
Down went the steed, the girthing broke,
Hurl'd on a heap lay man and horse.
The baron onward pass'd his course;
Nor knew, so giddy roll'd his brain,
His foe lay stretch'd upon the plain.

VII.

But when he rein'd his courser round,
And saw his foeman on the ground
Lie senseless as the bloody clay,
He bade his page to staunch the wound,
And there beside the warrior stay,
And tend him in his doubtful state,
And lead him to Branksome castle-gate.
His noble mind was inly moved
For the kinsman of the maid he loved.
"This shalt thou do without delay;
No longer here myself may stay;
Unless the swifter I speed away,
Short shrift will be at my dying day."

VIII.

Away in speed Lord Cranstoun rode;
The goblin page behind abode:
His lord's commands he ne'er withstood,
Though small his pleasure to do good.
As the corslet off he took,
The dwarf espied the mighty book!
Much he marvell'd, a knight of pride,
Like a book-bosom'd priest should ride:
He thought not to search or stanch the wound,
Until the secret he had found.

IX.

The iron band, the iron clasp,
Resisted long the elfin grasp;
For when the first he had undone,
It closed as he the next begun.
Those iron clasps, that iron band,
Would not yield to unchristen'd hand,
Till he smear'd the cover o'er
With the Borderer's curdled gore;
A moment then the volume spread,
And one short spell therein he read.
It had much of glamour might,
Could make a ladye seem a knight;
The cobwebs on a dungeon wall,
Seem tapestry in lordly hall;
A nutshell seem a gilded barge,
A sheeling* seem a palace large,
And youth seem age, and age seem youth;—
All was delusion, naught was truth.

X.

He had not read another spell,
When on his cheek a buffet fell,
So fierce, it stretch'd him on the plain,
Beside the wounded Deloraine.
From the ground he rose dismay'd,
And shook his huge and matted head;
One word he mutter'd, and no more—
"Man of age, thou smitest sore!"—
No more the elfin page durst try
Into the wondrous book to pry;
The clasps, though smear'd with Christian gore,
Shut faster than they were before.
He hid it underneath his cloak,—
Now, if you ask who gave the stroke,
I cannot tell, so mot I thrive;
It was not given by man alive.

XI.

Unwillingly himself he address'd,
To do his master's high behest:
He lifted up the living corse,
And laid it on the weary horse;
He led him into Branksome hall,
Before the beards of the warders all;
And each did after swear and say,
There only pass'd a wain of hay.
He took him to Lord David's tower,
E'en to the ladye's secret bower:
And, but that stronger spells were spread,
And the door might not be opened,
He laid him on her very bed.
Whate'er he did of gramarye,*
Was always done maliciously;
He flung the warrior on the ground,
And the blood well'd freshly from the wound.

XII.

As he repass'd the outer court,
He spied the fair young child at sport;
He thought to train him to the wood;
For, at a word, be it understood,
He was always for ill, and never for good.
Seem'd to the boy some comrade gay,
Led him forth to the woods to play;
On the drawbridge the warders stout
Saw a terrier and lurcher passing out.

XIII.

He led the boy o'er bank and fell,
Until they came to a woodland brook;
The running stream dissolved the spell,
And his own elvish shape he took.
Could he have had his pleasure vilde,
He had crippled the joints of the noble child;
Or, with his finger long and lean,
Had strangled him in fiendish spleen:
But his awful mother he had in dread,
And also his power was limited:
So he but scowl'd on the startled child,
And darted through the forest wild;
The woodland brook he bounding cross'd,
And laugh'd, and shouted, "Lost! lost! lost!

XIV.

Full sore amazed at the wondrous change,
And frighten'd, as a child might be,
At the wild yell, and visage strange,
And the dark words of gramarye,

* A shepherd's hut.

* Magic.

The child, amidst the forest bower,
Stood rooted like a lily flower;
And when at length, with trembling pace,
He sought to find where Branksome lay,
He fear'd to see that grisly face
Glare from some thicket on his way.
Thus, starting oft, he journey'd on,
And deeper in the wood is gone,—
For aye the more he sought his way,
The farther still he went astray,
Until he heard the mountains round
Ring to the baying of a hound.

XV.

And hark! and hark! the deep-mouth'd bark
Comes nigher still, and nigher;
Bursts on the path a dark bloodhound,
His tawny muzzle track'd the ground,
And his red eye shot fire.
Soon as the wilder'd child saw he,
He flew at him right furiouslie.
I ween, you would have seen with joy
The bearing of the gallant boy,
When, worthy of his noble sire,
His wet cheek glow'd 'twixt fear and ire!
He faced the bloodhound manfully,
And held his little bat on high;
So fierce he struck, the dog, afraid,
At cautious distance hoarsely bay'd,
But still in act to spring;
When dash'd an archer through the glade,
And when he saw the hound was stay'd,
He drew his tough bowstring:
But a rough voice cried, "Shoot not, boy!
Ho! shoot not, Edward—'tis a boy!"

XVI.

The speaker issued from the wood,
And check'd his fellow's surly mood,
And quell'd the ban-dog's ire;
He was an English yeoman good,
And born in Lancashire.
Well could he hit a fallow deer,
Five hundred feet him fro;
With hand more true, and eye more clear,
No archer bended bow.
His coal-black hair, shorn round and close,
Set off his sunburn'd face;
Old England's sign, Saint George's cross,
His barret-cap did grace;
His bugle-horn hung by his side,
All in a wolf-skin baldric tied:
And his short falchion, sharp and clear,
Had pierced the throat of many a deer.

XVII.

His kirtle, made of forest green,
Reach'd scantly to his knee;
And, at his belt, of arrows keen
A furbish'd sheaf bore he:
His buckler scarce in breadth a span,
No larger fence had he:
He never counted him a man
Would strike below the knee;
His slacken'd bow was in his hand,
And the leash, that was his bloodhound's band.

XVIII.

He would not do the fair child harm,
But held him with his powerful arm,
That he might neither fight nor flee;
For when the red cross spied he,
The boy strove long and violently.
"Now, by Saint George," the archer cries,
"Edward, methinks we have a prize!
This boy's fair face, and courage free,
Show he is come of high decree."

XIX.

"Yes, I am come of high decree,
For I am the heir of bold Buccleuch;
And, if thou dost not set me free,
False southron thou shalt dearly rue!
For Walter of Harden shall come with speed,
And William of Deloraine, good at need,
And every Scott from Esk to tweed;
And, if thou dost not let me go,
Despite thy arrows and thy bow,
I'll have thee hang'd to feed the crow!"

XX.

"Gramercy, for thy good will, fair boy!
My mind was never set so high;
But if thou art chief of such a clan,
And art the son of such a man,
And ever comest to thy command,
Our wardens had need to keep good order:
My bow of yew to a hazel wand,
Thou'lt make them work upon the border.
Meantime be pleased to come with me,
For good Lord Dacre shalt thou see.
I think our work is well begun,
When we have taken thy father's son."

XXI.

Although the child was led away,
In Branksome still he seem'd to stay,
For so the dwarf his part did play;
And, in the shape of that young boy,
He wrought the castle much annoy.
The comrades of the young Buccleuch
He pinch'd, and beat, and overthrew;
Nay, some of them he well nigh slew.
He tore dame Maudlin's silken tire,
And as Sym Hall stood by the fire,
He lighted the match of his bandelier,*
And wofully scorch'd the hackbutteer;†
It may be hardly thought or said,
The mischief that the urchin made,
Till many of the castle guess'd,
That the young baron was possess'd!

XXII.

Well, I ween, the charm he held
The noble ladye had soon dispell'd:
But she was deeply busied then
To tend the wounded Deloraine.
Much she wonder'd to find him lie,
On the stone threshold stretch'd along
She thought some spirit of the sky
Had done the bold mosstrooper wrong:

* *Bandelier*, belt for carrying ammunition.
† *Hackbutteer*, musketeer.

Because, despite her precept dread,
Perchance he in the book had read;
But the broken lance in his bosom stood,
And it was earthly steel and wood.

XXIII.

She drew the splinter from the wound,
And with a charm she stanch'd the blood:
She bade the gash be cleansed and bound;
No longer by his couch she stood;
But she has ta'en the broken lance,
And wash'd it from the clotted gore,
And salved the splinter o'er and o'er.
William of Deloraine, in trance,
Whene'er she turn'd it round and round,
Twisted, as if she gall'd his wound.
Then to her maidens she did say,
That he should be whole man and sound,
Within the course of a night and day.
Full long she toil'd; for she did rue
Mishap to friend so stout and true.

XXIV.

So pass'd the day—the evening fell,
'Twas near the time of curfew bell;
The air was mild, the wind was calm,
The stream was smooth, the dew was balm;
E'en the rude watchman, on the tower,
Enjoy'd and bless'd the lovely hour;
Far more fair Margaret loved and bless'd
The hour of silence and of rest.
On the high turret sitting lone,
She waked at times the lute's soft tone;
Touch'd a wild note, and, all between,
Thought of the bower of hawthorns green.
Her golden hair stream'd free from band,
Her fair cheek rested on her hand,
Her blue eyes sought the west afar,
For lovers love the western star.

XXV.

Is yon the star, o'er Penchryst Pen,
That rises slowly to her ken,
And, spreading broad its wavering light,
Shakes its loose tresses on the right?
Is yon red glare the western star?—
O, 'tis the beacon blaze of war!
Scarce could she draw her tighten'd breath,
For well she knew the fire of death!

XXVI.

The warder view'd it blazing strong,
And blew his war note loud and long,
Till, at the high and haughty sound,
Rock, wood, and river rung around.
The blast alarm'd the festal hall,
And startled forth the warriors all;
Far downward, in the castle-yard,
Full many a torch and cresset glared;
And helms and plumes, confusedly toss'd,
Were in the blaze half seen, half lost;
And spears in wild disorder shook,
Like reeds beside a frozen brook.

XXVII.

The seneschal, whose silver hair
Was redden'd by the torches' glare,
Stood in the midst, with gesture proud,
And issued forth his mandates loud.
"On Penchryst glows a bale of fire,
And three are kindling on Priesthaughswire;
Ride out, ride out,
The foe to scout,
Mount, mount, for Branksome,* every man!
Thou, Todrig, warn the Johnstone clan
That ever are true and stout.
Ye need not send to Liddesdale;
For, when they see the blazing bale,
Elliots and Armstrongs never fail.—
Ride, Alton, ride, for death and life!
And warn the warden of the strife.
Young Gilbert, let our beacon blaze.
Our kin, and clan, and friends to raise."

XXVIII.

Fair Margaret, from the turret head,
Heard far below, the coursers' tread.
While loud the harness rang,
As to their seats, with clamour dread,
The ready horsemen sprang;
And trampling hoofs, and iron coats,
And leaders' voices, mingled notes,
And out! and out!
In hasty route,
The horsemen gallop'd forth;
Dispersing to the south to scout,
And east, and west, and north,
To view their coming enemies,
And warn their vassals and allies.

XXIX.

The ready page, with hurried hand
Awaked the need-fire's† slumbering brand,
And ruddy blush'd the heaven:
For a sheet of flame, from the turret high,
Waved like a blood-flag on the sky,
All flaring and uneven.
And soon a score of fires, I ween,
From height, and hill, and cliff were seen;
Each with warlike tidings fraught;
Each from each the signal caught;
Each after each they glanced to sight,
As stars arise upon the night.
They gleam'd on many a dusky tarn,‡
Haunted by the lonely earn;§
On many a cairn's gray pyramid,
Where urns of mighty chiefs lie hid
Till high Dunedin the blazes saw,
From Soltra and Dumpender law;
And Lothian heard the regent's order,
That all should bowne‖ them for the Border.

XXX.

The livelong night in Branksome rang
The ceaseless sound of steel:
The castle-bell, with backward clang,
Sent forth the larum peel;
Was frequent heard the heavy jar
Where massy stone and iron bar

* *Mount for Branksome* was the gathering word of the Scotts.
† *Need-fire*, beacon.
‡ *Tarn*, a mountain lake.
§ *Earn*, the Scottish eagle
‖ *Bowne*, make ready

Were piled on echoing keep and tower,
To whelm the foe with deadly shower;
Was frequent heard the changing guard,
And watchword from the sleepless ward;
While, wearied by the endless din,
Bloodhound and ban-dog yell'd within.

XXXI.

The noble dame, amid the broil,
Shared the gray seneschal's high toil,
And spoke of danger with a smile;
Cheer'd the young knights, and council sage
Held with the chiefs of riper age.
No tidings of the foe were brought,
Nor of his numbers knew they aught,
Nor in what time the truce he sought.
Some said that there were thousands ten,
And others ween'd that it was naught,
But Leven clans, or Tynedale men,
Who came to gather in black mail,*
And Liddesdale, with small avail,
Might drive them lightly back agen.
So pass'd the anxious night away,
And welcome was the peep of day.

Ceased the high sound—the listening throng
Applaud the master of the song;
And marvel much, in helpless age,
So hard should be his pilgrimage.
Had he no friend, no daughter dear,
His wandering toil to share and cheer;
No son, to be his father's stay,
And guide him on the rugged way?
"Ay, once he had—but he was dead!"—
Upon the harp he stoop'd his head,
And busied himself the strings withal,
To hide the tear that fain would fall.
In solemn measure, soft and slow,
Arose a father's notes of wo.

Canto IV.

I.

Sweet Teviot! on thy silver tide
The glaring bale-fires blaze no more;
No longer steel-clad warriors ride
Along thy wild and willow'd shore:
Where'er thou wind'st, by dale or hill,
All, all is peaceful, all is still,
As if thy waves, since time was born,
Since first they roll'd their way to Tweed,
Had only heard the shepherd's reed,
Nor started at the bugle-horn.

II.

Unlike the tide of human time,
Which, though it change in ceaseless flow,
Retains each grief, retains each crime,
Its earliest course was doom'd to know
And, darker as it downward bears,
Is stain'd with past and present tears.
Low as that tide has ebb'd with me,
It still reflects to memory's eye
The hour my brave, my only boy,
Fell by the side of great Dundee.

Why! when the volleying musket play'd
Against the bloody Highland blade,
Why was I not beside him laid?—
Enough—he died the death of fame;
Enough—he died with conquering Græme!

III.

Now over border, dale, and fell,
Full wide and far was terror spread;
For pathless march and mountain cell,
The peasant left his lowly shed.
The frighten'd flocks and herds were pent
Beneath the peel's rude battlement;
And maids and matrons dropt the tear,
While ready warriors seized the spear.
From Branksome's towers the watchman's eye
Dun wreaths of distant smoke can spy,
Which, curling in the rising sun,
Show'd southern ravage was begun.

IV.

Now loud the heedful gateward cried—
"Prepare ye all for blows and blood!
Wat Tinlinn, from the Liddel-side,
Comes wading through the flood.
Full oft the Tynedale snatchers knock
At his lone gate, and prove the lock;
It was but last Saint Barnabright
They sieged him a whole summer night,
But fled at morning; well they knew,
In vain he never twang'd the yew.
Right sharp has been the evening shower,
That drove him from his Liddel tower;
And, by my faith," the gateward said,
"I think 'twill prove a warden-raid."*

V.

While thus he spoke, the bold yeoman
Enter'd the echoing barbican.
He led a small and shaggy nag,
That through a bog, from hag to hag†
Could bound like any Bilhope stag,
It bore his wife and children twain.
A half-clothed serf‡ was all their train:
His wife, stout, ruddy, and dark-brow'd,
Of silver brooch and bracelet proud,
Laugh'd to her friends among the crowd.
He was of stature passing tall,
But sparely form'd, and lean withal;
A batter'd morion on his brow;
A leathern jack, as fence enow,
On his broad shoulders loosely hung;
A border axe behind was slung;
His spear, six Scottish ells in length,
Seem'd newly died with gore;
His shafts and bow, of wondrous strength,
His hardy partner bore.

VI.

Thus to the ladye did Tinlinn show
The tidings of the English foe.—
"Belted Will Howard is marching here,
And hot lord Dacre, with many a spear,
And all the German hagbut-men,
Who long have lain at Askerten:

* Protection money exacted by freebooters.

* An inroad comanded by the warden in person.
† The broken ground in a bog. ‡ Bondsman

They cross'd the Liddel at curfew hour,
And burn'd my little lonely tower;
The fiend receive their souls therefor!
It had not been burn'd this year and more,
Barn-yard, and dwelling, blazing bright,
Served to guide me on my flight:
But I was chased the livelong night.
Black John of Akeshaw, and Fergus Græme,
Full fast upon my traces came,
Until I turn'd at Priesthaughscrogg,
And shot their horses in the bog,
Slew Fergus with my lance outright—
I had him long at high despite:
He drove my cows last Fastern's night."

VII.

Now, weary scouts from Liddesdale,
Fast hurrying in, confirm'd the tale:
As far as they could judge by ken,
Three hours would bring to Teviot's strand
Three thousand armed Englishmen.
Meanwhile, full many a warlike band,
From Teviot, Aill, and Ettrick shade,
Came in their chief's defence to aid.
There was saddling and mounting in haste,
There was pricking o'er moor and lee;
He that was last at the trysting place
Was but lightly held of his gay ladye.

VIII.

From fair Saint Mary's silver wave,
From dreary Gamescleugh's dusky height,
His ready lances Thirlestane brave
Array'd beneath a banner bright.
The treasured fleur-de-luce he claims
To wreath his shield, since royal James,
Encamp'd by Fala's mossy wave,
The proud distinction grateful gave.
For faith mid feudal jars;
What time save Thirlestane alone,
Would march to southern wars;
And hence in fair remembrance worn
Yon sheaf of spears his crest has borne;
Hence his high motto shines revea 1—
"Ready, aye ready," for the fiel.

IX.

An aged knight, to danger steel'd,
With many a mosstrooper came on:
And azure in a golden field,
The stars and crescent graced his shield,
Without the bend of Murdieston.
Wide lay his hands round Oakwood tower,
And wide round haunted Castle Ower;
High over Borthwick's mountain flood,
His wood-embosom'd mansion stood;
In the dark glen so deep below,
The herds of plunder'd England low,
His bold retainers' daily food,
And bought with danger, blows, and blood.
Marauding chief! his sole delight
The moonlight raid, the morning fight;
Not even the flower of Yarrow's charms
In youth might tame his rage for arms;
And still, in age, he spurn'd at rest,
And still his brows the helmet press'd,
Albeit the blanch'd locks below
Were white as Dinlay's spotless snow:
Five stately warriors drew the sword
Before their father's band;
A braver knight than Harden's lord
Ne'er belted on a brand.

X.

Scotts of Eskdale, a stalwart band,
Came trooping down the Todshawhill;
By the sword they won their land,
And by the sword they hold it still,
Hearken, ladye, to the tale,
How thy sires won fair Eskdale.—
Earl Morton was lord of that valley fair,
The Beattisons were his vassals there.
The earl was gentle and mild of mood,
The vassels were warlike, and fierce, and rude;
High of heart, and haughty of word,
Little they reck'd of a tame liege lord.
The earl to fair Eskdale came,
Homage and seignory to claim:
Of Gilbert the Galliard, a heriot* he sought,
Saying, "Give thy best steed, as a vassel ought
—"Dear to me is my bonny white steed,
Oft has he help'd me at pinch of need;
Lord and earl though thou be, I trow
I can rein Bucksfoot better than thou."
Word on word gave fuel to fire,
Till so highly blazed the Beattisons' ire,
But that the earl to flight had ta'en,
The vassals there their lord had slain.
Sore he plied both whip and spur,
As he urged his steed through Eskdale muir;
And it fell down a dreary weight,
Just on the threshold of Branksome gate.

XI.

The earl was a wrathful man to see,
Full fain avenged would he be.
In haste to Branksome's lord he spoke,
Saying—"Take these traitors to thy yoke:
For a cast of hawks, and a purse of gold;
All Eskdale I'll sell thee, to have and hold:
Beshrew thy heart, of the Beattisons' clan
If thou leavest on Esk a landed man:
But spare Woodkerrick's lands alone,
For he lent me his horse to escape upon."—
A glad man then was Branksome bold,
Down he flung him the purse of gold;
To Eskdale soon he spurr'd amain,
And with him five hundred riders has ta'en.
He left his merryman in the midst of the hill.
And bade them hold them close and still;
And alone he wended to the plain,
To meet with the Galliard and all his train.
To Gilbert the Galliard thus he said:
"Know thou me for thy liege lord and head
Deal not with me as with Morton tame,
For Scots play best at the roughest game.
Give me in peace my heriot due,
Thy bonny white steed, or thou shalt rue.

* The feudal superior, in certain cases, was entitled to the best horse of the vassal, in name of Heriot, or Herezeld.

If my horn I three times wind,
Eskdale shall long have the sound in mind."

XII.

Loudly the Beattison laugh'd in scorn:—
"Little care we for thy winded horn.
Ne'er shall it be the Galliard's lot,
To yield his steed to a haughty Scott.
Wend thou to Branksome back on foot,
With rusty spur and miry boot."—
He blew his bugle so loud and hoarse,
That the dun deer started at far Craikcross;
He blew again so loud and clear,
Through the gray mountain mist there did lances appear;
And the third blast wrung with such a din,
That the echoes answer'd from Pentoun-linn,
And all his riders came lightly in.
Then had you seen a gallant shock,
When saddles were emptied, and lances broke!
For each scornful word the Galliard had said,
A Beattison on the field was laid.
His own good sword the chieftain drew,
And he bore the Galliard through and through;
Where the Beattisons' blood mix'd with the rill,
The Galliard's Haugh, men call it still.
The Scotts have scatter'd the Beattison clan,
In Eskdale they left but one landed man.
The valley of Esk, from the mouth to the source,
Was lost and won for that bonny white horse.

XIII.

Whitslade the Hawk, and Headshaw came,
And warriors more than I may name;
From Yarrow-cleuch to Hindhaug-swair,
From Woodhouselie to Chester-glen,
Troop'd man and horse, and bow and spear;
Their gathering word was Bellenden.
And better hearts o'er Border sod
To siege or rescue never rode.
The ladye mark'd the aids come in,
And high her heart of pride arose:
She bade her youthful son attend,
That he might know his father's friend,
And learn to face his foes.
"The boy is ripe to look on war;
I saw him draw a cross-bow stiff,
And his true arrow struck afar
The raven's nest upon the cliff;
The red cross on a southern breast,
Is broader than the raven's nest: [wield,
Thou, Whitslade, shall teach him his weapon to
And over him hold his father's shield."

XIV.

Well may you think, the wily page
Cared not to face the ladye sage.
He counterfeited childish fear,
And shriek'd, and shed full many a tear,
And moan'd and plain'd in manner wild.
The attendants to the ladye told,
Some fairy, sure, had changed the child,
That wont to be so free and bold.
Then wrathful was the noble dame;
She blush'd blood-red for very shame:—
'Hence! ere the clan his faintness view;
Hence with the weakling to Buccleuch!—
Wat Tinlinn, thou shalt be his guide
To Rangleburn's lonely side—
Sure some fell fiend has cursed our line,
That coward should e'er be son of mine!"

XV.

A heavy task Wat Tinlinn had,
To guide the counterfeited lad,
Soon as the palfrey felt the weight
Of that ill-omen'd elfish freight,
He bolted, sprung, and rear'd amain,
Nor heeded bit, nor curb, nor rein.
It cost Wat Tinlinn mickle toil
To drive him but a Scottish mile;
But, as a shallow brook they cross'd,
The elf, amid the running stream,
His figure changed, like form, in dream,
And fled, and shouted, "Lost! lost! lost!"
Full fast the urchin ran and laugh'd,
But faster still a cloth yard shaft
Whistled from startled Tinlinn's yew,
And pierced his shoulder through and through.
Although the imp might not be slain,
And though the wound soon heal'd again,
Yet, as he ran, he yell'd for pain;
And Wat of Tinlinn, much aghast,
Rode back to Branksome fiery fast.

XVI.

Soon on the hill's steep verge he stood,
That looks o'er Branksome's towers and wood:
And martial murmurs from below,
Proclaim'd the approaching southern foe.
Through the dark wood, in mingled tone,
Were Border pipes and bugles blown:
The coursers's neighing he could ken,
And measured tread of marching men;
While broke at times the solemn hum,
The Almayn's sullen kettle-drum;
And banners tall, of crimson sheen,
Above the copse appear;
And, glistening through the hawthorns green,
Shine helm, and shield, and spear.

XVII.

Light forayers first, to view the ground,
Spurr'd their fleet coursers loosely round;
Behind, in close array and fast,
The Kendal archers, all in green,
Obedient to the bugle blast,
Advancing from the wood were seen.
To back and guard the archer band,
Lord Dacre's bill-men were at hand:
A hardy race, on Irthing bred,
With kirtles white, and crosses red,
Array'd beneath the banners tall,
That stream'd o'er Acre's conquer'd wall.
And minstrels as they march'd in order,
Play'd, "Noble Lord Dacre, he dwells on the Border."

XVIII.

Behind the English bill and bow,
The mercenaries, firm and slow,
Moved on to fight in dark array,
By Conrad led of Wolfenst in.

Who brought the band from distant Rhine,
And sold their blood for foreign pay;
The camp their home, their law the sword,
They knew no country, own'd no lord.
They were not arm'd like England's sons,
But bore the levin-darting guns;
Buff coats, all frounced and 'broider'd o'er,
And morsing-horns* and scarfs they wore;
Each better knee was bared, to aid
The warriors in the escalade:
And, as they march'd in rugged tongue,
Songs of Teutonic feuds they sung.

XIX.

But louder still the clamour gew,
And louder still the minstrels blew,
When, from beneath the greenwood tree,
Rode forth Lord Howard's chivalry;
His men at arms, with glaive and spear,
Brought up the battle's glittering rear.
There many a youthful knight, full keen
To gain his spurs, in arms was seen;
With favour in his crest, or glove,
Memorial of his ladye-love.
So rode they forth in fair array,
Till full their lengthen'd lines display;
Then call'd a halt, and made a stand,
And cried, "Saint George for merry England!"

XX.

Now every English eye, intent,
On Branksome's armed towers was bent:
So near they were, that they might know
The straining harsh of each cross bow;
On battlement and bartizan
Gleam'd axe, and spear, and partizan;
Falcon and culver,† on each tower,
Stood prompt their deadly hail to shower;
And flashing armour frequent broke
From eddying whirls of sable smoke,
Where, upon tower and turret head,
The seathing pitch and molten lead
Reek'd, like a witch's cauldron red.
While yet they gaze, the bridges fall,
The wicket opes, and from the wall
Rides forth the hoary seneschal.

XXI.

Armed he rode, all save the head,
His white beard o'er his breastplate spread;
Unbroke by age, erect his seat,
He ruled his eager courser's gait;
Forced him, with chasten'd fire, to prance,
And, high curvetting, slow advance:
In sign of truce, his better hand
Display'd a peeled willow wand;
His squire, attending in the rear,
Bore high a gauntlet on a spear.
When they espied him riding out,
Lord Howard and Lord Dacre stout
Sped to the front of their array,
To hear what this old knight should say.

XXII.

"Ye English warden lords, of you
Demands the ladye of Buccleuch,
Why, 'gainst the truce of Border tide,
In hostile guise ye dare to ride,
With Kendal bow, and Gilsland brand,
And all yon mercenary band,
Upon the bounds of fair Scotland?
My ladye redes you swithe return;
And, if but one poor straw you burn,
Or do our towers so much molest,
As scare one swallow from her nest,
Saint Mary! but we'll light a brand,
Shall warm your hearths in Cumberland."

XXIII.

A wrathful man was Dacre's lord,
But calmer Howard took the word:
"May't please thy dame, sir seneschal,
To seek the castle's outward wall,
Our pursuivant-at-arms shall show,
Both why we came, and when we go."
The message sped, the noble dame
To the wall's outward circle came;
Each chief around lean'd on his spear
To see the pursuivant appear.
All in Lord Howard's livery dress'd,
The lion argent deck'd his breast;
He led a boy of blooming hue—
O sight to meet a mother's view!
It was the heir of great Buccleuch.
Obeisance meet the herald made,
And thus his master's will he said:

XXIV.

"It irks, high dame, my noble lords,
'Gainst ladye fair to draw their swords;
But yet they may not tamely see,
All through the western wardenry,
Your law-contemning kinsmen ride,
And burn and spoil the Border-side;
And ill beseems your rank and birth
To make your towers a flemen's firth.*
We claim from thee William of Deloraine,
That he may suffer march-treason pain;
It was but last Saint Cuthbert's even
He prick'd to Stapleton on Leven,
Harried† the lands of Richard Musgrave,
And slew his brother by dint of glaive.
Then, since a lone and widow'd dame
These restless riders may not tame,
Either receive within thy towers
Two hundred of my master's powers,
Or straight they sound their warrison;‡
And storm and spoil thy garrison;
And this fair boy, to London led,
Shall good king Edward's page be bred."

XXV.

He ceased:—and loud the boy did cry,—
And stretch'd his little arms on high;
Implored for aid each well-known face,
And strove to seek the dame's embrace.

* Powder flasks.
† Ancient pieces of Artillery.

* An asylum for outlaws. † Plundered.
‡ Note of assault.

A moment changed that ladye's cheer;
Gush'd to her eye the unbidden tear;
She gazed upon the leaders round,
And dark and sad each warrior frown'd;
Then deep within her sobbing breast
She lock'd the struggling sigh to rest;
Unalter'd and collected stood,
And thus replied in dauntless mood:—

XXVI.

"Say to your lords of high emprise,
Who war on women and on boys
That either William of Deloraine
Will cleanse him, by oath, of march-treason stain,
Or else he will the combat take
'Gainst Musgrave, for his honour's sake.
No knight in Cumberland so good,
But William may count with him kin and blood.
Knighthood he took of Douglas' sword,
When English blood swell'd Ancram ford;
And but that Lord Dacre's steed was wight,
And bore him ably in the flight,
Himself had seen him dubb'd a knight.
For the young heir of Branksome's line,
God be his aid, and God be mine;
Through me no friend shall meet his doom;
Here, while I live, no foe finds room.
Then, if thy lords their purpose urge,
Take our defiance loud and high;
Our slogan is their lyke-wake* dirge,
Our moat, the grave where they shall lie."

XXVII.

Proud she look'd round, applause to claim—
Then lighten'd Thirlestane's eye of flame;
His bugle Wat of Harden blew:
Pensils and pennons wide were flung,
To heaven the Border slogan rung,
"Saint Mary for the young Buccleuch!"
The English war-cry answered wide,
And forward bent each southern spear;
Each Kendal archer made a stride,
And drew the bow-string to his ear;
Each minstrel's war-note loud was blown:—
But, ere a gray goose shaft had flown,
A horseman gallop'd from the rear.

XXVIII.

"Ah! noble lords!" he, breathless, said,
"What treason has your march betray'd?
What make you here, from aid so far,
Before you walls, around you war?
Your foemen triumph in the thought,
That in the toils the lion's caught.
Already on dark Ruberslaw
The Douglas holds his weapon-schaw,†
The lances, waving in his train,
Clothe the dun heap like autumn grain;
And on the Liddel's northern strand,
To bar retreat to Cumberland,
Lord Maxwell ranks his merry men good,
Beneath the eagle and the rood;
And Jedwood, Esk, and Teviotdale,
Have to proud Angus come;
And all the Merse and Lauderdale
Have risen with haughty Home
An exile from Northumberland,
In Liddesdale I've wander'd long;
But still my heart was with merry England
And cannot brook my country's wrong;
And hard I've spurr'd all night to show
The mustering of the coming foe."

XXIX.

"And let them come!" fierce Dacre cried;
"For soon yon crest, my father's pride,
That swept the shores of Judah's seas,
And waved in gales of Galilee,
From Branksome's highest towers display'd,
Shall mock the rescue's lingering aid!"—
Level each harquebuss on row;
Draw, merry archers, draw the bow;
Up, bill-men, to the walls, and cry,
Dacre, for England, win or die!"

XXX.

"Yet hear," quoth Howard, "calmly hear,
Nor deem my words the words of fear:
For who, in field or foray slack,
Saw the blanche lion e'er fall back?
But thus to risk our Border flower
In strife against a kingdom's power,
Ten thousand Scots 'gainst thousands three
Certes, were desperate policy.
Nay, take the terms the ladye made,
Ere conscious of the advancing aid;
Let Musgrave meet fierce Deloraine
In single fight, and if he gain,
He gains for us; but if he's cross'd,
'Tis but a single warrior lost:
The rest, retreating as they came,
Avoid defeat, and death, and shame."

XXXI.

Ill could the haughty Dacre brook
His brother-warden's sage rebuke:
And yet his forward step he stay'd,
And slow and sullenly obey'd.
But ne'er again the Border-side
Did these two lords in friendship ride;
And this slight discontent, men say,
Cost blood upon another day.

XXXII.

The pursuivant-at-arms again
Before the castle took his stand;
His trumpet call'd, with parleying strain,
The leaders of the Scottish band;
And he defied, in Musgrave's right,
Stout Deloraine to single fight;
A gauntlet at their feet he laid,
And thus the terms of fight he said:—
"If in the lists good Musgrave's sword
Vanquish the knight of Deloraine,
Your youthful chieftain, Branksome's lord,
Shall hostage for his clan remain:
If Deloraine foil good Musgrave,
The boy his liberty shall have.

* Lyke-wake, the watching a corpse previous to interment.

† *Weapon-schaw*, the military array of a country.

Howe'er it falls, the English band,
Unharming Scots, by Scots unharm'd,
In peaceful march, like men unarm'd,
Shall straight retreat to Cumberland."

XXXIII.

Unconscious of the near relief,
The proffer pleased each Scottish chief,
Though much their ladye sage gainsay'd,
For though their hearts were brave and true,
From Jedwood's recent sack they knew,
How tardy was the regent's aid:
And you may guess the noble dame
Durst not the secret prescience own,
Sprung from the art she might not name,
By which the coming help was known.
Closed was the compact, and agreed,
That lists should be enclosed with speed,
Beneath a castle, on a lawn:
They fix'd the morrow for the strife,
On foot, with Scottish axe and knife,
At the fourth hour from peep of dawn;
When Deloraine, from sickness freed,
Or else a champion in his stead,
Should for himself and chieftain stand,
Against stout Musgrave, hand to hand.

XXXIV.

I know right well, that, in their lay,
Full many minstrels sing and say,
Such combat should be made on horse,
On foaming steed, in full career,
With brand to aid, when as the spear
Should shiver in the course:
But he, the jovial harper, taught
Me, yet a youth, how it was fought,
In guise which now I say;
He knew each ordinance and clause
Of black Lord Archibald's battle laws,
In the old Douglas' day.
He brook'd not, he, that scoffing tongue
Should tax his minstrelsy with wrong,
Or call his song untrue;
For this, when they the goblet plied,
And such rude taunt had chafed his pride,
The bard of Reull he slew.
On Teviot's side, in fight they stood,
And tuneful hands were stain'd with blood;
Where still the thorn's white branches wave
Memorial o'er his rival's grave.

XXXV.

Why should I tell the rigid doom,
That dragg'd my master to his tomb;
How Ousenam's maidens tore their hair,
Wept till their eyes were dead and dim,
And wrung their hands for love of him
Who died at Jedwood Air?
He died!—His scholars, one by one,
To the cold silent grave are gone;
And I, alas! survive alone,
To muse o'er rivalries of yore,
And grieve that I shall hear no more
The strains, with envy heard before;
For, with my minstrel brethren fled,
My jealousy of song is dead.

He paused: the listening dames again
Applaud the hoary minstrel's strain;
With many a word of kindly cheer,—
In pity half, and half sincere,—
Marvell'd the dutchess how so well
His legendary song could tell,—
Of ancient deeds, so long forgot;
Of feuds, whose memory was not;
Of forests, now laid waste and bare;
Of towers, which harbour now the hare;
Of manners, long since changed and gone;
Of chiefs, who under their gray stone
So long had slept, that fickle fame
Had blotted from her rolls their name,
And twined round some new minion's head
The fading wreath for which they bled;
In sooth, 'twas strange, this old man's verse
Could call them from their marble hearse.
The harper smiled, well pleased; for ne'er
Was flattery lost on poet's ear.
A simple race! they waste their toil
For the vain tribute of a smile;
E'en when in age their flame expires,
Her dulcet breath can fan its fires:
Their drooping fancy wakes at praise,
And strives to trim the shortlived blaze.

Smiled then, well pleased, the aged man,
And thus his tale continued ran.

Canto V.

I.

Call it not vain:—they do not err,
Who say, that when the poet dies,
Mute nature mourns her worshipper,
And celebrates his obsequies;
Who say tall cliff, and cavern lone,
For the departed bard make moan;
That mountains weep in crystal rill;
That flowers in tears of balm distil;
Through his loved groves that breezes sigh
And oaks, in deeper groan, reply;
And rivers teach their rushing wave
To murmur dirges round his grave.

II.

Not that, in sooth, o'er mortal urn
Those things inanimate can mourn;
But that the stream, the wood, the gale,
Is vocal with the plaintive wail
Of those, who, else forgotten long,
Lived in the poet's faithful song,
And, with the poet's parting breath,
Whose memory feels a second death.
The maid's pale shade, who wails her lot,
That love, true love, should be forgot,
From rose and hawthorn shakes the tear
Upon the gentle minstrel's bier:
The phantom knight, his glory fled,
Mourns o'er the field he heap'd with dead
Mounts the wild blast that sweeps amain,
And shrieks along the battle-plain:
The chief, whose antique crownlet long
Still sparkled in the feudal song,
Now, from the mountain's misty throne,
Sees, in the thanedom once his own,

His ashes undistinguish'd lie,
His place, his power, his memory die:
His groans the lonely caverns fill,
His tears of rage impel the rill;
All mourn the minstrel's harp unstrung,
Their name unknown, their praise unsung.

III.

Scarcely the hot assault was staid,
The terms of truce were scarcely made,
When they could spy, from Branksome's towers,
The advancing march of martial powers;
Thick clouds of dust afar appear'd,
And trampling steeds were faintly heard;
Bright spears, above the column's dun,
Glanced momentary to the sun;
And feudal banners fair display'd
The bands that moved to Branksome's aid.

IV.

Vails not to tell each hardy clan,
From the fair Middle Marches came;
The Bloody Heart blazed in the van,
Announcing Douglas' dreaded name!
Vails not to tell what steeds did spurn,
Where the Seven Spears of Wedderburne
The men in battle-order set;
And Swinton laid the lance in rest,
That tamed of yore the sparkling crest
Of Clarence's Plantagenet.
Nor lists, I say what hundreds more,
From the rich Merse and Lammermore,
And Tweed's fair borders, to the war,
Beneath the crest of Old Dunbar,
And Hepburn's mingled banners come,
Down the steep mountain glittering far,
And shouting still, "a home! a home!"

V.

Now squire and knight, from Branksome tent,
On many a courteous message went;
To every chief and lord they paid
Meet thanks for prompt and powerful aid;
And told them,—how a truce was made,
And how a day of fight was ta'en
'Twixt Musgrave and stout Deloraine;
And how the ladye pray'd them dear,
That all would stay the fight to see,
And deign, in love and courtesy,
To taste of Branksome cheer.
Nor, while they bade to feast each Scot,
Were England's noble lords forgot;
Himself, the hoary seneschal,
Rode forth, in seemly terms to call
Those gallant foes to Branksome hall.
Accepted Howard, than whom knight
Was never dubb'd more bold in fight;
Nor, when from war and armour free,
More famed for stately courtesy.
But angry Dacre rather chose
In his pavilion to repose.

VI.

Now, noble dame, perchance you ask,
How these two hostile armies met?
Deeming it were no easy task
To keep the truce which here was set;
Where martial spirits, all on fire,
Breathed only blood and mortal ire.
By mutual inroads, mutual blows,
By habit, and by nation, foes,
They met on Teviot's strand:
They met, and sate them mingled down,
Without a threat, without a frown,
As brothers meet in foreign land:
The hands, the spear that lately grasp'd,
Still in the mailed gauntlet clasp'd;
Were interchanged in greeting dear;
Visors were raised, and faces shown,
And many a friend, to friend made known,
Partook of social cheer.
Some drove the jolly bowl about;
With dice and draughts some chased the day;
And some, with many a merry shout,
In riot, revelry, and rout,
Pursued the foot-ball play.

VII.

Yet, be it known, had bugles blown,
Or sign of war been seen,
Those bands, so fair together ranged,
Those hands, so frankly interchanged,
Had died with gore the green.
The merry shout by Teviot side
Had sunk in war-cries wild and wide,
And in the groan of death;
And whingers,* now in friendship bare,
The social meal to part and share,
Had found a bloody sheath.
'Twixt truce and war, such sudden change
Was not infrequent, nor held strange,
In the old Border-day;
But yet on Branksome's towers and town,
In peaceful merriment sunk down
The sun's declining ray.

VIII.

The blithsome signs of wassel gay
Decay'd not with the dying day;
Soon through the latticed windows tall
Of lofty Branksome's lordly hall,
Divided square by shafts of stone,
Huge flakes of ruddy lustre shone;
Nor less the gilded rafters rang
With merry harp and beaker's clang:
And frequent, on the darkening plain,
Loud hollo, whoop, or whistle ran,
As bands, their stragglers to regain,
Give the shrill watchword of their clan;
And revellers o'er their bowls proclaim
Douglas or Dacre's conquering name.

IX.

Less frequent heard, and fainter still,
At length, the various clamours died;
And you might hear, from Branksome hill,
No sound but Teviot's rushing tide;
Save, when the changing sentinel
The challenge of his watch could tell;
And save, where, through the dark profound,
The clanging axe and hammer's sound

* A sort of knife, or poniard.

Rung from the nether lawn;
For many a busy hand toil'd there,
Strong pales to shape, and beams to square,
The lists' dread barriers to prepare
Against the morrow's dawn.

X.

Margaret from hall did soon retreat,
Despite the dame's reproving eye;
Nor mark'd she, as she left her seat,
Full many a stifled sigh:
For many a noble warrior strove
To win the flower of Teviot's love,
And many a bold ally.—
With throbbing head and anxious heart,
All in her lonely bower apart,
In broken sleep she lay;
By times, from silken couch she rose;
While yet the banner'd hosts repose,
She view'd the dawning day:
Of all the hundreds sunk to rest,
First woke the loveliest and the best.

XI.

She gazed upon the inner court,
Which in the tower's tall shadow lay;
Where coursers' clang, and stamp, and snort,
Had rung the livelong yesterday;
Now still as death; till, stalking slow,—
The jingling spurs announced his tread,—
A stately warrior pass'd below;
But when he raised his plumed head—
Blessed Mary! can it be?—
Secure, as if in Ousenam bowers,
He walks through Branksome's hostile towers,
With fearless step and free.
She dared not sign, she dared not speak—
O! if one page's slumbers break,
His blood the price must pay!
Not all the pearls queen Mary wears,
Not Margaret's yet more precious tears,
Shall buy his life a day.

XII.

Yet was his hazard small; for well
You may bethink you of the spell
Of that sly urchin page;
This to his lord he did impart,
And made him seem, by glamour art,
A knight from hermitage.
Unchallenged, thus, the warder's post,
The court, unchallenged, thus he cross'd,
For all the vassalage:
But, O! what magic's quaint disguise
Could blind fair Margaret's azure eyes!
She started from her seat;
While with surprise and fear she strove,
And both could scarcely master love—
Lord Henry's at her feet.

XIII.

Oft have I mused, what purpose bad
That foul malicious urchin had
To bring this meeting round
For happy love's a heavenly sight,
And by a vile malignant sprite
In such no joy is found;
And oft I've deem'd, perchance he thought
Their erring passion might have wrought
Sorrow, and sin, and shame;
And death to Cranstoun's gallant knight,
And to the gentle ladye bright,
Disgrace, and loss of fame.
But earthly spirit could not tell
The heart of them that love so well.
True love's the gift which God has given
To man alone beneath the heaven.
It is not fantasy's hot fire,
Whose wishes, soon as granted, fly;
It liveth not in fierce desire,
With dead desire it doth not die;
It is the secret sympathy,
The silver link, the silken tie,
Which heart to heart, and mind to mind,
In body and in soul can bind.—
Now leave we Margaret and her knight,
To tell you of the approaching fight.

XIV.

Their warning blast the bugles blew,
The pipe's shrill port* aroused each clan;
In haste, the deadly strife to view,
The trooping warriors eager ran:
Thick round the lists their lances stood,
Like blasted pines in Ettrick wood;
To Branksome many a look they threw,
The combatants' approach to view,
And bandied many a word of boast,
About the knight each favour'd most.

XV.

Meantime full anxious was the dame;
For now arose disputed claim,
Of who should fight for Deloraine,
'Twixt Harden and 'twixt Thirlestane:
They 'gan to reckon kin and rent,
And frowning brow on brow was bent;
But yet not long the strife—for, lo!
Himself, the knight of Deloraine,
Strong, as it seem'd, and free from pain,
In armour sheath'd from top to toe,
Appear'd, and craved the combat due.
The dame her charm successful knew,†
And the fierce chiefs their claims withdrew.

XVI.

When for the lists they sought the plain,
The stately ladye's silken rein
Did noble Howard hold;
Unarmed by her side he walk'd,
And much in courteous phrase they talk'd
Of feats of arms of old.
Costly his garb—his Flemish ruff
Fell o'er his doublet, shaped of buff,
With satin slash'd and lined;
Tawny his boot, and gold his spur,
His cloak was all of Poland fur,
His hose with silver twined;
His Bilboa blade, by Marchmen felt,
Hung in a broad and studded belt;

* A martial piece of music, adapted to the bagpipes.
† See p. 609, stanza XXIII.

Hence, in rude phrase, the Borderers still
Call'd noble Howard, belted Will.

XVII.

Behind Lord Howard and the dame,
Fair Margaret on her palfrey came,
Whose foot-cloth swept the ground;
White was her wimple and her veil,
And her loose locks a chaplet pale
Of whitest roses bound.
The lordly Angus, by her side,
In courtesy to cheer her tried;
Without his aid her hand in vain
Had strove to guide her broider'd rein.
He deem'd she shudder'd at the sight
Of warriors met for mortal fight;
But cause of terror, all unguess'd,
Was fluttering in her gentle breast,
When, in their chair of crimson placed,
The dame and she the barriers graced.

XVIII.

Prize of the field, the young Buccleuch,
An English knight led forth to view;
Scarce rued the boy his present plight,
So much he long'd to see the fight.
Within the lists, in knightly pride,
High Home and haughty Dacre ride;
Their leading staffs of steel they wield,
As marshals of the mortal field;
While to each knight their care assign'd
Like vantage of the sun and wind.
Then heralds hoarse did loud proclaim,
In king and queen, and warden's name,
That none, while lasts the strife,
Should dare, by look, or sign, or word,
Aid to a champion to afford,
On peril of his life;
And not a breath the silence broke,
Till thus the alternate heralds spoke:—

XIX.

ENGLISH HERALD.

Here standeth Richard of Musgrave,
Good knight, and true, and freely born,
Amends from Deloraine to crave,
For foul despiteous scathe and scorne
He sayeth, that William of Deloraine
Is traitor false by Border laws;
This with his sword he will maintain,
So help him God, and his good cause!

XX.

SCOTTISH HERALD.

Here standeth William of Deloraine,
Good knight, and true, of noble strain,
Who sayeth, that foul treason's stain,
Since he bore arms, ne'er soil'd his coat;
And that, so help him God above!
He will on Musgrave's body prove,
He lies most foully in his throat.

LORD DACRE.

Forward, brave champions to the fight!
Sound trumpets!——

LORD HOME.

——"God defend the right!"
Then, Teviot! how thine echoes rang,
When bugle sound, and trumpet clang
Let loose the martial foes,
And in 'mid list, with shield poised high,
And measured step, and wary eye,
The combatants did close.

XXI.

Ill would it suit your gentle ear,
Ye lovely listeners, to hear
How to the axe the helms did sound,
And blood pour'd down from many a wound;
For desperate was the strife and long,
And either warrior fierce and strong.
But, were each dame a listening knight,
I well could tell how warriors fight;
For I have seen war's lightning flashing,
Seen the claymore with bayonet clashing,
Seen through red blood the war-horse dashing,
And scorn'd, amid the reeling strife,
To yield a step for death or life.

XXII.

'Tis done, 'tis done! that fatal blow
Has stretch'd him on the bloody plain;
He strives to rise—Brave Musgrave, no:
Thence never shalt thou rise again!
He chokes in blood—some friendly hand
Undo the visor's barred band,
Unfix the gorget's iron clasp,
And give him room for life to gasp!
O, bootless aid!—Haste, holy friar,
Haste, ere the sinner shall expire!
Of all his guilt let him be shriven,
And smooth his path from earth to heaven!

XXIII.

In haste the holy friar sped,—
His naked foot was died with red
As through the lists he ran:
Unmindful of the shouts on high,
That hail'd the conqueror's victory,
He raised the dying man;
Loose waved his silver beard and hair,
As o'er him he kneel'd down in prayer;
And still the crucifix on high
He holds before his darkening eye;
And still he bends an anxious ear,
His faltering penitence to hear;
Still props him from the bloody sod;
Still, even when soul and body part,
Pours ghostly comfort on his heart,
And bids him trust in God!
Unheard he prays;—the death-pang's o'er.
Richard of Musgrave breathes no more.

XXIV.

As if exhausted in the fight,
Or musing o'er the piteous sight,
The silent victor stands:
His beaver did he not unclasp,
Mark'd not the shouts, felt not the grasp
Of gratulating hands.
When, lo! strange cries of wild surprise,
Mingled with seeming terror, rise
Among the Scottish bands;

And all, amid the throng'd array,
In panic haste gave open way
To a half-naked ghastly man,
Who downward from the castle ran:
He cross'd the barriers at a bound,
And wild and haggard look'd around,
As dizzy, and in pain;
And all upon the armed ground,
Knew William of Deloraine!
Each ladye sprung from seat with speed;
Vaulted each marshal from his steed;
"And who art thou," they cried,
'Who hast this battle fought and won?"
His plumed helm was soon undone—
"Cranstoun of Teviotside!
For this fair prize I've fought and won:"—
And to the ladye led her son.

XXV.

Full oft the rescued boy she kiss'd,
And often press'd him to her breast;
For, under all her dauntless show,
Her heart had throbb'd at every blow;
Yet not Lord Cranstoun deign'd she greet,
Though low he kneeled at her feet.
Me list not tell what words were made,
What Douglas, Home, and Howard said—
—For Howard was a generous foe—
And how the clan united pray'd,
The ladye would the feud forego,
And deign to bless the nuptial hour
Of Cranstoun's lord and Teviot's flower.

XXVI.

She look'd to river, look'd to hill,
Thought on the spirit's prophesy,
Then broke her silence stern and still,—
"Not you, but fate, has vanquish'd me;
Their influence kindly stars may shower
On Teviot's tide and Branksome's tower,
For pride is quell'd, and love is free."
She took fair Margaret by the hand,
Who, breathless, trembling, scarce might stand;
That hand to Cranstoun's lord gave she:—
"As I am true to thee and thine,
Do thou be true to me and mine!
This clasp of love our bond shall be,
For this is your betrothing day,
And all these noble lords shall stay,
To grace it with their company.

XXVII.

All as they left the listed plain,
Much of the story she did gain:
How Cranstoun fought with Deloraine,
And of his page, and of the book
Which from the wounded knight he took;
And how he sought her castle high,
That morn by help of gramarye;
How, in Sir William's armour dight,
Stolen by his page, while slept the knight,
He took on him the single fight.
But half his tale he left unsaid,
And linger'd till he join'd the maid.—
Cared not the ladye to betray
Her mystic arts in view of day;
But well she thought, ere midnight came,
Of that strange page the pride to tame,
From his foul hands the book to save,
And send it back to Michael's grave.—
Needs not to tell each tender word
'Twixt Margaret and 'twixt Cranstoun's lord;
Now how she told of former woes,
And how her bosom fell and rose,
While he and Musgrave bandied blows.—
Needs not these lovers' joys to tell;
One day, fair maids, you'll know them well.

XXVIII.

William of Deloraine, some chance
Had waken'd from his deathlike trance;
And taught that, in the listed plain,
Another, in his arms and shield,
Against fierce Musgrave axe did wield,
Under the name of Deloraine.
Hence, to the field, unarm'd, he ran,
And hence his presence scared the clan,
Who held him for some fleeting wraith,*
And not a man of blood and breath.
Not much this new ally he loved,
Yet, when he saw what hap had proved,
He greeted him right heartilie:
He would not waken old debate,
For he was void of rancorous hate,
Though rude, and scant of courtesy.
In raids he spilt but seldom blood,
Unless when men at arms withstood,
Or, as was meet, for deadly feud.
He ne'er bore grudge for stalwart blow,
Ta'en in fair fight from gallant foe:
And so 'twas seen of him, e'en now,
When on dead Musgrave he look'd down;
Grief darken'd on his rugged brow,
Though half disguised with a frown;
And thus, while sorrow bent his head,
His foeman's epitaph he made.

XXIX.

"Now, Richard Musgrave, liest thou here,
I ween, my deadly enemy;
For, if I slew thy brother dear,
Thou slewest a sister's son to me;
And when I lay in dungeon dark,
Of Naworth Castle, long months three,
Till ransom'd for a thousand mark,
Dark Musgrave, it was long of thee.
And, Musgrave, could our fight be tried,
And thou wert now alive, as I,
No mortal man should us divide,
Till one or both of us did die.
Yet rest thee, God! for well I know
I ne'er shall find a nobler foe.
In all the northern counties here,
Whose word is snafle, spur, and spear,†
Thou wert the best to follow gear.
'Twas pleasure, as we look'd behind,
To see how thou the chase couldst wind,

* The spectral apparition of a living person.

† The lands that over Ouse to Berwick forth do bear,
Have for their blazon had, the snafle, spur, and spear
Poly-Albion, song xiii.

Cheer the dark bloodhound on his way,
And with the bugle rouse the fray!
I'd give the lands of Deloraine,
Dark Musgrave were alive again."—

XXX.

So mourn'd he, till Lord Dacre's band
Were bowning back to Cumberland.
They raised brave Musgrave from the field,
And laid him on his bloody shield;
On levell'd lances four and four,
By turns, the noble burden bore.
Before, at times, upon the gale,
Was heard the minstrel's plaintive wail;
Behind, four priests, in sable stole,
Sung requiem for the warrior's soul:
Around, the horsemen slowly rode;
With trailing pikes the spearmen trode;
And thus the gallant knight they bore,
Through Liddesdale, to Leven's shore;
Thence to Holme Coltrame's lofty nave,
And laid him in his father's grave.

The harp's wild notes, though hush'd the song,
The mimic march of death prolong;
Now seems it far, and now anear,
Now meets, and now eludes the ear;
Now seems some mountain side to sweep,
Now faintly dies in valley deep;
Seems now as if the minstrel's wail,
Now the sad requiem loads the gale:
Last, o'er the warrior's closing grave,
Rung the full choir in choral stave.
After due pause, they bade him tell,
Why he who touch'd the harp so well,
Should thus, with ill-rewarded toil,
Wander a poor and thankless soil,
When the more generous southern land
Would well requite his skilful hand.

The aged harper, howsoe'er
His only friend, his harp, was dear,
Liked not to hear it rank'd so high
Above his flowing poesy;
Less liked he still that scornful jeer
Misprized the land he loved so dear;
High was the sound, as thus again
The bard resumed his minstrel strain.

Canto VI.

I.

Breathes there the man, with soul so dead,
Who never to himself hath said,
This is my own, my native land!
Whose heart hath ne'er within him burn'd,
As home his footsteps he hath turn'd,
From wandering on a foreign strand?
If such there breathe, go, mark him well;
For him no minstrel's raptures swell;
High though his titles, proud his name,
Boundless his wealth as wish can claim;
Despite those titles, power, and pelf,
The wretch, concentred all in self,
Living, shall forfeit fair renown,
And, doubly dying, shall go down
To the vile dust, from whence he sprung,
Unwept, unhonour'd, and unsung.

II.

O Caledonia! stern and wild,
Meet nurse for a poetic child!
Land of brown heath and shaggy wood,
Land of the mountain and the flood,
Land of my sires! what mortal hand
Can e'er untie the filial band,
That knits me to thy rugged strand!
Still, as I view each well known scene,
Think what is now, and what hath been,
Seems as, to me, of all bereft,
Sole friends thy woods and streams are left:
And thus I love them better still,
Even in extremity of ill.
By Yarrow's stream still let me stray,
Though none should guide my feeble way;
Still feel the breeze down Ettrick break,
Although it chill my wither'd cheek;
Still lay my head by Teviot's stone,
Though there, forgotten and alone,
The bard may draw his parting groan.

III.

Not scorn'd like me! to Branksome Hall
The minstrels came, at festive call:
Trooping they came, from near and far,
The jovial priests of mirth and war;
Alike for feast and fight prepared,
Battle and banquet both they shared.
Of late, before each martial clan,
They blew their death-note in the van,
But now, for every merry mate,
Rose the portcullis' iron grate;
They sound the pipe, they strike the string,
They dance, they revel, and they sing,
Till the rude turrets shake and ring.

IV.

Me lists not at this tide declare
The splendour of the spousal rite,
How muster'd in the chapel fair
Both maid and matron, squire and knight;
Me lists not tell of owches rare,
Of mantles green, and braided hair,
And kirtles furr'd with miniver;
What plumage waved the altar round,
How spurs, and ringing chainlets sound:
And hard it were for bard to speak
The changeful hue of Margaret's cheek;
That lovely hue which comes and flies
As awe and shame alternate rise.

V.

Some bards have sung, the ladye high
Chapel or altar came not nigh;
Nor durst the rites of spousal grace,
So much she fear'd each holy place.
False slanders these;—I trust right well,
She wrought not by forbidden spell;
For mighty words and signs have power
O'er sprites in planetary hour:
Yet scarce I praise their venturous part,
Who tamper with such dangerous art:

But this for faithful truth I say,
The ladye by the altar stood,
Of sable velvet her array,
And on her head a crimson hood,
With pearls embroider'd and entwined,
Guarded with gold, with ermine lined;
A merlin sat upon her wrist,
Held by a leash of silken twist.

VI.

The spousal rites were ended soon:
'Twas now the merry of noon,
And in the lofty arched hall
Was spread the gorgeous festival.
Steward and squire, with heedful haste,
Marshall'd the rank of every guest;
Pages, with ready blade, were there,
The mighty meal to carve and share:
O'er capon, heron-shew, and crane,
And princely peacock's gilded train,
And o'er the boar-head, garnish'd brave,
And cygnet from St. Mary's wave;
O'er ptarmigan and venison,
The priest had spoke his benison;
Then rose the riot and the din,
Above, beneath, without, within!
For, from the lofty balcony,
Rung trumpet, shalm, and psaltery;
Their changing bowls old warriors quaff'd,
Loudly they spoke, and loudly laugh'd;
Whisper'd young knights, in tone more mild,
To ladies fair, and ladies smiled.
The hooded hawks, high perch'd on beam,
The clamour join'd, with whistling scream,
And flapp'd their wings, and shook their bells,
In concert with the staghounds' yells.
Round go the flasks of ruddy wine,
From Bordeaux, Orleans, or the Rhine,
Their tasks the busy sewers ply,
And all is mirth and revelry.

VII.

The goblin page, omitting still
No opportunity of ill,
Strove now, while blood ran hot and high,
To rouse debate and jealousy;
Till Conrad, Lord of Wolfenstein,
By nature fierce, and warm with wine,
And now in humour highly cross'd,
About some steeds his band had lost,
High words to words succeeding still,
Smote, with his gauntlet, stout Hunthill;
A hot and haughty Rutherford,
Whom men call'd Dickon Draw-the-sword.
He took it on the page's saye,
Hunthill had driven these steeds away.
Then Howard, Home, and Douglas rose,
The kindling discord to compose:
Stern Rutherford right little said,
But bit his glove and shook his head.—
A fortnight thence, in Inglewood,
Stout Conrad, cold, and drench'd in blood,
His bosom gored with many a wound,
Was by a woodman's lyme-dog found;
Unknown the manner of his death,
Gone was his brand, both sword and sheath;
But ever from that time, 'twas said,
That Dickon wore a Cologne blade.

VIII.

The dwarf, who fear'd his master's eye
Might his foul treachery espie,
Now sought the castle buttery,
Where many a yeoman, bold and free,
Revell'd as merrily and well
As those that sat in lordly selle.
Wat Tinlinn, there, did frankly raise
The pledge to Arthur Fire-the-braes;
And he, as by his breeding bound,
To Howard's merrry men sent it round.
To quit them, on the English side,
Red Roland Forster loudly cried,
"A deep carouse to yon fair bride!"
At every pledge, from vat and pail,
Foam'd forth, in floods, the nut-brown ale,
While shout the riders every one,
Such day of mirth ne'er cheer'd their clan,
Since old Buccleuch the name did gain,
When in the cleuch the buck was ta'en.

IX

The wily page, with vengeful thought,
Remember'd him of Tinlinn's yew,
And swore, it should be dearly bought,
That ever he the arrow drew.
First, he the yeoman did molest,
With bitter gibe and taunting jest;
Told how he fled at Solway strife,
And how Hob Armstrong cheer'd his wife:
Then, shunning still his powerful arm,
At unawares he wrought him harm;
From trencher stole his choicest cheer,
Dash'd from his lips his can of beer;
Then, to his knee sly creeping on,
With bodkin piereed him to the bone;
The venom'd wound, and festering joint,
Long after rued that bodkin's point.
The startled yeoman swore and spurn'd,
And board and flagons overturn'd,
Riot and clamour wild began;
Back to the hall the urchin ran;
Took in a darkling nook his post,
And grinn'd, and mutter'd, "Lost! lost! lost!"

X.

By this, the dame, lest farther fray
Should mar the concord of the day,
Had bid the minstrels tune their lay.
And first stept forth old Albert Græme,
The minstrel of that ancient name:
Was none who struck the harp so well,
Within the Land Debateable;
Well friended, too, his hardy kin,
Whoever lost were sure to win;
They sought the beeves, that made their broth,
In Scotland and in England both.
In homely guise, as nature bade,
His simple song the Borderer said.

XI.

ALBERT GRÆME.

It was an English ladye bright,
(The sun shines fair on Carlisle wall,)

And she would marry a Scottish knight,
For love will still be lord of all.

Blithly they saw the rising sun,
When he shone fair on Carlisle wall,
But they were sad ere day was done,
Though love was still the lord of all;

Her sire gave brooch and jewel fine,
Where the sun shines fair on Carlisle wall:
Her brother gave but a flask of wine,
For ire that love was lord of all.

For she had lands, both meadow and lea,
Where the sun shines fair on Carlisle wall,
And he swore her death, ere he would see
A Scottish knight the lord of all!

XII.

That wine she had not tasted well,
(The sun shines fair on Carlisle wall,)
When dead, in her true love's arms, she fell,
For love was still the lord of all.

He pierced her brother to the heart,
Where the sun shines fair on Carlisle wall;
So perish all, would true love part,
That love may still be lord of all.

And then he took the cross divine,
Where the sun shines fair on Carlisle wall,
And he died for her sake in Palestine,
So love was still the lord of all.

Now all ye lovers, that faithful prove,
(The sun shines fair on Carlisle wall,)
Pray for their souls who died for love,
For love shall still be lord of all!

XIII.

As ended Albert's simple lay,
Arose a bard of loftier port;
For sonnet, rhyme, and roundelay,
Renown'd in haughty Henry's court:
There rung thy harp unrivall'd long,
Fitztraver of the silver song!
The gentle Surrey loved his lyre—
Who has not heard of Surrey's fame?
His was the hero's soul of fire,
And his, the bard's immortal name,
And his was love exalted high
By all the glow of chivalry.

XIV.

They sought together, climes afar,
And oft within some olive grove,
When evening came, with twinkling star,
They sung of Surrey's absent love.
His step th' Italian peasant stay'd,
And deem'd, that spirits from on high,
Round where some hermit saint was laid,
Were breathing heavenly melody
So sweet did harp and voice combine,
To praise the name of Geraldine.

XV.

Fitztraver! O what tongue may say
The pangs thy faithful bosom knew,
When Surrey of the deathless lay,
Ungrateful Tudor's sentence slew!
Regardless of the tyrant's frown,
His harp called wrath and vengeance down.
He left, for Naworth's iron towers,
Windsor's green glades, and courtly bowers,
And, faithful to his patron's name,
With Howard still Fitztraver came;
Lord William's foremost favourite he,
And chief of all his minstrelsy.

XVI.

FITZTRAVER.

'Twas All-soul's eve, and Surrey's heart beat high
He heard the midnight bell with anxious start,
Which told the mystic hour, approaching nigh,
When wise Cornelius promised, by his art,
To show to him the ladye of his heart,
Albeit betwixt them roar'd the ocean grim;
Yet so the sage had hight to play his part,
That he should see her form in life and limb,
And mark, if still she loved, and still she though of him.

XVII.

Dark was the vaulted room of gramarye,
To which the wizard led the gallant knight,
Save that before a mirror, huge and high,
A hallow'd taper shed a glimmering light
On mystic implements of magic might;
On cross, and character, and talisman,
And almagest, and altar,—nothing bright
For fitful was the lustre, pale and wan,
As watch-light by the bed of some departing man

XVIII.

But soon, within that mirror huge and high,
Was seen a self-emitted light to gleam;
And forms upon its breast the earl 'gan spy,
Cloudy and indistinct, as feverish dream;
Till, slow arranging, and defined, they seem
To form a lordly and a lofty room,
Part lighted by a lamp with silver beam,
Placed by a couch of Agra's silken loom,
And part by moonshine pale, and part was hid in gloom.

XIX.

Fair all the pageant—but how passing fair
The slender form, which lay on couch of Ind!
O'er her white bosom stray'd her hazel hair,
Pale her dear cheek, as if for love she pined;
All in her night-robe loose she lay reclined,
And, pensive, read from tablet eburnine
Some strain that seem'd her inmost soul to find:—
That favour'd strain was Surrey's rapture. Line,
That fair and lovely form, the Ladye Geraldine.

XX.

Slow roll'd the clouds upon the lovely form,
And swept the goodly vision all away—
So royal envy roll'd the murky storm
O'er my beloved master's glorious day
Thou jealous, ruthless tyrant! Heaven repay
On thee, and on thy children's latest line,
The wild caprice of thy despotic sway,

The gory bridal bed, the plunder'd shrine,
The murder'd Surrey's blood, the tears of Geraldine!

XXI.

Both Scots, and Southern chiefs prolong
Applauses of Fitztraver's song:
These hated Henry's name as death,
And those still held the ancient faith.—
Then, from his seat with lofty air,
Rose Harold, bard of brave St. Clair;
St. Clair, who, feasting high at Home
Had with that lord to battle come.
Harold was born where restless seas
Howl round the storm-swept Orcades;
Where erst St. Clairs held princely sway
O'er isle and islet, strait and bay;—
Still nods their palace to its fall,
Thy pride and sorrow fair Kirkwall!
Thence oft he mark'd fierce Pentland rave,
As if grim Odin rode her wave;
And watch'd, the whilst, with visage pale,
And throbbing heart, the struggling sail;
For all of wonderful and wild
Had rapture for the lonely child.

XXII.

And much of wild and wonderful
In these rude isles mighty Fancy cull;
For thither came, in times afar,
Stern Lochlin's sons of roving war,
The Norseman, train'd to spoil and blood,
Skill'd to prepare the raven's food;
Kings of the main their leaders brave,
Their barks the dragons of the wave.
And there in many a stormy vale,
The scald had told his wondrous tale,
And many a Runic column high
Had witness'd grim idolatry.
And thus had Harold, in his youth,
Learn'd many a saga's rhyme uncouth,—
Of that sea-snake tremendous curl'd,
Whose monstrous circle girds the world:
Of those dread Maids; whose hideous yell
Maddens the battle's bloody swell:
Of chiefs, who, guided through the gloom
By the pale-death like of the tomb,
Ransack'd the graves of warriors old,
Their falchions wrench'd from corpses' hold,
Waked the deaf tomb with war's alarms,
And bade the dead arise to arms!
With war and wonder all on flame,
To Roslin's bowers young Harold came,
Where, by sweet glen and greenwood tree,
He learn'd a milder minstrelsy;
Yet something of the northern spell
Mix'd with the softer numbers well.

XXIII.

HAROLD.

O listen, listen, ladies gay!
No haughty feat of arms I tell;
Soft is the note, and sad the lay,
That mourns the lovely Rosabelle.

"Moor, moor the barge, ye gallant crew:
And, gentle ladye, deign to stay!
Rest thee in castle Ravensheuch,
Nor tempt the stormy firth to-day.

"The blackening wave is edged with white;
To inch* and rock the sea-mews fly;
The fishers have heard the water sprite,
Whose screams forbode that wreck is nigh.

"Last night the gifted seer did view
A wet shroud swathe a ladye gay;
Then stay thee, Fair, in Ravensheuch:
Why cross the gloomy firth to-day?"

"'Tis not because lord Lindesay's heir
To-night at Roslin leads the ball,
But that my ladye-mother there
Sits lonely in her castle hall.

"'Tis not because the ring they ride,
And Lindesay at the ring rides well,
But that my sire the wine will chide,
If 'tis not fill'd by Rosabelle."

O'er Roslin all that dreary night
A wondrous blaze was seen to gleam;
'Twas broader than the watch-fire light,
And redder than the bright moonbeam.

It glared on Roslin's castled rock,
It ruddied all the copse-wood glen:
'Twas seen from Dryden's groves of oak,
And seen from cavern'd Hawthornden.

Seem'd all on fire, that chapel proud,
Where Roslin's chiefs uncoffin'd lie;
Each baron, for a sable shroud,
Sheath'd in his iron panoply.

Seem'd all on fire, within, around,
Deep sacristy and altar's pale:
Shone every pillar foliage bound,
And glimmer'd all the dead men's mail.

Blazed battlement and pinnet high,
Blazed every rose-carved buttress fair—
So still they blaze, when fate is nigh
The lordly line of high St. Clair.

There are twenty of Roslin's barons bold
Lie buried within that proud chapelle:
Each one the holy vault doth hold—
But the sea holds lovely Rosabelle!

And each St. Clair was buried there,
With candle, with book, and with knell;
But the sea-caves rung, and the wild winds sung
The dirge of lovely Rosabelle.

XXIV.

So sweet was Harold's piteous lay,
Scarce mark'd the guests the darken'd hall,
Though, long before the sinking day,
A wondrous shade involved them all;
It was not eddying mist or fog,
Drain'd by the sun from fen or bog;
Of no eclipse had sages told;
And yet, as it came on apace,

* *Inch*, Isle.

Each one could scarce his neighbour's face,
Could scarce his own stretch'd hand behold.
A secret horror check'd the feast,
And chill'd the soul of every guest:
Even the high dame stood half aghast,
She knew some evil on the blast;
The elfish page fell to the ground,
And, shuddering, mutter'd, "Found, found, found!"

XXV

Then sudden through the darken'd air
A flash of lightning came;
So broad, so bright, so red the glare,
The castle seem'd on flame;
Glanced every rafter of the hall,
Glanced every shield upon the wall;
Each trophied beam, each sculptured stone
Were instant seen, and instant gone;
Full through the guests' bedazzled band
Resistless flash'd the levinbrand,
And fill'd the hall with smouldering smoke,
As on the elfish page it broke.
It broke, with thunder long and loud,
Dismay'd the brave, appall'd the proud,
From sea to sea the larum rung;
On Berwick wall, and at Carlisle withal,
To arms the startled warders sprung.
When ended was the dreadful roar,
The elfish dwarf was seen no more!

XXVI.

Some heard a voice in Branksome Hall,
Some saw a sight, not seen by all;
That dreadful voice was heard by some,
Cry, with loud summons, "GYLBIN, COME!"
And on the spot where burst the brand,
Just where the page had flung him down,
Some saw an arm, and some a hand,
And some the waving of a gown.
The guests in silence pray'd and shook,
And terror dimm'd each lofty look.
But none of all the astonish'd train
Was so dismay'd as Deloraine:
His blood did freeze, his brain did burn,
'Twas fear'd his mind would ne'er return;
For he was speechless, ghastly, wan,
Like him of whom the story ran,
Who spoke the spectre-hound in Man.
At length by fits, he darkly told,
With broken hint, and shuddering cold—
That he had seen, right certainly,
A shape with amice wrapp'd around,
With a wrought Spanish baldrick bound,
Like pilgrim from beyond the sea;
And knew—but how it matter'd not—
It was the wizard, Michael Scott!

XXVII.

The anxious crowd, with horror pale,
All trembling, heard the wondrous tale.
No sound was made, no word was spoke,
Till noble Angus silence broke:
And he a solemn sacred plight
Did to St. Bride of Douglas make,
That he a pilgrimage would take,
To Melrose Abbey, for the sake
Of Michael's restless sprite.
Then each, to ease his troubled breast,
To some bless'd saint his prayers address'd;
Some to St. Modan made their vows,
Some to St. Mary of the Lowes,
Some to the holy Rood of Lisle,
Some to our lady of the Isle;
Each did his patron witness make,
That he such pilgrimage would take,
And monks should sing, and bells should toll,
All for the weal of Michael's soul.
While vows were ta'en, and prayers were pray'd,
Tis said the noble dame, dismay'd,
Renounced, for aye, dark magic's aid.

XXVIII.

Nought of the bridal will I tell,
Which after in short space befell;
Nor how brave sons and daughters fair
Bless'd Teviot's flower, and Cranstoun's heir:
After such dreadful scene, 'twere vain,
To wake the note of mirth again.
More meet it were to mark the day
Of penitence and prayer divine,
When pilgrim chiefs, in sad array,
Sought Melrose' holy shrine.

XXIX.

With naked foot, and sackloth vest,
And arms enfolded on his breast,
Did every pilgrim go;
The standers-by might hear uneath,
Footstep, or voice, or highdrawn breath,
Through all the lengthen'd row:
No lordly look, nor martial stride,
Gone was their glory, sunk their pride,
Forgotten their renown;
Silent and slow, like ghosts, they glide
To the high altar's hallow'd side,
And there they knelt them down;
Above the suppliant chieftains wave
The banners of departed brave;
Beneath the letter'd stones were laid
The ashes of their fathers dead;
From many a garnish'd niche around,
Stern saints, and tortured martyrs frown'd.

XXX.

And slow up the dim aisle afar,
With sable shroud and scapular,
And snow-white stoles, in order due,
The holy fathers, two and two,
In long procession came;
Taper, and host, and book they bare,
And holy banner, flourish'd fair
With the Redeemer's name:
Above the prostrate pilgrim band
The mitred abbot stretch'd his hand,
And bless'd them as they kneel'd;

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

THE CASTLE.

With holy cross he sign'd them all,
And pray'd they might be sage in hall,
  And fortunate in field.
The mass was sung, and prayers were said,
And solemn requiem for the dead;
And bells toll'd out their mighty peal
For the departed spirit's weal;
And ever in the office close
The hymn of intercession rose;
And far the echoing aisles prolong
The awful burthen of the song,—
  DIES IRÆ, DIES ILLA,
  SOLVET SÆCLUM IN FAVILLA:
While the pealing organ rung;
  Were it meet with sacred strain
  To close my lay, so light and vain.
Thus the holy fathers sung.

XXXI.

HYMN FOR THE DEAD.

That day of wrath, that dreadful day,
When heaven and earth shall pass away,
What power shall be the sinners stay?
How shall he meet that dreadful day?

When, shrivelling like a parched scroll,
The flaming heavens together roll;
When louder yet, and yet more dread,
Swells the high trump that wakes the dead:

O! on that day, that wrathful day,
When man from judgment wakes from clay,
Be THOU the trembling sinner's stay,
Though heaven and earth shall pass away!

HUSH'D is the harp—the minstrel gone.
And did he wander forth alone,
Alone, in indigence and age,
To linger out his pilgrimage?
No:—close beneath proud Newark's tower
Arose the minstrel's lowly bower:
A simple hut; but there was seen
The little garden hedged with green,
The cheerful hearth, and lattice clean.
There shelter'd wanderers, by the blaze,
Oft heard the tale of other days;
For much he loved to ope his door,
And give the aid he begg'd before.
So pass'd the winter's day; but still,
When summer smiled on sweet Bowhill,
And July's eve, with balmy breath,
Waved the blue bells on Newark heath;
When throstles sun in Hare-head shaw,
And corn was green on Carterhaugh,
And flourish'd, broad, Blackandro's oak,
The aged harper's soul awoke!
Then would he sing achievements high,
And circumstance of chivalry,
Till the rapt traveller would stay,
Forgetful of the closing day;
And noble youths, the strain to hear,
Forsook the hunting of the deer;
And Yarrow, as he roll'd along,
Bore burden to the minstrel's song.

MARMION.

A TALE OF FLODDEN FIELD.

Alas! that Scottish maid should sing
  The combat where her lover fell!
That Scottish bard should wake the string,
  The triumph of our foes to tell.—*Leyden.*

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE HENRY,
LORD MONTAGUE, &c;

THIS ROMANCE IS INSCRIBED, BY THE AUTHOR.

ADVERTISEMENT.

IT is hardly to be expected that an author, whom the public has honoured with some degree of applause, should not be again a trespasser on their kindness. Yet the author of *Marmion* must be supposed to feel some anxiety concerning its success, since he is sensible that he hazards, by this second intrusion, any reputation which his first poem may have procured him. The present story turns upon the private adventures of a fictitious character; but is called a Tale of Flodden Field, because the hero's fate is connected with that memorable defeat, and the causes which led to it. The design of the author was, if possible, to apprise his readers, at the outset, of the date of his story, and to prepare them for the manners of the age in which it is laid. Any historical narrative, far more an attempt at epic composition, exceeds his plan of a romantic tale; yet he may be permitted to hope from the popularity of *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*, that an attempt to paint the manners of the feudal times upon a broader scale, and in the course of a more interesting history, will not be unacceptable to the public.

The poem opens about the commencement of August, and concludes with the defeat of Flodden, 9th September, 1513.

INTRODUCTION TO CANTO I.

TO WILLIAM STEWART ROSE, ESQ.

Ashestiel, Ettrick Forest.

NOVEMBER'S sky is chill and drear,
November's leaf is red and sear;
Late, gazing down the steepy linn,
That hems our little garden in,
Low in its dark and narrow glen,
You scarce the rivulet might ken,
So thick the tangled greenwood grew,
So feeble trill'd the streamlet through:
Now, murmuring hoarse, and frequent seen
Though bush and brier, no longer green,
An angry brook, it sweeps the glade,
Brawls over rock and wild cascade,
And, foaming brown with double speed,
Hurries its waters to the Tweed.
  No longer Autumn's glowing red
Upon our forest hills is shed;
No more, beneath the evening beam,
Fair Tweed reflects their purple gleam;

Away hath pass'd the hether-bell,
That bloom'd so rich on Needpath-fell,
Sallow his brow, and russet bare
Are now the sister-heights of Yare.
The sheep, before the pinching heaven,
To shelter'd dale and down are driven,
Where yet some faded herbage pines,
And yet a watery sunbeam shines;
In meek despondency they eye
The wither'd sward and wintry sky,
And far beneath their summer hill,
Stray sadly by Glenkinnon's rill:
The shepherd shifts his mantle's fold
And wraps him closer from the cold;
His dogs no merry circles wheel,
But, shivering, follow at his heel:
A cowering glance they often cast,
As deeper moans the gathering blast.
My imps, though hardy, bold, and wild
As best befits the mountain child,
Feels the sad influence of the hour,
And wail the daisy's vanish'd flower;
Their summer's gambols tell, and mourn,
And anxious ask,—Will spring return,
And birds and lambs again be gay,
And blossoms clothe the hawthorn spray?
Yes, prattlers, yes. The daisy's flower
Again shall paint your summer bower;
Again the hawthorn shall supply
The garlands you delight to tie;
The lambs upon the lea shall bound,
The wild birds carol to the round,
And while you frolic, light as they,
Too short shall seem the summer day.
To mute and to material things
New life revolving summer brings;
The genial call dead nature hears,
And in her glory reappears.
But O! my country's wintry state
What second spring shall renovate?
What powerful call shall bid arise
The buried warlike and the wise?
The mind, that thought for Britain's weal,
The hand, that grasp'd the victor steel?
The vernal sun new life bestows
E'en on the meanest flower that blows;
But vainly, vainly may he shine,
Where glory weeps o'er Nelson's shrine;
And vainly pierce the solemn gloom
That shrouds, O Pitt, thy hallow'd tomb!
Deep graved in every British heart,
O never let those names depart!
Say to your sons,—Lo, here his grave,
Who victor died on Gadite wave;
To him, as to the burning levin,
Short, bright, resistless course was given,
Where'er his country's foes were found,
Was heard the fated thunder's sound,
Till burst the bolt on yonder shore,
Roll'd, blazed, destroy'd,—and was no more.
Nor mourn ye less his perish'd worth,
Who bade the conqueror go forth,
And launch'd that thunderbolt of war
On Egypt, Hafnia,* Trafalgar;

Who, born to guide such high emprise,
For Britain's weal was early wise;
Alas! to whom the Almighty gave,
For Britain's sins, an early grave;
His worth, who, in his mightiest hour,
A bauble held the pride of power,
Spurn'd at the sordid lust of pelf,
And served his Albion for herself;
Who, when the frantic crowd amain
Strain'd at subjection's bursting rein,
O'er their wild mood full conquest gain'd,
The pride, he would not crush, restrain'd,
Show'd their fierce zeal a worthier cause,
And brought the freeman's arm to aid the freeman's laws.
Hadst thou but lived, though stripp'd of power
A watchman on the lonely tower,
Thy thrilling trump had roused the land,
When fraud or danger were at hand;
By thee, as by the beacon light,
Our pilots had kept course aright;
As some proud column, though alone,
Thy strength had propp'd the tottering throne.
Now is the stately column broke,
The beacon light is quench'd in smoke,
The trumpet's silver sound is still,
The warder silent on the hill!
O, think, how to his latest day,
When death, just hovering, claim'd his prey
With Palinure's unalter'd mood,
Firm at his dangerous post he stood:
Each call for needful rest repell'd,
With dying hand the rudder held,
Till, in his fall, with fateful sway,
The steerage of the helm gave way!
Then, while on Britain's thousand plains
One unpolluted church remains,
Whose peaceful bells ne'er sent around
The bloody tocsin's maddening sound,
But still, upon the hallow'd day,
Convoke the swains to praise and pray;
While faith and civil peace are dear,
Grace this cold marble with a tear,—
He, who preserved them, Pitt, lies here!
Nor yet suppress the generous sigh,
Because his rival slumbers nigh;
Nor be thy *requiescat* dumb,
Lest it be said o'er Fox's tomb.
For talents mourn, untimely lost,
When best employ'd, and wanted most;
Mourn genius high, and lore profound,
And wit that loved to play, not wound;
And all the reasoning powers divine,
To penetrate, resolve, combine;
And feelings keen, and fancy's glow,—
They sleep with him who sleeps below;
And, if thou mourn'st they could not save
From error him who owns this grave,
Be every harsher thought suppress'd,
And sacred be the last long rest.
Here, where the end of earthly things
Lays heroes, patriots, bards, and kings;
Where stiff the hand, and still the tongue,
Of those who fought, and spoke, and sung,
Here, where the fretted aisles prolong
The distant notes of holy song,

* Copenhagen.

As if some angel spoke agen,
All peace on earth, good will to men;
If ever from an English heart,
O *here* let prejudice depart,
And, partial feeling cast aside,
Record, that Fox a Britain died!
When Europe crouch'd to France's yoke,
And Austria bent, and Prussia broke,
And the firm Russian's purpose brave
Was barter'd by a timorous slave,
Even then dishonour's peace he spurn'd,
The sullied olive-branch return'd,
Stood for his country's glory fast,
And nail'd her colours to the mast!
Heaven, to reward his firmness, gave
A portion in this honour'd grave;
And ne'er held marble in its trust
Of two such wondrous men the dust.
With more than mortal powers endow'd,
How high they soar'd above the crowd!
Theirs was no common party race,
Jostling by dark intrigue for place;
Like fabled gods, their mighty war
Shook realms and nations in its jar;
Beneath each banner proud to stand,
Look'd up the noblest of the land,
Till through the British world were known
The names of Pitt and Fox alone.
Spells of such force no wizard grave
E'er framed in dark Thessalian cave,
Though his could drain the ocean dry,
And force the planets from the sky.
These spells are spent, and, spent with these,
The wine of life is on the lees.
Genius, and taste, and talent gone,
Forever tomb'd beneath the stone,
Where—taming thought to human pride!
The mighty chiefs sleep side by side,
Drop upon Fox's grave the tear,
'Twill trickle to his rival's bier;
O'er Pitt's the mournful requiem sound,
And Fox's shall the notes rebound.
The solemn echo seems to cry,—
"Here let their discord with them die;
Speak not for those a separate doom,
Whom fate made brothers in the tomb,
But search the land of living men,
Where wilt thou find their like agen?"
Rest, ardent spirits! till the cries
Of dying nature bids you rise;
Not even your Britain's groans can pierce
The leaden silence of your hearse:
Then, O how impotent and vain
This grateful tributary strain!
Though not unmark'd from northern clime,
Ye heard the Border minstrel's rhyme:
His gothic harp has o'er you rung;
The bard you deign'd to praise, your death has sung.
Stay yet illusion, stay awhile,
My wilder'd fancy still beguile!
From this high theme how can I part,
Ere half unloaded is my heart!
For all the tears e'er sorrow drew,
And all the raptures fancy knew,
And all the keener rush of blood,
That throbs through bard in bardlike mood,
Were here a tribute mean and low,
Though all their mingled streams could flow—
Woe, wonder, and sensation high,
In one springtide of ecstasy!
It will not be—it may not last—
The vision of enchantment's past:
Like frost-work in the morning ray,
The fancied fabric melts away;
Each Gothic arch, memorial stone,
And long, dim, lofty aisle are gone,
And, lingering last, deception dear,
The choirs high sounds die on my ear.
Now slow return the lonely down,
The silent pastures bleak and brown,
The farm begirt with copsewood wild,
The gambols of each frolic child,
Mixing their shrill cries with the tones
Of Tweed's dark waters rushing on.
Prompt on unequal tasks to run,
Thus Nature disciplines her son:
Meeter, she says, for me to stray,
And waste the solitary day,
In plucking from yon fen the reed,
And watch it floating down the Tweed;
Or idly list the shrilling lay
With which the milk-maid cheers her way
Marking its cadence rise and fail,
As from the field, beneath her pail,
She trips it down the uneven dale:
Meeter for me, by yonder cairn,
The ancient shepherd's tale to learn,
Though oft he stop in rustic fear,
Lest his old legends tire the ear
Of one, who, in his simple mind,
May boast of book-learn'd taste refined.
But thou, my friend, canst fitly tell,
(For few have read romance so well,)
How still the legendary lay
O'er poet's bosom holds its sway;
How on the ancient minstrel strain
Time lays his palsied hand in vain;
And how our hearts at doughty deeds,
By warriors wrought in steely weeds.
Still throb for fear and pity's sake;
As when the champion of the lake
Enters Morgana's fated house,
Or in the Chapel perilous,
Despising spells and demons' force,
Hold converse with the unburied corse,
O when, dame Gamore's grace to move,
(Alas! that lawless was their love,)
He sought proud Tarquin in his den,
And freed full sixty knights; or when,
A sinful man, and unconfess'd,
He took the Sangeal's holy quest,
And, slumbering, saw the vision high,
He might not view with waking eye.
The mightiest chiefs of British song
Scorn'd not such legends to prolong:
They gleam through Spencer's elfin dream,
And mix in Milton's heavenly theme;
And Dryden, in immortal strain,
Had raised the Table Round again,

But that a ribald king and court
Bade him toil on, to make them sport;
Demanded for their niggard pay,
Fit for their souls, a looser lay,
Licentious satire, song, and play:
The world defrauded of the high design,
Profaned the God-given strength, and marr'd the lofty line.

Warm'd by such names well may we then,
Though dwindled sons of little men,
Essay to break a feeble lance
In the fair fields of old romance;
Or seek the moated castle's cell
Where long through talisman and spell,
While tyrants ruled, and damsels wept,
Thy genius, chivalry, hath slept:
There sound the harpings of the north,
Till he awake and sally forth,
On venturous quest to prick again,
In all his arms, with all his train,
Shield, lance, and brand, and plume, and scarf,
Fay, giant, dragon, squire, and dwarf,
And wizard, with his wand of might,
And errant maid on palfrey white.
Around the genius weave their spells,
Pure love, who scarce his passion tells;
Mystery, half veil'd and half reveal'd;
And honour, with his spotless shield;
Attention, with fix'd eye; and fear,
That loves the tale he shrinks to hear;
And gentle courtesy; and faith,
Unchanged by sufferings, time, or death;
And valour, lion-melted lord,
Leaning upon his own good sword.

Well has thy fair achievement shown,
A worthy meed may thus be won;
Ytene's* oaks—beneath whose shade,
Their theme the merry minstrels made,
Of Ascapart, and Bevis bold,
And that red king,† who, while of old,
Though Boldrewood the chase he led,
By his loved huntsman's arrow bled—
Ytene's oaks have heard again
Renew'd such legendary strain;
For thou hast sung, how he of Gaul,
That Amadis, so famed in hall,
For Oriana, foil'd in fight
The necromancer's felon might;
And well in modern verse hast wove
Partenopex's mystic love:
Hear then, attentive to my lay,
A knightly tale of Albion's elder day.

Canto I.

THE CASTLE.

I.

Day set on Norham's castled steep,
And Tweed's fair river, broad and deep,
And Cheviot's mountains lone.
The battled towers, the donjon keep,
The loop-hole grates where captives weep,
The flanking walls that round it sweep,
In yellow lustre shone.
The warriors on the turrets high,
Moving athwart the evening sky,
Seem'd forms of giant height:
Their armour, as it caught the rays
Flash'd back again the western blaze,
In lines of dazzling light.

II.

St. George's banner, broad and gay,
Now faded, as the fading ray
Less bright, and less, was flung;
The evening gale had scarce the power
To wave it on the donjon tower,
So heavily it hung.
The scouts had parted on their search,
The castle gates were barr'd;
Above the gloomy portal arch,
Timing his footsteps to a march,
The warder kept his guard;
Low humming as he paced along,
Some ancient border-gathering song.

III.

A distant trampling sound he hears;
He looks abroad, and soon appears,
O'er Horncliff hill, a plump* of spears
Beneath a pennon gay:
A horseman, darting from the crowd,
Like lightning from a summer cloud,
Spurs on his mettled courser proud,
Before the dark array.
Beneath the sable palisade,
That closed the castle barricade,
His bugle horn he blew;
The warder hasted from the wall,
And warn'd the captain in the hall,
For well the blast he knew;
And joyfully that knight did call
To sewer, squire, and seneschal.

IV.

"Now broach ye a pipe of Malvoisie,
Bring pasties of the doe,
And quickly make the entrance free,
And bid my heralds ready be,
And every minstrel sound his glee,
And all our trumpets blow;
And from the platform, spare ye not
To fire a noble salvo-shot;
Lord Marmion waits below!"
Then to the castle's lower ward
Sped forty yeomen tall,
The iron-studded gates unbarr'd,
Raised the portcullis' ponderous guard,
The lofty palisade unsparr'd,
And let the drawbridge fall.

---

* The new forest in Hampshire, anciently so called.
† William Rufus.

* This word properly applies to a flight of water-fowl but is applied, by analogy, to a body of horse.

There is knight of the North Country,
Which leads a lusty *plump* of spears.
Battle of Flodden.

V.

Along the bridge Lord Marmion rode,
Proudly his red-roan charger trod,
His helm hung at the saddle bow;
Well, by his visage, you might know
He was a stalworth knight, and keen,
And had in many a battle been:
The scar on his brown cheek reveal'd
A token true of Bosworth field;
His eyebrow dark, and eye of fire,
Show'd spirit proud, and prompt to ire:
Yet lines of thought upon his cheek
Did deep design and counsel speak.
His forehead, by his casque worn bare,
His thin mustache, and curly hair,
Coal-black, and grizzled here and there,
But more through toil than age;
His square turn'd joints, and strength of limb,
Show'd him no carpet knight so trim,
But, in close fight, a champion grim,
In camps, a leader sage.

VI.

Well was he arm'd from head to heel,
In mail and plate of Milan steel;
But his strong helm, of mighty cost,
Was all with burnish'd gold emboss'd;
Amid the plumage of the crest
A falcon hover'd on her nest,
With wings outspread, and forward breast;
E'en such a falcon, on his shield,
Soar'd sable in an azure field:
The golden legend bore aright,
"*Who checks at me, to death is dight.*"
Blue was the charger's broider'd rein;
Blue ribands deck'd his arching mane;
The knightly housing's ample fold
Was velvet blue, and trapp'd with gold.

VII.

Behind him rode two gallant squires,
Of noble name, and knightly sires;
They burn'd the gilded spurs to claim;
For well could each a war-horse tame,
Could draw the bow, the sword could sway,
And lightly bear the ring away;
Nor less with courteous precepts stored,
Could dance in hall, and carve at board,
And frame love-ditties passing rare,
And sing them to a ladye fair.

VIII.

Four men-at-arms came at their backs,
With halbert, bill, and battle-axe:
They bore Lord Marmion's lance so strong,
And led his sumpter-mules along,
And ambling palfrey, when at need
Him listed ease his battle-steed.
The last, and trustiest of the four,
On high his forky pennon bore;
Like swallow's tail, in shape and hue,
Flutter'd the streamer glossy blue,
Where, blazon'd sable, as before,
The towering falcon seem'd to soar.
Last, twenty yeomen, two and two,
In hosen black, and jerkin blue,
With falcons broider'd on each breast,
Attended on their lord's behest.
Each, chosen for an archer good,
Knew hunting-craft by lake or wood;
Each one a six foot bow could bend,
And far a clothyard shaft could send;
Each held a boar-spear tough and strong,
And at their belts their quivers rung,
Their dusty palfreys, and array,
Show'd they had march'd a weary way.

IX.

'Tis meet that I should tell you now,
How fairly arm'd, and order'd how,
The soldiers of the guard,
With musket, pipe, and morion,
To welcome noble Marmion,
Stood in the castleyard;
Minstrels and trumpeters were there,
The gunner held his linstock yare,
For welcome shot prepared—
Enter'd the train, and such a clang,
As then through all his turrets rang,
Old Norham never heard.

X.

The guards their morrice-pikes advanced,
The trumpets flourish'd brave,
The cannon from the ramparts glanced,
And thundering welcome gave.
A blithe salute, in martial sort,
The minstrels well might sound,
For, as Lord Marmion cross'd the court,
He scatter'd angels round.
"Welcome to Norham, Marmion,
Stout heart, and open hand!
Well dost thou brook thy gallant roan,
Thou flower of English land!"

XI.

Two pursuivants, whom tabards deck,
With silver scutcheon round their neck,
Stood on the steps of stone,
By which you reach the donjon gate,
And there, with herald pomp and state,
They hail'd Lord Marmion:
They hail'd him Lord of Fontenaye,
Of Lutterward and Scrivelbaye,
Of Tamworth tower and town;
And he, their courtesy to requite,
Gave them a chain of twelve marks weight
All as he lighted down.
"Now, largesse;* largesse, Lord Marmion,
Knight of the crest of gold!
A blazon'd shield in battle won,
Ne'er guarded heart so bold."

XII.

They marshall'd him to the castle hall,
Where the guests stood all aside,
And loudly flourish'd the trumpet call,
And the heralds loudly cried,
—"Room, lordings, room, for Lord Marmion,
With the crest and helm of gold!

* The cry by which the heralds express their th
for the bounty of the nobles.

Full well we know the trophies won
In the lists at Cottiswold:
There, vainly Ralph de Wilton strove
'Gainst Marmion's force to stand;
To him he lost his ladye love,
And to the king his land.
Ourselves beheld the listed field,
A sight both sad and fair;
We saw Lord Marmion pierce his shield,
And saw his saddle bare;
We saw the victor win the crest
He wears with worthy pride;
And on the gibbet tree, reversed,
His foeman's scutcheon tied.
Place, nobles, for the Falcon-knight!
Room, room, yé gentles gay,
For him who conquer'd in the right,
Marmion of Fontenaye!"

XIII.

Then stepp'd to meet that noble lord,
Sir Hugh, the Heron bold,
Baron of Twisell, and of Ford,
And captain of the Hold.
He led Lord Marmion to the deas,
Raised o'er the pavement high,
And placed him in the upper place—
They feasted full and high:
The whiles a northern harper rude,
Chanted a rhyme of deadly feud,
"*How the fierce Thirlwalls, and Ridleys all,*
Stout Willimondswick,
And Hard-riding Dick,
And Hughie of Hawden, and Will o' the Wall,
Have set on Sir Albany Featherstonhaugh,
And taken his life at the deadman's shaw."
Scantly Lord Marmion's ear could brook
The harper's barbarous lay;
Yet much he praised the pains he took,
And well those pains did pay;
For ladye's suit and minstrel's strain,
By knight should ne'er be heard in vain.

XIV.

"Now, good Lord Marmion," Heron says,
"Of your fair courtesy,
I pray you bide some little space
In this poor tower with me.
Here may you keep your arms from rust,
May breathe your war-horse well;
Seldom hath pass'd a week, but giust
Or feat of arms befel:
The Scots can rein a mettled steed,
And love to couch a spear;—
St. George! a stirring life they lead,
That have such neighbours near.
Then stay with us a little space,
Our northern wars to learn;
I pray you for your ladye's grace."—
Lord Marmion's brow grew stern.

XV.

The captain mark'd his alter'd look,
And gave a squire the sign;
A mighty wassail bowl he took,
And crown'd it high with wine.
"Now pledge me here, Lord Marmion:
But first, I pray thee fair,
Where hast thou left that page of thine,
That used to serve thy cup of wine,
Whose beauty was so rare?
When last in Raby towers we met,
The boy I closely eyed,
And often mark'd his cheeks were wet
With tears he fain would hide:
His was no rugged horse-boy's hand,
To burnish shield, or sharpen brand,
Or saddle battle steed;
But meeter seem'd for lady fair,
To fan her cheeks, or curl her hair,
Or through embroidery, rich and rare,
The slender silk to lead:
His skin was fair, his ringlets gold,
His bosom—when he sigh'd,
The russet doublet's rugged fold
Could scarce repel its pride!
Say, hast thou given that lovely youth
To serve in ladye's bower?
Or was the gentle page, in sooth,
A gentle paramour's?"

XVI.

Lord Marmion ill could brook such jest;
He roll'd his kindling eye,
With pain his rising wrath suppress'd,
Yet made a calm reply:
"That boy thou thought'st so goodly fair,
He might not brook the northern air.
More of his fate if thou wouldst learn,
I left him sick in Lindisfarn:
Enough of him.—But, Heron, say,
Why does thy lovely lady gay
Disdain to grace the hall to-day?
Or has that dame, so fair and sage,
Gone on some pious pilgrimage."—
He spoke in covert scorn, for fame
Whisper'd light tales of Heron's dame.

XVII.

Unmark'd, at least unreck'd, the taunt
Careless the knight replied,
"No bird whose feathers gayly flaunt,
Delights in cage to bide:
Norham is grim, and grated close,
Hemm'd in by battlement and fosse,
And many a darksome tower;
And better loves my lady bright,
To sit in liberty and light,
In fair queen Margaret's bower.
We hold our greyhound in our hand,
Our falcon on our glove;
But where shall we find leash or band,
For dame that loves to rove?
Let the wild falcon soar her swing
She'll stoop when she has tired her wing."—

XVIII.

"Nay, if with royal James's bride,
The lovely lady Heron bide,
Behold me here a messenger,
Your tender greetings prompt to bear;
For, to the Scottish court address'd,
I journey at our king's behest

And pray you, of your grace, provide
For me, and mine, a trusty guide.
I have not ridden in Scotland since
James back'd the cause of that mock prince,
Warbeck, that Flemish counterfeit,
Who on the gibbet paid the cheat.
Then did I march with Surrey's power
What time we razed old Ayton tower."—

XIX.

"For such like need, my lord, I trow,
Norham can find you guides enow;
For here be some have prick'd as far,
On Scottish ground, as to Dunbar;
Have drunk the monks of St. Bothan's ale,
And driven the beeves of Lauderdale;
Harried the wives of Greenlaw's goods,
And given them light to set their hoods."—

XX.

"Now, in good sooth," Lord Marmion cried,
"Were I in warlike-wise to ride
A better guard I would not lack,
Than your stout forayers at my back;
But, as in form of peace I go,
A friendly messenger, to know,
Why, through all Scotland, near and far,
Their king is mustering troops for war,
The sight of plundering border spears
Might justify suspicious fears,
And deadly feud, or thirst of spoil,
Break out in some unseemly broil:
A herald were my fitting guide;
Or friar, sworn in peace to bide;
Or pardoner, or travelling priest,
Or strolling pilgrim, at the least."

XXI.

The captain mused a little space,
And pass'd his hand across his face.
—"Fain would I find the guide you want,
But ill may spare a pursuivant,
The only men that safe can ride
Mine errands on the Scottish side:
And, though a bishop built this fort,
Few holy brethren here resort;
E'en our good chaplain, as I ween,
Since our last siege, we have not seen;
The mass he might not sing or say,
Upon one stinted meal a day;
So, safe he sat in Durham aisle,
And pray'd for our success the while.
Our Norham vicar, wo betide,
Is all too well in case to ride.
The priest of Shoreswood—he could rein
The wildest warhorse in your train;
But then, no spearman in the hall
Will sooner swear, or stab, or brawl.
Friar John of Tillmouth were the man;
A blithsome brother at the can,
A welcome guest in hall and bower,
He knows each castle, town, and tower,
In which the wine and ale are good,
'Twixt Newcastle and Holy-Rood.
But that good man, as ill befalls,
Hath seldom left our castle walls,
Since, on the vigil of St. Bede,
In evil hour, he cross'd the Tweed,
To teach dame Alison her creed.
Old Bughtrig found him with his wife;
And John, an enemy to strife,
Sans frock and hood, fled for his life.
The jealous churl hath deeply swore,
That, if again he venture o'er,
He shall shrieve penitent no more.
Little he loves such risks, I know;
Yet, in your guard, perchance, will go."—

XXII.

Young Selby, at the fair hall-board,
Carved to his uncle, and that lord,
And reverently took up the word.
"Kind uncle, wo were we each one,
If harm should hap to brother John.
He is a man of mirthful speech,
Can many a game and gambol teach;
Full well at tables can he play,
And sweep, at bowls, the stake away.
None can a lustier carol bawl,
The needfullest among us all,
When time hangs heavy in the hall,
And snow comes thick at Christmas tide,
And we can neither hunt, nor ride
A foray on the Scottish side.
The vow'd revenge of Bughtrig rude,
May end in worse than loss of hood.
Let Friar John, in safety, still
In chimney-corner snore his fill,
Roast hissing crabs, or flagons swill:
Last night to Norham there came one
Will better guide Lord Marmion."
"Nephew," quoth Heron, "by my fay,
Well hast thou spoke; say forth thy say."

XXIII.

"Here is a holy palmer come,
From Salem first, and last from Rome:
One, that hath kiss'd the blessed tomb,
And visited each holy shrine,
In Araby and Palestine;
On hills of Armenie hath been,
Where Noah's ark may yet be seen;
By that Red Sea, too, hath he trod,
Which parted at the prophet's rod;
In Sinai's wilderness he saw
The mount, where Israel heard the law,
Mid thunder-dint, and flashing levin,
And shadows, mists, and darkness, given.
He shows Saint James's cockle shell,
Of fair Montserrat, too, can tell;
And of that grot where olives nod,
Where, darling of each heart and eye,
From all the youth of Sicily,
Saint Rosalie retired to God.

XXIV.

"To stout Saint George of Norwich merry
Saint Thomas, too, of Canterbury,
Cuthbert of Durham, and Saint Bede,
For his sins' pardon hath he pray'd.
He knows the passes of the North,
And seeks far shrines beyond the Forth;

Little he eats, and long will wake,
And drinks but of the streams or lake.
This were a guide o'er moor and dale;
But, when our John hath quaff'd his ale,
As little as the wind that blows,
And warms itself against his nose,
Kens he, or cares, which way he goes."—

XXV.

"Gramercy!" quoth Lord Marmion,
"Full loth were I, that friar John,
That venerable man, for me,
Were placed in fear or jeopardy:
If this same palmer will me lead
From hence to Holy-Rood,
Like his good saint, I'll pay his meed,
Instead of cockle shell or bead,
With angels fair and good.
I love such holy ramblers; still
They know to charm a weary hill,
With song, romance, or lay:
Some jovial tale, or glee, or jest,
Some lying legend, at the least,
They bring to cheer the way."—

XXVI.

"Ah! noble sir," young Selby said,
And finger on his lip he laid,
"This man knows much, perchance, e'en more
Than he could learn by holy lore.
Still to himself he's muttering,
And shrinks, as at some unseen thing.
Last night we listen'd at his cell;
Strange sounds we heard, and, soooth to tell,
He murmur'd on till morn, howe'er,
No living mortal could be near.
Sometimes I thought I heard it plain,
As other voices spoke again.
I cannot tell—I like it not—
Friar John hath told us it is wrote,
No conscience clear and void of wrong,
Can rest awake, and pray so long.
Himself still sleeps before his beads
Have mark'd ten aves, and two creeds."—

XXVII.

"Let pass," quoth Marmion; "by my fay
This man shall guide me on my way,
Although the great arch fiend and he
Had sworn themselves of company;
So please you, gentle youth, to call
This palmer to the castle hall."
The summon'd palmer came in place;
His sable cowl o'erhung his face:
In his black mantle was he clad,
With Peter's keys, in cloth of red,
On his broad shoulders wrought;
The scallop shell his cap did deck;
The crucifix around his neck
Was from Loretto brought;
His sandals were with travel tore,
Staff, budget, bottle, scrip, he wore:
The faded palm branch in his hand,
Show'd pilgrim from the Holy Land.

XXVIII.

When as the palmer came in hall,
Nor lord, nor knight, was there more tall,
Or had a statelier step withal,
Or look'd more high and keen
For no saluting did he wait,
But strode across the hall of state,
And fronted Marmion where he sate,
As he his peer had been.
But his gaunt frame was worn with toil,
His cheek was sunk, alas, the while!
And when he struggled at a smile,
His eye look'd haggard wild:
Poor wretch! the mother that him bare,
If she had been in presence there,
In his wan face, and sunburn'd hair,
She had not known her child.
Danger, long travel, want, or wo,
Soon change the form that best we know—
For deadly fear can time outgo,
And blanch at once the hair;
Hard toil can roughen form and face,
And want can quench the eye's bright grace;
Nor does old age a wrinkle trace,
More deeply than despair.
Happy whom none of these befall,
But this poor palmer knew them all.

XXIX.

Lord Marmion then his boon did ask;
The palmer took on him the task,
So he would march with morning tide,
To Scottish court to be his guide.
—"But I have solemn vows to pay,
And may not linger by the way,
To fair Saint Andrew's bound,
Within the ocean-cave to pray,
Where good Saint Rule his holy lay
From midnight to the dawn of day,
Sung to the billows' sound;
Thence to Saint Fillan's blessed well,
Whose spring can frenzied dreams dispel,
And the crazed brain restore:—
Saint Mary grant, that cave or spring
Could back to peace my bosom bring,
Or bid it throb no more!"

XXX.

And now the midnight draught of sleep,
Where wine and spices richly steep,
In massive bowl of silver deep,
The page presents on knee.
Lord Marmion drank a fair good rest,
The captain pledged his noble guest,
The cup went through among the rest,
Who drain'd it merrily:
Alone the palmer pass'd it by,
Though Selby press'd him courteously.
This was the sign the feast was o'er:
It hush'd the merry wassel-roar,
The minstrels ceased to sound.
Soon in the castle naught was heard,
But the slow footsteps of the guard,
Pacing his sober round.

XXXI.

With early dawn Lord Marmion rose:
And first the chapel doors unclose;
Then, after morning rites were done,
(A hasty mass from friar John,)

And knight, and squire had broke their fast,
On rich substantial repast,
Lord Marmion's bugles blew to horse:
Then came the stirrup cup in course,
Between the baron and his host,
No point of courtesy was lost;
High thanks were by Lord Marmion paid,
Solemn excuse the captain made,
Till, filing from the gate had past
That noble train, their lord the last.
Then loudly rung the trumpet call;
Thunder'd the cannon from the wall,
And shook the Scottish shore;
Around the castle eddied slow,
Volumes of smoke as white as snow,
And hid its turret's hoar;
Till they roll'd forth upon the air,
And met the river breezes there,
Which gave again the prospect fair.

INTRODUCTION TO CANTO II.

TO THE REV. JOHN MARRIOT, M. A.

Ashestiel, Ettrick Forest.

The scenes are desert now, and bare,
Where flourish'd once a forest fair,
When these waste glens with copse were lined,
And peopled with the hart and hind.
Yon thorn—perchance, whose prickly spears
Have fenced him for three hundred years,
While fell around his green compeers—
Yon lonely thorn, would he could tell
The changes of his parent dell,
Since he, so gray and stubborn now,
Waved in each breeze a sapling bough;
Would he could tell how deep the shade,
A thousand mingled branches made;
How broad the shadows of the oak,
How clung the rowan* to the rock,
And through the foliage show'd his head,
With narrow leaves, and berries red;
What pines on every mountain sprung,
O'er every dell what birches hung,
In every breeze what aspens shook,
What alders shaded every brook!
"Here, in my shade," methinks he'd say,
"The mighty stag at noontide lay:
The wolf I've seen, a fiercer game,
(The neighbouring dingle bears his name,)
With lurching step around me prowl,
And stop against the moon to howl;
The mountain-boar, on battle set,
His tusks upon my stem would whet,
While doe and roe, and red-deer good,
Have bounded by through gay greenwood.
Then oft, from Newark's riven tower,
Sallied a Scottish monarch's power:
A thousand vassals muster'd round,
With horse, and hawk, and horn, and hound;
And I might see the youth intent,
Guard every pass with crossbow bent;
And through the brake the rangers stalk,
And falconers hold the ready hawk;
And foresters, in greenwood trim,
Lead in the leash the gazehounds grim,
Attentive, as the bratchet's* bay
From the dark covert drove the prey,
To slip them as he broke away.
The startled quarry bounds amain,
As fast the gallant greyhounds strain:
Whistles the arrow from the bow,
Answers the harquebuss below;
While all the rocking hills reply,
To hoof-clang, hound, and hunters' cry
And bugles ringing lightsomely."—
Of such proud huntings, many tales
Yet linger in our lonely dales,
Up pathless Ettrick, and on Yarrow,
Where erst the Outlaw drew his arrow.
But not more blith that sylvan court,
Than we have been at humbler sport;
Though small our pomp and mean our game,
Our mirth, dear Marriot, was the same,
Rememberest thou my greyhounds true?
O'er holt, or hill, there never flew,
From slip, or leash, there never sprang,
More fleet of foot or sure of fang,
Nor dull, between each merry chase,
Pass'd by the intermitted space;
For we had fair resource in store,
In classic, and in Gothic lore;
We mark'd each memorable scene,
And held poetic talk between;
Nor hill, nor brook, we paced along,
But had its legend or its song.
All silent now—for now are still
Thy bowers untenanted Bowhill!
No longer, from thy mountains dun,
The yeoman bears the well-known gun,
And, while his honest heart grows warm,
At thought of his paternal farm,
Round to his mates a brimmer fills,
And drinks, "The chieftain of the hills!"
No fairy forms, in Yarrow's bowers,
Trip o'er the walks, or tend the flowers,
Fair as the elves whom Janet saw,
By moonlight, dance on Carterhaugh;
No youthful baron's left to grace
The forest-sheriff's lonely chase,
And ape, in manly step and tone,
The majesty of Oberon;
And she is gone, whose lovely face
Is but her least and lowest grace;
Though if to Sylphid queen 'twere given,
To show our earth the charms of heaven,
She could not glide along the air,
With form more light, or face more fair.
No more the widow's deafen'd ear
Grows quick, that lady's step to hear;
At noontide she expects her not,
Nor busies her to trim the cot;
Pensive she turns her humming wheel,
Or pensive cooks her orphan's meal;
Yet blesses, ere she deals their bread,
The gentle hand by which they're fed.
From Yair—which hills so closely bind,
Scarce can the Tweed his passage find,

* Mountain-ash.

* Slow-hound.

Though much he fret, and chafe, and toil,
Till all his eddying currents boil,—
Her long-descended lord is gone,
And left us by the stream alone.
And much I miss those sportive boys,
Companions of my mountain joys,
Just at the age 'twixt boy and youth,
When thought is speech, and speech is truth.
Close to my side with what delight,
They press'd to hear of Wallace wight,
When, pointing to his airy mound,
I call'd his ramparts holy ground!*
Kindled their brows to hear me speak;
And I have smiled, to feel my cheek,
Despite the difference of our years,
Return again the glow of theirs.
Ah! happy boys! such feelings pure,
They will not, cannot long endure;
Condemn'd to stem the world's rude tide,
You may not linger by the side;
For fate shall thrust you from the shore,
And passion ply the sail and oar.
Yet cherish the remembrance still,
Of the lone mountain, and the rill;
For trust, dear boys, the time will come
When fiercer transports shall be dumb,
And you will think, right frequently,
But, well I hope, without a sigh,
On the free hours that we have spent,
Together, on the brown hill's bent.

When, musing on companions gone,
We doubly feel ourselves alone,
Something, my friend, we yet may gain,—
There is a pleasure in this pain:
It soothes the love of lonely rest,
Deep in each gentler heart impress'd.
'Tis silent, amid worldly toils,
And stifled soon by mental broils;
But, in a bosom thus prepared,
Its still small voice is often heard,
Whispering a mingled sentiment,
Twixt resignation and content.
Oft in my mind such thoughts awake,
By lone St. Mary's silent lake:
Thou know'st it well,—nor fen, nor sedge,
Pollute the pure lake's crystal edge;
Abrupt and sheer, the mountains sink
At once upon the level brink;
And just a trace of silver sand
Marks where the water meets the land.
Far in the mirror bright and blue,
Each hill's huge outline you may view;
Shaggy with heath, but lonely bare,
Nor tree, nor bush, nor brake is there,
Save where, of land, yon slender line
Bears thwart the lake the scatter'd pine.
Yet e'en this nakedness has power,
And aids the feeling of the hour;
Nor thicket, dell, nor copse you spy,
Where living thing conceal'd might lie;
Nor point, retiring, hides a dell,
Where swain, or woodman lone, might dwell;
There's nothing left to fancy's guess,
You see that all is loneliness:
And silence aids—though the steep hills
Send to the lake a thousand rills;
In summer tide, so soft they weep,
The sound but lulls the ear asleep;
Your horse's hoof-tread sounds too rude,
So stilly is the solitude.

Naught living meets the eye or ear,
But well I ween the dead are near;
For though, in feudal strife, a foe
Hath laid Our Lady's chapel low,
Yet still beneath the hallow'd soil,
The peasant rests him from his toil,
And, dying, bids his bones be laid,
Where erst his simple fathers pray'd.

If age had tamed the passion's life,
And fate had cut my ties to strife,
Here, have I thought, 'twere sweet to dwell
And rear again the chaplain's cell,
Like that same peaceful hermitage,
Where Milton long'd to spend his age.
'Twere sweet to mark the setting day
On Bourhope's lonely top decay;
And, as it faint and feeble died,
On the broad lake and mountain's side,
To say, "Thus pleasures fade away;
Youth, talents, beauty, thus decay,
And leave us dark, forlorn, and gray!"
Then gaze on Dryhope's ruin'd tower,
And think on Yarrow's faded flower:
And when that mountain-sound I heard
Which bids us be for storm prepared,
The distant rustling of his wings,
As up his force the tempest brings,
'Twere sweet, ere yet his terrors rave
To sit upon the wizard's grave;
That wizard priest's, whose bones are thrust
From company of holy dust;
On which no sunbeams ever shines—
(So superstition's creed divines,)
Thence view the lake with sullen roar,
Heave her broad billows to the shore;
And mark the wild swans mount the gale,
Spread wide through mist their snowy sail,
And ever stoop again, to lave
Their bosoms on the surging wave;
Then, when against the driving hail,
No longer might my plaid avail,
Back to my lonely home retire,
And light my lamp, and trim my fire:
There ponder o'er some mystic lay,
Till the wild tale had all its sway,
And, in the bittern's distant shriek,
I heard unearthly voices speak,
And thought the wizard priest was come,
To claim again his ancient home!
And bade my busy fancy range
To frame him fitting shape and strange,
Till from the task my brow I clear'd,
And smiled to think that I had fear'd.

But chief, 'twere sweet to think such life
(Though but escape from fortune's strife,)
Something most matchless, good, and wise,
A great and grateful sacrifice;

* There is on a high mountainous range above the farm of Ashestiel, a fosse called Wallace's Trench.

And deem each hour to musing given,
A step upon the road to heaven.
Yet him, whose heart is ill at ease
Such peaceful solitudes displease:
He loves to drown his bosom's jar
Amid the elemental war:
And my black palmer's choice had been
Some ruder and more savage scene,
Like that which frowns round dark Lochskene.
There eagles scream from isle to shore;
Down all the rocks the torrents roar;
O'er the black waves incessant driven,
Dark mists infest the summer heaven;
Through the rude barriers of the lake,
Away its hurrying waters break,
Faster and whiter dash and curl,
Till down yon dark abyss they hurl.
Rises the fog-smoke white as snow,
Thunders the viewless stream below,
Diving, as if condemn'd to lave
Some demon's subterranean cave,
Who, prison'd by enchanter's spell,
Shakes the dark rock with groan and yell.
And well that palmer's form and mien
Had suited with the stormy scene,
Just on the edge, straining his ken,
To view the bottom of the den,
Where, deep, deep down, and far within,
Toils with the rocks the roaring linn:
Then, issuing forth one foamy wave,
And wheeling round the Giant's Grave,
White as the snowy charger's tail,
Drives down the pass of Moffatdale.
Marriot, thy harp, on Isis strung,
To many a Border theme has rung:
Then list to me, and thou shalt know
Of this mysterious man of wo.

Canto II.

THE CONVENT.

I.

The breeze, which swept away the smoke
Round Norham Castle roll'd,
When all the loud artillery spoke,
With lightning-flash, and thunder stroke,
As Marmion left the Hold.
It curl'd not Tweed alone, that breeze,
For, far upon Northumbrian seas
It freshly blew, and strong,
Where, from high Whitby's cloister'd pile,
Bound to saint Cuthbert's Holy Isle,
It bore a bark along.
Upon the gale she stopp'd her side,
And bounded o'er the swelling tide,
As she were dancing home;
The merry seamen laugh'd, to see
Their gallant ship so lustily
Furrow the green sea-foam.
Much joy'd they in their honour'd freight;
For, on the deck, in chair of state,
The abbess of Saint Hilda placed,
With five fair nuns, the galley graced.

II.

'Twas sweet to see these holy maids,
Like birds escaped to green wood shades,
Their first flight from the cage,
How timid, and how curious, too,
For all to them was strange and new,
And all the common sights they view,
Their wonderment engage.
One eyed the shrouds and swelling sail,
With many a benedicite;
One at the rippling surge grew pale,
And would for terror pray;
Then shriek'd, because the sea-dog, nigh,
His round black head, and sparkling eye,
Rear'd o'er the foaming spray;
And one would still adjust her veil,
Disorder'd by the summer gale,
Perchance lest some more worldly eye
Her dedicated charms might spy;
Perchance, because such action graced
Her fair turn'd arm and slender waist.
Light was each simple bosom there,
Save two, who ill might pleasure share,—
The abbess, and the novice Clare.

III.

The abbess was of noble blood,
But early took the veil and hood,
Ere upon life she cast a look,
Or knew the world that she forsook.
Fair, too, she was, and kind had been
As she was fair, but ne'er had seen
For her a timid lover sigh,
Now knew the influence of her eye.
Love, to her ear, was but a name,
Combined with vanity and shame;
Her hopes, her fears, her joys, were all
Bounded within the cloister wall:
The deadliest sin her mind could reach,
Was of monastic rule the breach;
And her ambition's highest aim,
To emulate Saint Hilda's fame.
For this she gave her ample dower,
To raise the convent's eastern tower;
For this, with carving rare and quaint,
She deck'd the chapel of the saint;
And gave the relique shrine of cost,
With ivory and gems embost.
The poor her convent's bounty blest,
The pilgrim in its halls found rest.

IV.

Black was her garb, her rigid rule
Reform'd on Benedictine school;
Her check was pale, her form was spare;
Vigils, and penitence austere
Had early quench'd the light of youth,
But gentle was the dame in sooth;
Though, vain of her religious sway,
She loved to see her maids obey,
Yet nothing stern was she in cell,
And the nuns loved their abbess well.
Sad was this voyage to the dame;
Summon'd to Lindisfarn, she came,
There, with Saint Cuthbert's abbot old
And Tynemouth's prioress, to hold

A chapter of Saint Benedict,
For inquisition stern and strict,
On two apostates from the faith,
And, if need were, to doom to death.

V.

Naught say I hereof sister Clare,
Save this, that she was young and fair;
As yet a novice unprofess'd,
Lovely and gentle, but distress'd.
She was betroth'd to one now dead,
Or worse, who had dishonour'd fled.
Her kinsman bade her give her hand
To one, who loved her for her land;
Herself, almost heart-broken now,
Was bent to take the vestal vow,
And shroud, within Saint Hilda's gloom,
Her blasted hopes and wither'd bloom.

VI.

She sate upon the galley's prow,
And seem'd to mark the waves below;
Nay, seem'd to fix her look and eye,
To count them as they glided by.
She saw them not—'twas seeming all—
Far other scene her thoughts recall,
A sun-scorch'd desert, waste and bare,
Nor wave nor breezes, murmur'd there;
There saw she, where some careless hand
O'er a dead corpse had heap'd the sand,
To hide it till the jackalls come,
To tear it from the scanty tomb.—
See what a woful look was given,
As she raised up her eyes to heaven!

VII.

Lovely, and gentle, and distress'd—
These charms might tame the fiercest breast,
Harpers have sung, and poets told,
That he, in fury uncontroll'd,
The shaggy monarch of the wood,
Before a virgin, fair and good,
Hath pacified his savage mood.
But passions in the human frame,
Oft put the lion's rage to shame;
And jealousy, by dark intrigue,
With sordid avarice in league,
Had practised, with her bowl and knife,
Against the mourner's harmless life.
This crime was charged 'gainst those who lay
Prison'd in Cuthbert's islet gray.

VIII.

And now the vessel skirts the strand
Of mountainous Northumberland,
Towns, towers, and halls sucessive rise,
And catch the nuns' delighted eyes.
Monk Wearmouth soon behind them lay,
And Tynemouth's priory and bay;
They mark'd, amid her trees, the hall
Of Lofty Seaton-Delaval;
They saw the Blythe and Wansbeck floods
Rush to the sea through sounding woods;
They past the tower of Widderington,
Mother of many a valiant son;
At Coquet-isle their beads they tell
To the good saint who own'd the cell;
Then did the Alne attention claim,
And Warkworth, proud of Percy's name;
And next they cross'd themselves, to hear
The whitening breakers sound so near,
Where, boiling through the rocks, they roar
On Dunstanborough's cavern'd shore:
Thy tower, proud Bamborough, mark'd they there;
King Ida's castle, huge and square,
From its tall rock look'd grimly down,
And on the swelling ocean frown;
Then from the coast they bore away,
And reach'd the Holy Island's bay.

IX.

The tide did now its flood-mark gain,
And girdled in the saint's domain:
For, with the flow and ebb, the style
Varies from continent to isle;
Dryshod, o'er sands, twice every day,
The pilgrims to the shrine find way;
Twice every day, the waves efface
Of staves and sandall'd feet the trace.
As to the port the galley flew,
Higher and higher rose to view
The castle, with its battled wall,
The ancient monastery's hall,
A solemn, rude, and dark-red pile,
Placed on the margin of the isle.

X.

In Saxon strength that abbey frown'd,
With massive arches broad and round,
That rose alternate, row and row,
On ponderous columns, short and low,
Built ere the art was known,
By pointed aisle, and shafted stalk,
The arcades of an alley'd walk
To emulate in stone.
On the deep walls the heathen Dane
Had pour'd his impious rage in vain;
And needful was such strength to these,
Exposed to the tempestuous seas,
Scourged by the wind's eternal sway,
Open to rovers fierce as they,
Which could twelve hundred years withstand
Winds, waves, and northern pirates' hand.
Not but that portions of that pile,
Rebuilded in a later style,
Show'd where the spoiler's hand had been;
Not but the wasting seabreeze keen
Had worn the pillar's carving quaint,
And moulder'd in his niche the saint,
And rounded, with consuming power,
The pointed angles of each tower:
Yet still entire the abbey stood,
Like veteran, worn, but unsubdued.

XI.

Soon as they near'd his turrets strong,
The maidens raised Saint Hilda's song,
And with the seawave and the wind,
Their voices, sweetly shrill, combined,
And made harmonious close;

Then, answering from the sandy shore,
Half-drown'd amid the breakers' roar,
According chorus rose.
Down to the haven of the Isle,
The monks and nuns in order file,
From Cuthbert's cloisters grim;
Banner, and cross, and reliques there,
To meet Saint Hilda's maids, they bare;
And, as they caught the sounds on air,
They echoed back the hymn.
The islanders, in joyous mood,
Rush'd emulously through the flood,
To hale the bark to land;
Conspicuous by her veil and hood,
Signing the cross the abbess stood,
And bless'd them with her hand.

XII.

Suppose we now the welcome said,
Suppose the convent banquet made;
All through the holy dome,
Through cloister, aisle, and gallery,
Wherever vestal maid might pry,
Nor risk to meet unhallow'd eye,
The stranger sisters roam;
Till fell the evening damp with dew,
And the sharp seabreeze coldly blew,
For there, e'en summer night is chill.
Then, having stray'd and gazed their fill,
They closed around the fire;
And all, in turn, essay'd to paint
The rival merits of their saint,
A theme that ne'er can tire
A holy maid; for, be it known,
That their saint's honour is their own.

XIII.

Then Whitby's nuns exulting told,
How to their house three baron's bold
Must menial service do;
While horns blow out a note of shame,
And monks cry, "Fy upon your name!
In wrath, for loss of sylvan game,
Saint Hilda's priest ye slew."
"This, on Ascension-day, each year,
While labouring on our harbour-pier,
Must Herbert, Bruce, and Percy hear."
They told how, in their convent cell,
A Saxon princess once did dwell,
The lovely Edelfled;
And how, of thousand snakes, each one
Was changed into a coil of stone,
When holy Hilda pray'd.
Themselves, within their holy bound,
Their stony folds had often found.
They told, how seafowls' pinions fail,
As over Whitby's towers they sail,
And, sinking down, with flutterings faint,
They do their homage to the saint.

XIV.

Nor did Saint Cuthbert's daughters fail
To vie with these in holy tale;
His body's resting-place, of old,
How oft their patron changed, they told;
How, when the rude Dane burn'd their pile,
The monks fled forth from Holy Isle;
O'er northern mountain, marsh, and moor,
From sea to sea, from shore to shore,
Seven years Saint Cuthbert's corpse they bore.
They rested them in fair Melrose;
But though, alive, he loved it well,
Not there his relics might repose;
For, wondrous tale to tell!
In his stone coffin forth he rides,
(A ponderous bark for river tides,)
Yet light as gossamer it glides,
Downward to Tillmouth cell.
Nor long was his abiding there,
For southward did the saint repair;
Chester-le Street, and Rippon, saw
His holy corpse, ere Wardilaw
Hail'd him with joy and fear;
And, after many wanderings past,
He chose his lordly seat at last,
Where his cathedral, huge and vast,
Looks down upon the Wear.
There, deep in Durham's Gothic shade,
His relics are in secret laid;
But none may know the place,
Save of his holiest servants three,
Deep sworn to solemn secrecy,
Who share that wondrous grace.

XV.

Who may his miracles declare!
E'en Scotland's dauntless king, and heir
(Although with them they led
Galwegians, wild as ocean's gale,
And London's knights, all sheathed in mail,
And the bold men of Teviotdale,)
Before his standard fled.
'Twas he, to vindicate his reign,
Edged Alfred's falchion on the Dane,
And turn'd the conqueror back again,
When, with his Norman bowyer band,
He came to waste Northumberland.

XVI.

But fain Saint Hilda's nuns would learn,
If, on a rock, by Lindisfarn,
Saint Cuthbert sits, and toils to frame
The seaborn beads that bear his name:
Such tales had Whitby's fishers told,
And said they might his shape behold,
And hear his anvil sound;
A deaden'd clang, a huge dim form,
Seen but, and heard, when gathering storm,
And night were closing round.
But this, as tale of idle fame,
The nuns of Lindisfarn disclaim.

XVII.

While round the fire such legends go,
Far different was the scene of wo,
Where, in a secret aisle beneath,
Council was held of life and death.
It was more dark and lone, that vault,
Than the worst dungeon cell;
Old Colwulf built it, for his fault,
In penitence to dwell,
When he, for cowl and beads, laid down
The Saxon battle-axe and crown.

This den, which, chilling every sense
Of feeling, hearing, sight,
Was call'd the vault of penitence,
Excluding air and light,
Was, by the prelate Sexhelm, made
A place of burial, for such dead
As, having died in mortal sin,
Might not be laid the church within.
'Twas now a place of punishment;
Whence, if so loud a shriek were sent,
As reach'd the upper air,
The hearers bless'd themselves, and said,
The spirits of the sinful dead
Bemoan'd their torments there.

XVIII.

But though, in the monastic pile,
Did of this penitential aisle
Some vague tradition go,
Few only, save the abbot, knew
Where the place lay; and still more few
Were those, who had from him the clew
To that dread vault to go.
Victim and executioner
Were blindfold when transported there.
In low dark rounds the arches hung,
From the rude rock the side walls sprung;
The gravestones rudely sculptured o'er,
Half sunk in earth, by time half wore,
Were all the pavement of the floor;
The mildew drops fell one by one,
With tinkling plash, upon the stone.
A cresset,* in an iron chain,
Which served to light this drear domain,
With damp and darkness seem'd to strive,
As if it scarce might keep alive;
And yet it dimly served to show
The awful conclave met below.

XIX.

There, met to doom in secrecy,
Were placed the heads of convents three;
All servants of Saint Benedict,
The statutes of whose orders strict
On iron table lay;
In long black dress, on seats of stone,
Behind were these three judges shown,
By the pale cresset's ray:
The abbess of Saint Hilda, there,
Sate for a space with visage bare,
Until, to hide her bosom's swell,
And teardrops that for pity fell,
She closely drew her veil:
Yon shrouded figure, as I guess,
By her proud mien and flowing dress
Is Tynemouth's haughty prioress,
And she with awe looks pale:
And he, that ancient man, whose sight
Has long been quench'd by age's night,
Upon whose wrinkled brow alone,
Nor ruth, nor mercy's trace is shown,
Whose look is hard and stern,—
Saint Cuthbert's abbot is his style:
For sanctity call'd through the isle,
The Saint of Lindisfarn.

* Antique chandelier.

XX.

Before them stood a guilty pair;
But, though an equal fate they share,
Yet one alone deserves our care.
Her sex a page's dress belied;
The cloke and doublet, loosely tied,
Obscured her charms, but could not hide.
Her cap down o'er her face she drew;
And, on her doublet-breast,
She tried to hide the badge of blue,
Lord Marmion's falcon crest.
But, at the prioress' command,
A monk undid the silken band,
That tied her tresses fair,
And raised the bonnet from her head,
And down her slender form they spread,
In ringlets rich and rare.
Constance de Beverly they know,
Sister profess'd of Fontevraud,
Whom the church number'd with the dead,
For broken vows, and convent fled.

XXI.

When thus her face was given to view,
(Although so pallid was her hue,
It did a ghastly contrast bear,
To those bright ringlets, glistening fair,)
Her look composed, and steady eye,
Bespoke a matchless constancy.
And there she stood so calm, and pale,
That, but her breathing did not fail,
A motion slight of eye and head,
And of her bosom, warranted,
That neither sense nor pulse she lacks,
You might have thought a form of wax,
Wrought to the very life, was there:
So still she was, so pale, so fair.

XXII.

Her comrade was a sordid soul,
Such as does murder for a meed;
Who, but of fear, knows no control,
Because his conscience, sear'd and foul,
Feels not the import of his deed;
One, whose brute-feeling ne'er aspires
Beyond his own more brute desires.
Such tools the tempter ever needs,
To do the savagest of deeds;
For them, no vision'd terrors daunt,
Their nights no fancied spectres haunt;
One fear with them, of all most base,
The fear of death,—alone finds place.
This wretch was clad in frock and cowl,
And shamed not loud to moan and howl,
His body on the floor to dash,
And crouch, like hound beneath the lash;
While his mute partner, standing near,
Waited her doom without a tear.

XXIII.

Yet well the luckless wretch might shriek,
Well might her paleness terrors speak,
For there were seen, in that dark wall,
Two niches, narrow, deep, and tall;—
Who enters at each grisly door,
Shall ne'er, I ween, find exit more.

In each a slender meal was laid,
Of roots, of water, and of bread:
By each, in Benedictine dress,
Two haggard monks stood motionless;
Who, holding high a blazing torch,
Show'd the grim entrance of the porch;
Reflecting back the smoky beam,
The dark-red walls and arches gleam.
Hewn stones and cement were display'd,
And building tools in order laid.

XXIV.

These executioners were chose,
As men who were with mankind foes.
And, with despite and envy fired,
Into the cloister had retired;
Or who, in desperate doubt of grace,
Strove by deep penance to efface
Of some foul crime the stain;
For, as the vassals of her will,
Such men the church selected still,
As either joy'd in doing ill,
Or thought more grace to gain,
If, in her cause, they wrestled down
Feelings their nature strove to own.
By strange device were they brought there,
They knew not how, and knew not where.

XXV.

And now that blind old abbot rose,
To speak the chapter's doom,
On those the wall was to enclose,
Alive, within the tomb;
But stopp'd because that woful maid,
Gathering her powers, to speak essay'd.
Twice she essay'd, and twice, in vain;
Her accents might no utterance gain;
Naught but imperfect murmurs slip
From her convulsed and quivering lip:
'Twixt each attempt all was so still,
You seem'd to hear a distant rill—
'Twas ocean's swells and falls;
For though this vault of sin and fear
Was to the sounding surge so near,
A tempest there you scarce could hear;
So massive were the walls.

XXVI.

At length, an effort sent apart
The blood that curdled to her heart,
And light came to her eye;
And colour dawn'd upon her cheek,
A hectic and a flutter'd streak,
Like that left on the Cheviot peak,
By autumn's stormy sky;
And when her silence broke at length,
Still as she spoke she gather'd strength,
And arm'd herself to bear;
It was a fearful sight to see
Such high resolve and constancy,
In form so soft and fair.

XXVII.

"I speak not to implore your grace;
Well know I, for one minute's space
Successless might I sue:
Nor do I speak your prayers to gain;
For if a death of lingering pain,
To cleanse my sins, be penance vain,
Vain are your masses, too.—
I listen'd to a traitor's tale,
I left the convent and the veil,
For three long years I bow'd my pride,
A horse-boy in his train to ride;
And well my folly's meed he gave,
Who forfeited, to be his slave,
All here, and all beyond the grave.—
He saw young Clara's face more fair,
He knew her of broad lands the heir,
Forgot his vows, his faith forswore,
And Constance was beloved no more.
'Tis an old tale, and often told;
But, did my fate and wish agree,
Ne'er had been read, in story old,
Of maiden true betray'd for gold,
That loved, or was avenged, like me!

XXVIII.

"The king approved his favourite's aim;
In vain a rival barr'd his claim,
Whose faith with Clare's was plight,
For he attaints that rival's fame
With treason's charge—and on they came,
In mortal lists to fight.
Their oaths are said,
Their prayers are pray'd,
Their lances in the rest are laid,
They meet in mortal shock;
And hark! the throng, with thundering cry
Shout 'Marmion, Marmion, to the sky!
De Wilton to the block!'
Say ye, who preach Heaven shall decide,
When in the lists two champions ride,
Say, was Heaven's justice here?
When, loyal in his love and faith,
Wilton found overthrow or death,
Beneath a traitor's spear.
How false the charge, how true he fell,
This guilty packet best can tell."—
Then drew a packet from her breast,
Paused, gather'd voice, and spoke the rest.

XXIX.

"Still was false Marmion's bridal staid:
To Whitby's convent fled the maid,
The hated match to shun.
'Ho! shifts she thus?' King Henry cried,
'Sir Marmion, she shall be thy bride,
If she were sworn a nun.'
One way remain'd—the king's command
Sent Marmion to the Scottish land:
I linger'd here a rescue plann'd
For Clara and for me:
This caitiff monk, for gold, did swear,
He would to Whitby's shrine repair,
And, by his drugs, my rival fair
A saint in heaven should be.
But ill the dastard kept his oath,
Whose cowardice has undone us both.

XXX.

"And now my tongue the secret tells,
Now that remorse my bosom swells,

But to assure my soul, that none
Shall ever wed with Marmion.
Had fortune my last hope betray'd,
This packet to the king convey'd,
Had given him to the headsman's stroke,
Although my heart that instant broke.—
Now, men of death, work forth your will,
For I can suffer, and be still;
And, come he slow, or come he fast,
It is but Death who comes at last.

XXXI.

"Yet dread me, from my living tomb,
Ye vassal slaves of bloody Rome!
If Marmion's late remorse should wake,
Full soon such vengeance will he take,
That you shall wish the fiery Dane
Had rather been your guest again.
Behind, a darker hour ascends!
The altars quake, the crosier bends,
The ire of a despotic king
Rides forth upon destruction's wing.
Then shall these vaults, so strong and deep,
Burst open to the sea-wind's sweep;
Some traveller then shall find my bones,
Whitening amid disjointed stones,
And, ignorant of priests' cruelty,
Marvel such relics here should be."

XXXII.

Fix'd was her look, and stern her air;
Back from her shoulders stream'd her hair;
The locks, that wont her brow to shade,
Stared up erectly from her head;
Her figure seem'd to rise more high;
Her voice, despair's wild energy
Had given a tone of prophecy.
Appall'd the astonish'd conclave sate;
With stupid eyes, the men of fate
Gazed on the late inspired form,
And listen'd for the avenging storm;
The judges felt the victim's dread;
No hand was moved, no word was said,
Till thus the abbot's doom was given,
Raising his sightless balls to heaven:—
"Sister let thy sorrows cease;
Sinful brother, part in peace!"
From that dire dungeon, place of doom
Of execution, too, and tomb,
Paced forth the judges three;
Sorrow it were, and shame, to tell
The butcher-work that there befel,
When they had glided from the cell
Of sin and misery.

XXXIII.

A hundred winding steps convey
That conclave to the upper day;
But, ere they breathed the fresher air,
They heard the shriekings of despair,
And many a stifled groan:
With speed their upward way they take,
(Such speed as age and fear can make,)
And cross'd themselves for terror's sake,
As hurrying, tottering on;
E'en in the vesper's heavenly tone
They seem'd to hear a dying groan,
And bade the passing knell to toll
For welfare of a parting soul.
Slow o'er the midnight wave it swung,
Northumbrian rocks in answer rung;
To Warkworth cell the echoes roll'd,
His beads the wakeful hermit told;
The Bamborough peasant raised his head,
But slept ere half his prayer he said;
So far was heard the mighty knell,
The stag sprung up on Cheviot Fell,
Spread his broad nostrils to the wind,
Listed before, aside, behind,
Then couch'd him down beside the hind,
And quaked among the mountain fern,
To hear that sound so dull and stern.

INTRODUCTION TO CANTO III.

TO WILLIAM ERSKINE, ESQ.

Ashestiel, Ettrick Forest

Like April morning clouds, that pass,
With varying shadow, o'er the grass,
And imitate, on field and furrow,
Life checker'd scene of joy and sorrow;
Like streamlet of the mountain north,
Now in a torrent racing forth,
Now winding slow its silver train,
And almost slumbering on the plain;
Like breezes of the autumn day,
Whose voice inconstant dies away,
And ever swells again as fast,
When the ear deems its murmur past;
Thus various, my romantic theme
Flits, winds, or sinks, a morning dream.
Yet pleased, our eye pursues the trace
Of light and shade's inconstant race;
Pleased, views the rivulet afar,
Weaving its maze irregular;
And pleased, we listen as the breeze
Heaved its wild sigh through autumn trees;
Then wild as cloud, or stream, or gale,
Flow on, flow unconfined, my tale.
Need I to thee, dear Erskine, tell,
I love the license all too well,
In sounds now lowly, and now strong,
To raise the desultory song?—
Oft, when 'mid such capricious chime,
Some transient fit of lofty rhyme,
To thy kind judgment seem'd excuse
For many an error of the muse;
Oft hast thou said, "If, still mis-spent,
Thine hours to poetry are lent:
Go, and, to tame thy wandering course,
Quaff from the fountain at the source;
Approach those masters, o'er whose tomb,
Immortal laurels ever bloom:
Instructive of the feebler bard,
Still from the grave their voice is heard;
From them, and from the path they show'd
Choose honour'd guide and practised road;
Nor ramble on through brake and maze,
With harpers rude of barbarous day.
"Or, deem'st thou not our later time,
Yields topic meet for classic rhyme?

Hast thou no elegiac verse
For Brunswick's venerable hearse?
What! not a line, a tear, a sigh,
When valour bleeds for liberty!
O, hero of that glorious time,
When, with unrivall'd light sublime,—
Though martial Austria, and though all
The might of Russia, and the Gaul,
Though banded Europe stood her foes—
The star of Brandenburgh arose!
Thou couldst not live to see her beam
Forever quench'd in Jena's stream.
Lamented chief!—It was not given,
To thee to change the doom of heaven,
And crush that dragon in its birth,
Predestined scourge of guilty earth.
Lamented chief!—not thine the power,
To save in that presumptuous hour,
When Prussia hurried to the field,
And snatch'd the spear, but left the shield!
Valour and skill 'twas thine to try,
And, tried in vain, 'twas thine to die.
Ill had it seem'd thy silver hair
The last, the bitterest pang to share,
For princedoms reft, and scutcheons riven,
And birthrights to usurpers given;
Thy lands, thy children's wrongs to feel,
And witness woes thou couldst not heal!
On thee relenting heaven bestows
For honour'd life an honour'd close;
And when revolves, in time's sure change,
The hour of Germany's revenge,
When, breathing fury for her sake,
Some new Arminius shall awake.
Her champion, ere he strike, shall come
To whet his sword on Brunswick's tomb.
"Or of the Red-Cross hero teach,
Dauntless in dungeon as on breach:
Alike to him the sea, the shore,
The brand, the bridal, or the oar;
Alike to him the war that calls
Its votaries to the shatter'd walls
Which the grim Turks besmear'd with blood,
Against the invincible made good;
Or that, whose thundering voice could wake
The silence of the polar lake,
When stubborn Russ, and metall'd Swede,
On the warp'd wave their death-game play'd;
Or that, where vengeance and affright
Howl'd round the father of the fight,
Who snatch'd, on Alexander's sand,
The conqueror's wreath with dying hand.
"Or, if to touch such chord be thine,
Restore the ancient tragic line,
And emulate the notes that rung
From the wild harp, which silent hung,
By silver Avon's holy shore,
Till twice an hundred years roll'd o'er;
When she, the bold enchantress, came,
With fearless hand and heart on flame!
From the pale willow snatch'd the treasure,
And swept it with a kindred measure;
Till Avon's swans, while rung the grove
With Montfort's hate and Basil's love,
Awakening at th' inspired strain,
Deem'd their own Shakspeare lived again."

Thy friendship thus thy judgment wronging,
With praises not to me belonging,
In task more meet for mightiest powers,
Wouldst thou engage my thriftless hours.
But say, my Erskine, hast thou weigh'd
That secret power by all obey'd,
Which warps not less the passive mind,
Its source conceal'd or undefined;
Whether an impulse, that has birth
Soon as the infant wakes on earth,
One with our feelings and our powers,
And rather part of us than ours;
Or whether fitlier term'd the sway
Of habit, form'd in early day?
Howe'er derived, its force confess'd
Rules with despotic sway the breast,
And drags us on by viewless chain,
While taste and reason plead in vain.
Look east, and ask the Belgian why,
Beneath Batavia's sultry sky,
He seeks not, eager to inhale,
The freshness of the mountain gale
Content to rear his whiten'd wall
Beside the dank and dull canal?
He'll say, from youth he loved to see
The white sail gliding by the tree.
Or see yon weather-beaten hind,
Whose sluggish herds before him wind,
Whose tatter'd plaid and rugged cheek
His northern clime and kindred speak;
Through England's laughing meads he goes,
And England's wealth around him flows;
Ask, if it would content him well,
At ease in these gay plains to dwell,
Where hedge-rows spread a verdant screen,
And spires and forests intervene,
And the neat cottage peeps between?
No, not for these will he exchange
His dark Lochaber's boundless range;
Nor for fair Devon's meads forsake
Bennevis gray and Garry's lake.
Thus, while I ape the measure wild
Of tales that charm'd me yet a child,
Rude though they be, still with the chime,
Return the thoughts of early time;
And feelings, roused in life's first day,
Glow in the line, and prompt the lay.
Then rise those crags, that mountain tower,
Which charm'd my fancy's wakening hour.
Though no broad river swept along
To claim, perchance, heroic song;
Though sigh'd no groves in summer gale,
To prompt of love a softer tale;
Though scarce a puny streamlet's speed
Claim'd homage from a shepherd's reed;
Yet was poetic impulse given,
By the green hill and clear blue heaven.
It was a barren scene, and wild,
Where naked cliffs were rudely piled;
But ever and anon between
Lay velvet tufts of loveliest green;
And well the lonely infant knew
Recesses where the wall-flower grew,
And honeysuckle loved to crawl
Up the low crag and ruin'd wall.

I deem'd such nooks the sweetest shade
The sun in all his round survey'd;
And still I thought that shatter'd tower
The mightiest work of human power;
And marvell'd, as the aged hind
With some strange tale bewitch'd my mind,
Of forayers, who, with headlong force,
Down from that strength had spurr'd their horse,
Their southern rapine to renew,
Far in the distant Cheviot's blue,
And home returning, fill'd the hall
With revel, wassel-rout, and brawl.—
Methought that still with trump and clang
The gateway's broken arches rang;
Methought grim features, seam'd with scars,
Glared through the window's rusty bars.
And ever, by the winter hearth,
Old tales I heard of wo or mirth,
Of lovers' sleights, of ladies' charms,
Of witches' spells, of warriors' arms;
Of patriot battles, won of old,
By Wallace wight and Bruce the bold;
Of later fields of feud and fight,
When, pouring from their highland height,
The Scottish clans in headlong sway,
Had swept the scarlet ranks away.
While, stretch'd at length upon the floor,
Again I fought each combat o'er,
Pebbles and shells, in order laid,
The mimic ranks of war display'd;
And onward still the Scottish lion bore,
And still the scatter'd Southron fled before.
  Still, with vain fondness, could I trace,
Anew, each kind familiar face,
That brighten'd at our evening fire;
From the thatch'd mansion's gray-hair'd sire,
Wise without learning, plain and good,
And sprung of Scotland's gentler blood;
Whose eye in age, quick, clear, and keen,
Show'd what in youth its glance had been;
Whose doom discording neighbours sought,
Content with equity unbought;
To him the venerable priest,
Our frequent and familiar guest,
Whose life and manners well could paint
Alike the student and the saint;
Alas! whose speech too oft I broke
With gambol rude and timeless joke:
For I was wayward, bold, and wild,
A self-will'd imp, a grandame's child;
But, half a plague, and half a jest,
Was still endured, beloved, carest.
  From me, thus nurtured, dost thou ask
The classic poet's well-conn'd task?
Nay, Erskine, nay,—on the wild hill
Let the wild heathbell flourish still;
Cherish the tulip, prune the vine,
But freely let the woodbine twine,
And leave untrimm'd the eglantine:
Nay, my friend, nay,—since oft thy praise
Hath given fresh vigour to my lays,
Since oft thy judgment could refine
My flatten'd thought, or cumbrous line,
Still kind, as is thy wont, attend,
And in the minstrel spare the friend;
Though wild as cloud, as stream, as gale,
Flow forth, flow unrestrain'd, my tale!

Canto III.

The Hostel, or Inn.

I.

The livelong day Lord Marmion rode.
The mountain path the palmer show'd;
By glen and streamlet winded still,
Where stunted birches hid the rill.
They might not choose the lowland road,
For the Merse forayers were abroad,
Who, fired with hate and thirst of prey,
Had scarcely fail'd to bar their way.
Oft or the trampling band, from crown
Of some tall cliff, the deer look'd down;
On wing of jet, from his repose
In the deep heath, the black cock rose;
Sprung from the gorse the timid roe,
Nor waited for the bending bow;
And when the stony path began,
By which the naked peak they wan,
Up flew the snowy ptarmigan.
The noon had long been past before
They gain'd the height of Lammermoor;
Thence winding down the northern way,
Before them, at the closing day,
Old Gifford's towers and hamlet lay.

II.

No summons calls them to the tower,
To spend the hospitable hour.
To Scotland's camp the lord was gone,
His cautious dame, in bower alone,
Dreaded her castle to unclose,
So late, to unknown friends or foes.
  On through the hamlet as they paced,
  Before a porch, whose front was graced
  With bush and flaggon trimly placed,
    Lord Marmion drew his reign:
  The village inn seem'd large, though rude:
  Its cheerful fire and hearty food
    Might well relieve his train.
Down from their seats the horsemen sprang,
With jingling spurs the court-yard rang;
They bind their horses to the stall,
For forage, food, and firing call,
And various clamour fills the hall;
Weighing the labour with the cost,
Toils everywhere the bustling host.

III.

Soon, by the chimney's merry blaze,
Through the rude hostel might you gaze;
Might see, where in dark nook aloof,
The rafters of the sooty roof
  Bore wealth of winter cheer;
Of sea fowl dried, and solands store,
And gammons of the tusky boar,
  And savoury haunch of deer.
The chimney arch projected wide;
Above, around it, and beside,
  Were tools for housewifes' hand:
Nor wanted, in that martial day,
The implements of Scottish fray,
  The buckler, lance, and brand.
Beneath its shade, the place of state,
On oaken settle Marmion sate,

And view'd, around the blazing hearth,
His followers mix in noisy mirth,
Whom with brown ale, in jolly tide,
From ancient vessels ranged aside,
Full actively their host supplied.

IV.

Theirs was the glee of martial breast,
And laughter theirs at little jest;
And oft Lord Marmion deign'd to aid,
And mingle in the mirth they made:
For though, with men of high degree,
The proudest of the proud was he,
Yet, train'd in camps, he knew the art
To win the soldier's hardy heart.
They love a captain to obey,
Boisterous as March, yet fresh as May;
With open hand, and brow as free,
Lover of wine and minstrelsy,
Ever the first to scale a tower,
As venturous in a ladye's bower:—
Such buxom chief shall lead his host
From India's fires to Zembla's frost.

V.

Resting upon his pilgrim staff,
Right opposite the palmer stood:
His thin dark visage seen but half,
Half hidden by his hood.
Still fix'd on Marmion was his look,
Which he, who ill such gaze could brook,
Strove by a frown to quell;
But not for that, though more than once
Full met their stern encountering glance,
The palmer's visage fell.

VI.

By fits less frequent from the crowd
Was heard the burst of laughter loud;
For still as squire and archer stared
On that dark face and matted beard,
Their glee and game declined.
All gaze at length in silence drear,
Unbroke, save when in comrade's ear
Some yeomen, wondering in his fear,
Thus whisper'd forth his mind:
"Saint Mary! saw'st thou ere such sight?
How pale his cheek, his eye how bright,
Whene'er the firebrand's fickle light
Glances beneath his cowl!
Full on our lord he sets his eye;
For his best palfray, would not I
Endure that sullen scowl."—

VII.

But Marmion, as to chase the awe
Which thus had quell'd their hearts, who saw
The ever-varying firelight show
That figure stern and face of wo,
Now call'd upon a squire:—
"Fitz Eustace, know'st thou not some lay,
To speed the lingering night away?
We slumber by the fire."

VIII.

"So please you," thus the youth rejoin'd,
Our choicest minstrel's left behind.
Ill may we hope to please your ear,
Accustom'd Constant's strains to hear.
The harp full deftly can he strike,
And wake the lover's lute alike;
To dear Saint Valentine, no thrush
Sings livelier from a springtide bush;
No nightingale her lovelorn tune
More sweetly warbles to the moon.
Wo to the cause, whate'er it be,
Detains from us his melody,
Lavish'd on rocks, and billows stern,
Or duller monks of Lindisfern.
Now must I venture, as I may,
To sing his favourite roundelay."

IX.

A mellow voice Fitz-Eustace had,
The air he chose was wild and sad;
Such have I heard, in Scottish land,
Rise from the busy harvest band,
When falls before the mountaineer,
On lowland plains, the ripen'd ear.
Now one shrill voice the notes prolong,
Now a wild chorus swells the song:
Oft have I listen'd, and stood still
As it came soften'd up the hill,
And deem'd it the lament of men
Who languish'd for their native glen;
And thought how sad would be such sound
On Susquehannah's swampy ground,
Kentucky's wood-encumber'd brake,
Or wild Ontario's boundless lake,
Where heart-sick exiles, in the strain,
Recall'd fair Scotland's hills again!

X.

SONG.

Where shall the lover rest,
Whom the fates sever
From his true maiden's breast,
Parted for ever?
Where, through groves deep and high,
Sounds the far billow,
Where early violets die,
Under the willow.

CHORUS.

Eleu loro, &c. Soft shall be his pillow

There, through the summer day,
Cool streams are laving;
There while the tempests sway
Scarce are boughs waving:
There, thy rest shalt thou take,
Parted for ever,
Never again to wake,
Never, O never.

CHORUS.

Eleu loro, &c. Never, O never.

XI.

Where shall the traitor rest,
He, the deceiver,
Who could win maiden's breast,
Ruin, and leave her?

In the lost battle,
Borne down by the flying,
Where mingles war's rattle
With groans of the dying.

CHORUS.

Eleu loro, &c. There shall he be lying.

Her wing shall the eagle flap
O'er the false-hearted,
His warm blood the wolf shall lap,
Ere life be parted.
Shame and dishonour sit
By his grave ever;
Blessing shall hallow it,—
Never, O never.

CHORUS.

Eleu loro, &c. Never, O never.

XII.

It ceased, the melancholy sound,
And silence sunk on all around.
The air was sad; but sadder still
It fell on Marmion's ear,
And plain'd as if disgrace and ill,
And shameful death were near.
He drew his mantle past his face,
Between it and the band,
And rested with his head a space,
Reclining on his hand.
His thoughts I scan not; but I ween,
That, could their import have been seen,
The meanest groom in all the hall,
That e'er tied courser to a stall,
Would scarce have wish'd to be their prey,
For Lutterward and Fontenaye.

XIII.

High minds, of native pride and force,
Most deeply feel thy pangs, Remorse!
Fear, for their scourge, mean villains have—
Thou art the torturer of the brave!
Yet fatal strength they boast, to steel
Their minds to bear the wounds they feel.
E'en while they writhe beneath the smart
Of civil conflict in the heart.
For soon Lord Marmion raised his head,
And, smiling, to Fitz-Eustace said,—
"Is it not strange, that, as ye sung,
Seem'd in mine ear a death-peal rung,
Such as in nunneries they toll
For some departing sister's soul?
Say, what may this portend!"—
Then first the palmer silence broke
The livelong day he had not spoke,)
"The death of a dear friend."

XIV.

Marmion, whose steady heart and eye
Ne'er changed in worst extremity;
Marmion, whose soul could scantly brook,
E'en from his king a haughty look;
Whose accent of command controll'd,
In camps, the boldest of the bold—
Thought, look, and utterance, fail'd him now,
Pallen was his glance, and flush'd his brow;
For either in the tone,
Or something in the palmer's look,
So full upon his conscience strook,
That answer he found none.
Thus oft it haps, that when within
They shrink at sense of secret sin,
A feather daunts the brave,
A fool's wise speech confounds the wise,
And proudest princes veil their eyes
Before their meanest slave.

XV.

Well might he falter!—by his aid
Was Constance Beverly betray'd;
Not that he augur'd of the doom,
Which on the living closed the tomb:
But, tired to hear the desperate maid
Threaten by turns, beseech, upbraid:
And wroth, because, in wild despair,
She practised on the life of Clare;
Its fugitive the church he gave,
Though not a victim, but a slave;
And deem'd restraint in convent strange
Would hide her wrongs and her revenge.
Himself, proud Henry's favourite peer,
Held Romish thunders idle fear;
Secure his pardon he might hold,
For some slight mulct of penance gold.
Thus judging, he gave secret way,
When the stern priests surprised their prey;
His train but deem'd the favourite page
Was left behind, to spare his age;
Or other if they deem'd, none dared
To mutter what he thought and heard:
Wo to the vassal, who durst pry
Into Lord Marmion's privacy!

XVI.

His conscience slept—he deem'd her well,
And safe secured in distant cell;
But, waken'd by her favourite lay,
And that strange palmer's boding say,
That fell so ominous and drear,
Full on the object of his fear,
To aid remorse's venom'd throes,
Dark tales of convent vengeance rose;
And Constance, late betray'd and scorn'd
All lovely on his soul return'd;
Lovely as when, at treacherous call,
She left her convent's peaceful wall,
Crimson'd with shame, with terror mute,
Dreading alike escape, pursuit,
Till love, victorious o'er alarms,
Hid fears and blushes in his arms.

XVII.

"Alas!" he thought, "how changed that mien
How changed these timid looks have been,
Since years of guilt, and of disguise,
Have steel'd her brow, and arm'd her eyes;
No more of virgin terror speaks
The blood that mantles in her cheeks;
Fierce, and unfeminine, are there,
Frenzy for joy, for grief, despair;
And I the cause—for whom were given
Her peace on earth, her hopes in heaven!

"Would," thought he, as the picture grows,
I on its stalk had left the rose!
O why should man's success remove
The very charms that wake his love!
Her convent's peaceful solitude
Is now a prison harsh and rude;
And, pent within the narrow cell,
How will her spirit chafe and swell!
Her brook the stern monastic laws!
The penance how—and I the cause!
Vigil and scourge—perchance, e'en worse!"—
And twice he rose to cry "to horse!"
And twice his sovereign's mandate came,
Like damp upon a kindling flame;
And twice he thought, "Gave I not charge
She should be safe, though not at large?
They durst not, for their island, shred
One golden ringlet from her head."—

XVIII.

While thus in Marmion's bosom strove
Repentance and reviving love,
Like whirlwinds, whose contending sway
I've seen Loch Vennachar obey,
Their host the palmer's speech had heard,
And, talkative, took up the word:—
"Ay, reverend pilgrim, you, who stray
From Scotland's simple land away,
To visit realms afar,
Full often learn the art to know
Of future weal, or future wo,
By word, or sign, or star.
Yet might a knight his fortune hear,
If, knight like, he despises fear,
Not far from hence;—if fathers old
Aright our hamlet legend told."—
These broken words the menials move
(For marvels still the vulgar love;)
And, Marmion giving license cold,
His tale the host thus gladly told.

XIX.

THE HOST'S TALE.

"A clerk could tell what years have flown
Since Alexander fill'd our throne
(Third monarch of that warlike name,)
And eke the time when here he came
To seek Sir Hugo, then our lord:
A braver never drew a sword;
A wiser never, at the hour
Of midnight, spoke the word of power;
The same, whom ancient records call
The founder of the Goblin Hall.
I would, sir knight, your longer stay
Gave you that cavern to survey.
Of lofty roof, and ample size,
Beneath the castle deep it lies:
To hew the living rock profound,
The floor to pave, the arch to round,
There never toil'd a mortal arm,
It all was wrought by word and charm;
And I have heard my grandsire say,
That the wild clamour and affray
Of those dread artisans of hell,
Who labour'd under Hugo's spell,
Sounded as loud as ocean's war,
Among the caverns of Dunbar.

XX.

"The king Lord Gifford's castle sought,
Deep labouring with uncertain thought
Even then he muster'd all his host,
To meet upon the western coast;
For Norse and Danish galleys plied
Their oars within the Frith of Clyde.
There floated Haco's banner trim,
Above Norweyan warriors grim,
Savage of heart, and large of limb;
Threatening both continent and isle,
Bute, Arran, Cunningham, and Kyle.
Lord Gifford, deep beneath the ground,
Heard Alexander's bugle sound,
And tarried not his garb to change,
But, in his wizard habit strange,
Came forth,—a quaint and fearful sight!
His mantle lined with foxskins white;
His high and wrinkled forehead bore
A pointed cap, such as of yore
Clerks say that Pharoah's magi wore;
His shoes were mark'd with cross and spell,
Upon his breast a pentacle;
His zone, of virgin parchment thin,
Or, as some tell, of dead man's skin,
Bore many a planetary sign,
Combust, and retrograde, and trine;
And in his hand he held prepared,
A naked sword without a guard.

XXI.

"Dire dealings with the fiendish race
Had mark'd strange lines upon his face;
Vigil and fast had worn him grim;
His eyesight dazzled seem'd, and dim,
As one unused to upper day;
E'en his own menials with dismay
Beheld, sir knight, the griesly sire,
In this unwonted wild attire;
Unwonted,—for traditions run,
He seldom thus beheld the sun.
'I know,' he said,—his voice was hoarse,
And broken seem'd its hollow force,—
'I know the cause, although untold,
Why the king seeks his vassal's hold:
Vainly from me my liege would know
His kingdom's future weal or wo;
But yet if strong his arm and heart,
His courage may do more than art.

XXII.

"'Of middle air the demons proud,
Who ride upon the racking cloud,
Can read, in fix'd or wandering star,
The issue of events afar,
But still their sullen aid withhold,
Save when by mightier force control'd.
Such late I summon'd to my hall;
And though so potent was the call,
That scarce the deepest nook of hell
I deem'd a refuge from the spell;
Yet, obstinate in silence still,
The haughty demon mocks my skill.
But thou,—who little knowest thy might,
As born upon that blessed night,

When yawning graves, and dying groan,
Proclaim'd hell's empire overthrown,—
With untaught valour shall compell
Response denied to magic spell.'—
'Gramercy,' quoth our monarch free,
'Place him but front to front with me,
And, by this good and honour'd brand,
The gift of Cœur-de-Lion's hand,—
Soothly I swear, that, tide what tide,
The demon shall a buffet bide.'
His bearing bold the wizard view'd,
And thus, well pleased, his speech renew'd:—
'There spoke the blood of Malcolm!—mark:
Forth pacing hence, at midnight dark,
The rampart seek, whose circling crown
Crests the ascent of yonder down:
A southern entrance shalt thou find;
There halt, and there thy bugle wind,
And trust thine elfin foe to see,
In guise of thine worst enemy:
Couch then thy lance, and spur thy steed—
Upon him! and Saint George to speed!
If he go down, thou soon shalt know
Whate'er these airy sprites can show;—
If thy heart fail thee in the strife,
I am no warrant for thy life.'—

XXIII.

"Soon as the midnight bell did ring,
Alone, and arm'd, forth rode the king
To that old camp's deserted round;
Sir knight, you well might mark the mound,
Left hand the town,—the Pictish race,
The trench, long since, in blood did trace;
The moor around is brown and bare,
The space within is green and fair.
The spot our village children know,
For there the earliest wild flowers grow;
But wo betide the wandering wight,
That treads its circles in the night.
The breadth across the bowshot clear,
Gives ample space for full career;
Opposed to the four points of heaven,
By four deep gaps are entrance given.
The southernmost our monarch past,
Halted and blew a gallant blast:
And on the north, within the ring,
Appear'd the form of England's king,
Who then, a thousand leagues afar,
In Palestine waged holy war:
Yet arms like England's did he wield,
Alike the leopards in the shield,
Alike his Syrian courser's frame,
The rider's length of limb the same:
Long afterwards did Scotland know,
Fell Edward* was her deadliest foe.

XXIV.

"The vision made our monarch start,
But soon he mann'd his noble heart,
And, in the first career they ran,
The elfin knight fell, horse and man;
Yet did a splinter of his lance
Through Alexander's visor glance,
And raised the skin—a puny wound.
The king, light leaping to the ground
With naked blade his phantom foe
Compell'd the future war to show.
Of Largs he saw the glorious plain,
Where still gigantic bones remain,
Memorial of the Danish war;
Himself he saw, amid the field,
On high his brandish'd war-axe wield
And strike proud Haco from his car
While all around the shadowy kings
Denmark's grim ravens cower'd their wings.
'Tis said, that, in that awful night,
Remoter visions met his sight,
Fore-showing future conquests far,
When our sons' sons wage northern war;
A royal city, tower, and spire,
Redden'd the midnight sky with fire,
And shouting crews her navy bore
Triumphant to the victor shore.
Such signs may learned clerks explain,
They pass the wit of simple swain.

XXV.

"The joyful king turn'd home again,
Headed his host, and quell'd the Dane;
But yearly, when return'd the night
Of his strange combat with the sprite,
His wound must bleed and smart:
Lord Gifford then would gibing say,
'Bold as ye were, my liege, ye pay
The penance of your start.'
Long since, beneath Dunfermline's nave,
King Alexander fills his grave,
Our lady give him rest!
Yet still the mighty spear and shield
The elfin warrior doth wield,
Upon the brown hill's breast;
And many a knight hath proved his chance,
In the charm'd ring to break a lance,
But all have foully sped;
Save two, as legends tell, and they
Were Wallace wight, and Gilbert Hay.—
Gentles, my tale is said."—

XXVI.

The quaighs* were deep, the liquor strong,
And on the tale the yeomen-throng,
Had made a comment sage and long,
But Marmion gave a sign;
And, with their lord, the squires retire;
The rest, around the hostel fire,
Their drowsy limbs recline:
For pillow, underneath each head,
The quiver and the targe were laid.
Deep slumbering on the hostel floor,
Oppress'd with toil and ale, they snore;
The dying flame, in fitful change,
Threw on the group its shadows strange.

XXVII.

Apart, and nestling in the hay
Of a waste loft, Fitz-Eustace lay;

* Edward I., surnamed Longshanks.

* A wooden cup, composed of staves hooped together.

Scarce by the pale moonlight, were seen
The foldings of his mantle green:
Lightly he dreamt, as youth will dream,
Of sport by thicket, or by stream,
Of hawk or hound, of ring or glove,
Or, lighter yet, of lady's love.
A cautious tread his slumber broke,
And close beside him, when he woke,
In moonbeam half, and half in gloom,
Stood a tall form with nodding plume;
But, ere his dagger Eustace drew,
His master Marmion's voice he knew.

XXVIII.

—"Fitz-Eustace! rise,—I cannot rest,
Yon churls wild legend haunts my breast,
And graver thoughts have chafed my mood,
The air must cool my feverish blood;
And fain would I ride forth, to see
The scene of elfin chivalry.
Arise, and saddle me my steed,
And, gentle Eustace, take good heed
Thou dost not rouse the drowsy slaves
I would not that the prating knaves
Had cause for saying, o'er their ale,
That I could credit such a tale."
Then softly down the steps they slid,
Eustace the stable door undid,
And, darkling, Marmion's steed array'd,
While, whispering, thus the baron said:—

XXIX.

"Didst never, good my youth, hear tell
That on the hour when I was born,
St. George, who graced my sire's chapelle,
Down from his steed of marble fell,
A weary wight forlorn?
The flattering chaplains all agree,
The champion left his steed to me.
I would, the omen's truth to show,
That I could meet this elfin foe!
Blithe would I battle for the right
To ask one question at the sprite:—
Vain thought! for elves, if elves there be,
An empty race, by fount or sea,
To dashing waters dance and sing,
Or round the green oak wheel they ring."—
Thus speaking, he his steed bestrode,
And from the hostel slowly rode.

XXX.

Fitz-Eustace follow'd him abroad,
And mark'd him pace the village road,
And listen'd to his horse's tramp,
Till, by the lessening sound,
He judged that of the Pictish camp
Lord Marmion sought the round.
Wonder it seem'd, in the squire's eyes,
That one, so wary held, and wise,—
Of whom, 'twas said, he scarce received
For gospel what the church believed,
Should, stirr'd by idle tale,
Ride forth in silence of the night,
As hoping half to meet a sprite,
Array'd in plate and mail.
For little did Fitz-Eustace know,
That passions, in contending flow
Unfix the strongest mind:
Wearied from doubt to doubt to flee,
We welcome fond credulity,
Guide confident, though blind.

XXXI.

Little for this Fitz-Eustace cared,
But, patient, waited till he heard,
At distance, prick'd to utmost speed,
The foot-tramp of a flying steed,
Come townward rushing on:
First, dead, as if on turf it trod,
Then clattering on the village road,
In other pace than forth he yode,*
Return'd Lord Marmion.
Down hastily he sprang from selle,
And, in his haste, well nigh he fell;
To the squire's hand the rein he threw
And spoke no word as he withdrew:
But yet the moonlight did betray,
The falcon crest was soil'd with clay:
And plainly might Fitz-Eustace see,
By stains upon the charger's knee,
And his left side, that on the moor
He had not kept his footing sure.
Long musing on these wondrous signs,
At length to rest the squire reclines—
Broken and short; for still between,
Would dreams of terror intervene:
Eustace did ne'er so blithely mark
The first notes of the morning lark.

INTRODUCTION TO CANTO IV.

TO JAMES SKENE, ESQ.

Ashestiel, Ettrick Forest.

An ancient minstrel sagely said,
"Where is the life which late we led?"
That motely clown, in Ardenwood,
Whom humorous Jaques with envy view'd,
Not e'en that clown could amplify,
On this trite text, so long as I.
Eleven years we now may tell,
Since we have known each other well;
Since, riding side by side, our hand
First drew the voluntary brand;
And sure, through many a varied scene,
Unkindness never came between.
Away these winged years have flown,
To join the mass of ages gone;
And though deep mark'd, like all below,
With checker'd shades of joy and wo;
Though thou o'er realms, and seas hast ranged,
Mark'd cities lost, and empires changed,
While here, at home, my narrower ken
Somewhat of manners saw, and men;
Though varying wishes, hopes, and fears,
Fever'd the progress of these years,
Yet now days, weeks, and months, but seem
The recollection of a dream;
So still we glide down to the sea
Of fathomless eternity.
Even now it scarcely seems a day,
Since first I turn'd this idle lay;

* Used by old poets for *went*.

A task so often thrown aside,
When leisure graver cares denied,
That now, November's dreary gale,
Whose voice inspired my opening tale,
That same November gale once more
Whirls the dry leaves on Yarrow shore.
Their vex'd boughs streaming to the sky,
Once more our naked birches sigh,
And Blackhouse heights, and Ettrick Pen,
Have donn'd their wintry shrouds again;
And mountain dark, and flooded mead,
Bid us forsake the banks of Tweed.
Earlier than wont along the sky,
Mix'd with the rack, the snowmists fly;
The shepherd, who, in summer sun,
Has something of our envy won,
As thou with pencil, I with pen,
The features traced of hill and glen;
He who, outstretch'd the livelong day,
At ease among the heath-flowers lay,
View'd the light clouds with vacant look
Or slumber'd o'er his tatter'd book,
Or idly busied him to guide
His angle o'er the lessen'd tide;—
At midnight now, the snowy plain
Finds sterner labour for the swain.
When red hath set the beamless sun,
Through heavy vapours dank and dun;
When the tired ploughman, dry and warm,
Hears, half asleep, the rising storm
Hurling the hail and sleeted rain,
Against the casement's tinkling pane:
The sounds that drive wild deer, and fox,
To shelter in the brake and rocks,
Are warnings which the shepherd ask
To dismal and to dangerous task.
Oft he looks forth, and hopes, in vain,
The blast may sink in mellowing rain;
Till, dark above and white below,
Decided drives the flakes of snow,
And forth the hardy swain must go.
Long, with dejected look and whine,
To leave his hearth the dogs repine;
Whistling and cheering them to aid,
Around his backs he wreathes the plaid:
His flock he gathers, and he guides
To open downs and mountain sides,
Where fiercest though the tempest blow,
Least deeply lies the drift below.
The blast, that whistles o'er the fells,
Stiffens his locks to icicles;
Oft he looks back, while, streaming far,
His cottage window seems a star,—
Loses its feeble gleam,—and then
Turns patient to the blast again,
And, facing to the tempest's sweep,
Drives through the gloom his lagging sheep.
If fails his heart, if his limbs fail,
Benumbing death is in the gale;
His paths, his landmarks, all unknown,
Close to the hut no more his own,
Close to the aid he sought in vain,
The morn may find the stiffen'd swain:
The widow sees, at dawning pale,
His orphans raise their feeble wail:
And, close beside him, in the snow,
Poor Yarrow, partner of their wo,
Couches upon his master's breast,
And licks his cheek to break his rest.
Who envies now the shepherd's lot,
His healthy fare, his rural cot,
His summer couch by greenwood tree,
His rustic kirn's* loud revelry,
His native hill-notes, tuned on high,
To Marion of the blithesome eye;
His crook, his scrip, his oaten reed,
And all Arcadia's golden creed?
Changes not so with us, my Skene,
Of human life the varying scene?
Our youthful summer oft we see
Dance by on wings of game and glee,
While the dark storm reserves its rage,
Against the winter of our age:
As he, the ancient chief of Troy,
His manhood spent in peace and joy,
But Grecian fires, and loud alarms,
Call'd ancient Priam forth to arms.
Then happy those—since earth must drain
His share of pleasure, share of pain.
Then happy those, beloved of heaven,
To whom the mingled cup is given
Whose lenient sorrows find relief,
Whose joys are chasten'd by their grief,
And such a lot, my Skene, was thine,
When thou of late wert doom'd to twine,—
Just when thy bridal hour was by,—
The cypress with the myrtle tie.
Just on thy bride her sire had smiled,
And bless'd the union of his child,
When love must change its joyous cheer,
And wipe affection's filial tear.
Nor did the actions, next his end,
Speak more the father than the friend:
Scarce had lamented Forbes paid
The tribute to his minstrel's shade;
The tale of friendship scarce was told
Ere the narrator's heart was cold—
Far we may search before we find
A heart so manly and so kind!
But not around his honour'd urn
Shall friends alone and kindred mourn;
The thousand eyes his care had dried,
Pour at his name a bitter tide;
And frequent falls the grateful dew,
For benefits the world ne'er knew.
If mortal charity dare claim
The Almighty's attributed name,
Inscribe above his mouldering clay,
"The widow's shield, the orphan's stay."
Nor, though it wake thy sorrow, deem
My verse intrudes on this sad theme;
For sacred was the pen that wrote,
"Thy father's friend forget thou not."
And grateful title may I plead,
For many a kindly word and deed,
To bring my tribute to his grave:—
'Tis little—but 'tis all I have.
To thee, perchance, this rambling strain
Recalls our summer walks again;
When, doing naught,—and, to speak true,
Not anxious to find aught to do,—

* The Scottish harvest-home.

The wild unbounded hills we ranged,
While oft our talk its topic changed,
And desultory as our way,
Ranged, unconfined, from grave to gay.
Even when it flagg'd, as oft will chance,
No effort made to break its trance,
We could right pleasantly pursue
Our sports in social silence, too;
Thou gravely labouring to portray
The blighted oak's fantastic spray;
I spelling o'er, with much delight,
The legend of that antique knight,
Tirante by name, ycleped the White.
At either's feet a trusty squire,
Pandour and Camp, with eyes of fire,
Jealous, each other's motions view'd,
And scarce suppress'd their ancient feud.
The laverock whistled from the cloud;
The stream was lively, but not loud;
From the white thorn the Mayflower shed
Its dewy fragrance round our head:
Not Ariel lived more merrily
Under the blossom'd bough, than we.
And blithesome nights, too, have been ours,
When winter stript the summer's bowers.
Careless we heard, what now I hear,
The wild blast sighing deep and drear,
When fires were bright and lamps beam'd gay,
And ladies tuned the lovely lay;
And he was held a laggard soul,
Who shunn'd to quaff the sparkling bowl
Then he, whose absence we deplore,
Who breathes the gales of Devon's shore,
The longer miss'd, bewail'd the more;
And thou, and I, and dear loved R———,
And one whose name I may not say,—
For not Mimosa's tender tree
Shrinks sooner from the touch than he,—
In merry chorus well combined,
With laughter drown'd the whistling wind.
Mirth was within; and care, without,
Might gnaw her nails to hear our shout.
Not but amid the buxom scene
Some grave discourse might intervene—
Of the good horse that bore him best,
His shoulder, hoof, and arching crest:
For, like mad Tom's,* our chiefest care,
Was horse to ride, and weapon wear.
Such nights we've had; and, though the game
Of manhood be more sober tame,
And though the field day, or the drill,
Seem less important now—yet still
Such may we hope to share again.
The sprightly thought inspires my strain!
And mark, how, like a horseman true,
Lord Marmion's march I thus renew.

Canto IV.

THE CAMP.

I.

Eustace, I said, did blithely mark
The first notes of the merry lark.
The lark sung shrill, the cock he crew,
And loudly Marmion's bugle blew,
And, with their light and lively call,
Brought groom and yeoman to the stall.
Whistling they came, and free of heart,
But soon their mood was changed;
Complaint was heard on every part
Of something disarranged.
Some clamour'd loud for armour lost;
Some brawl'd and wrangled with the host;
"By Becket's bones," cried one "I fear
That some false Scot has stolen my spear!"
Young Blount, Lord Marmion's second squire,
Found his steed wet with sweat and mire;
Although the rated horseboy sware,
Last night he dress'd him sleek and fair.
While chafed the impatient squire like thunder,
Old Hubert shouts, in fear and wonder,—
"Help gentle Blount! help, comrades all!
Bevis lies dying in his stall;
To Marmion who the plight dare tell,
Of the good steed he loves so well?"—
Gaping for fear and ruth they saw
The charger panting on his straw;
Till one, who would seem wisest cried,—
"What else but evil could betide,
With that cursed palmer for our guide?
Better we had through mire and bush
Been lanternled by friar Rush."

II.

Fitz-Eustace, who the cause but guess'd,
Nor wholly understood,
His comrade's clamorous plaints suppress'd;
He knew Lord Marmion's mood.
Him, ere he issued forth, he sought,
And found deep plunged in gloomy thought,
And did his tale display
Simply, as if he knew of naught
To cause such disarray.
Lord Marmion gave attention cold,
Nor marvell'd at the wonders told,—
Pass'd them as accidents of course,
And bade his clarions sound to horse.

III.

Young Henry Blount, meanwhile, the cost
Had reckon'd with their Scottish host;
And as the charge he cast and paid,
"Ill thou deservest thy hire," he said;
"Dost see, thou knave, my horse's plight?
Fairies have ridden him all the night,
And left him in a foam!
I trust that soon a conjuring band,
With English cross, and blazing brand,
Shall drive the devils from this land
To their infernal home:
For in this haunted den, I trow,
All night they trampled to and fro,'
The laughing host look'd on the hire,—
"Gramercy, gentle southern squire,
And if thou comest among the rest,
With Scottish broad sword to be blest,

* See *King Lear*.

* *Alias* Will o' the Wisp.

Sharp be the brand, and sure the blow,
And short the pang to undergo."—
Here stay'd their talk,—for Marmion
Gave now the signal to set on.
The palmer showing forth the way,
They journey'd all the morning day.

IV.

The green-sward way was smooth and good,
Through Humbie's and through Saltoun's wood;
A forest glade which, varying still,
Here gave a view of dale and hill;
There narrower closed, till over head
A vaulted screen the branches made.
"A pleasant path," Fitz-Eustace said;
"Such as were errant-knights might see
Adventures of high chivalry;
Might meet some damsel flying fast,
With hair unbound, and looks aghast;
And smooth and level course were here,
In her defence to break a spear.
Here, too, are twilight nooks and dells
And oft, in such, the story tells,
The damsel kind, from danger freed,
Did grateful pay her champion's meed."—
He spoke to cheer lord Marmion's mind;
Perchance to show his lore design'd;
For Eustace much had pored
Upon a huge romantic tome,
In the hall-window of his home,
Imprinted at the antique dome
Of Caxton or De Worde.
Therefore he spoke,—but spoke in vain,
For Marmion answer'd naught again.

V.

Now sudden, distant trumpets shrill,
In notes prolong'd by wood and hill,
Were heard to echo far;
Each ready archer grasp'd his bow,
But by the flourish soon they know,
They breathed no point of war.
Yet cautious, as in foeman's land,
Lord Marmion's order speeds the band
Some opener ground to gain;
And scarce a furlong had they rode,
When thinner trees, receding, show'd
A little woodland plain.
Just in that advantageous glade
The halting troop a line had made,
As forth from the opposing shade
Issued a gallant train.

VI.

First came the trumpets at whose clang
So late the forest echoes rang;
On prancing steeds they forward press'd,
With scarlet mantle, azure vest;
Each at his trump a banner wore,
Which Scotland's royal scutcheon bore;
Heralds and pursuivants, by name
Bute, Islay, Marchmount, Rothsay, came
In painted tabards, proudly showing
Gules, argent, or, and azure glowing,
Attendant on a king-at-arms,
Whose hand the armorial truncheon held,
That feudal strife had often quell'd,
When wildest its alarms.

VII.

He was a man of middle age;
In aspect manly, grave, and sage,
As on king's errand come;
But in the glances of his eye,
A penetrating, keen, and sly
Expression found its home;
The flash of that satiric rage,
Which, bursting on the early stage,
Branded the vices of the age,
And broke the keys of Rome.
On milk-white palfrey forth he paced;
His cap of maintenance was graced
With the proud heron plume.
From his steed's shoulder, loin and breast,
Silk housings swept the ground,
With Scotland's arms, device, and crest,
Embroider'd round and round.
The double treasure might you see,
First by Achaius borne,
The thistle, and the fleur-de-lis,
And gallant unicorn.
So bright the kings armorial coat,
That scarce the dazzled eye could note,
In living colours blazon'd brave,
The lion, which his title gave.
A train, which well beseem'd his state,
But all unarm'd, around him wait.
Still is thy name in high account,
And still thy verse has charms,
Sir David Lindesay of the Mount,
Lord lion-king-at-arms!

VIII.

Down from his horse did Marmion spring,
Soon as he saw the lion-king;
For well the stately baron knew
To him such courtesy was due,
Whom royal James himself had crown'd,
And on his temples placed the round
Of Scotland's ancient diadem;
And wet his brow with hallow'd wine,
And on his finger given to shine
The emblematic gem.
Their mutual greetings duly made,
The lion thus his message said:—
"Though Scotland's king hath deeply sworn
Ne'er to knit faith with Henry more,
And strictly hath forbid resort
From England to his royal court;
Yet, for he knows lord Marmion's name,
And honours much his warlike fame
My liege hath deem'd it shame, and lack
Of courtesy, to turn him back:
And, by his order, I, your guide,
Must lodging fit and fair provide,
Till finds king James meet time to see
The flower of English chivalry."

IX.

Though inly chafed at this delay
Lord Marmion bears it as he may,

The palmer, his mysterious guide,
Beholding thus his place supplied,
Sought to take leave in vain:
Strict was the lion-king's command,
That none who rode in Marmion's band
Should sever from the train:
"England has here enow of spies
In lady Heron's witching eyes:"
To Marchmount thus, apart, he said,
But fair pretext to Marmion made.
The right hand path they now decline,
And trace against the stream the Tyne.

X.

At length up that wild dale they wind,
Where Critchtoun-castle crowns the bank;
For there the lion's care assign'd
A lodging meet for Marmion's rank.
That castle rises on the steep
Of the green vale of Tyne;
And far beneath, where slow they creep
From pool to eddy, dark and deep,
Where alders moist, and willows weep,
You hear her streams repine.
The towers in different ages rose;
Their various architecture shows
The builders' various hands;
A mighty mass that could oppose,
When deadliest hatred fired its foes,
The vengeful Douglas bands.

XI.

Critchtoun! though now thy miry court
But pens the lazy steer and sheep,
Thy turrets rude and totter'd keep
Have been the minstrel's loved resort.
Oft have I traced, within thy fort,
Of mouldering shields the mystic sense,
Scutcheons of honour, or pretence,
Quarter'd in old armorial sort,
Remains of rude magnificence.
Nor wholly yet hath time defaced
Thy lordly gallery fair;
Nor yet the stony chord unbraced,
Whose twisted knots, with roses laced,
Adorn thy ruin'd stair.
Still rises unimpair'd, below,
The court-yard's graceful portico;
Above its cornice, row and row,
Of fairhewn facets richly show
Their pointed diamond form,
Though there but homeless cattle go
To shield them from the storm.
And, shuddering, still may we explore,
Where oft whilome were captives pent,
The darkness of thy massy-more:*
Or, from thy grass-grown battlement,
May trace, in undulating line,
The sluggish mazes of the Tyne.

XII.

Another aspect Crichtoun show'd,
As through its portal Marmion rode;
But yet 'twas melancholy state
Received him at the outer gate;
For none were in the castle then
But women, boys, or aged men.
With eyes scarce dried, the sorrowing dame,
To welcome noble Marmion, came;
Her son, a stripling twelve years old,
Proffer'd the baron's rein to hold;
For each man that could draw a sword
Had march'd that morning with their lord,
Earl Adam Hepburn,—he who died
On Flodden by his sovereign's side.
Long may his lady look in vain!
She ne'er shall see his gallant train
Come sweeping back through Crichtoun-dear.
'Twas a brave race, before the name
'f hated Bothwell stain'd their fame.

XIII.

And here two days did Marmion rest,
With every rite that honour claims,
Attended as the king's own guest;—
Such the command of royal James,
Who marshall'd them his lands array,
Upon the Borough-moor that lay.
Perchance he would not foeman's eye
Upon his gathering host should pry,
Till full prepared was every band
To march against the English land.
Here while they dwelt, did Lindesay's wit
Oft cheer the baron's moodier fit:
And, in his turn, he knew to prize
Lord Marmion's powerful mind, and wise
Train'd in the lore of Rome and Greece,
And policies of war and peace.

XIV.

It chanced, as fell the second night,
That on the battlement they walk'd,
And, by the slowly fading light,
On varying topics talk'd;
And, unaware, the herald-bard
Said, Marmion might his toil have spared
In travelling so far;
For that a messenger from heaven
In vain to James had counsel given
Against the English war:
And, closer question'd, thus he told
A tale which chronicles of old
In Scottish story have enroll'd:—

XV.

SIR DAVID LINDESAY'S TALE.

"Of all the palaces so fair,
Built for the royal dwelling,
In Scotland, far beyond compare
Linlithgow is excelling;
And in its park, in jovial June,
How sweet the merry linnet's tune,
How blithe the blackbird's lay!
The wild buck bells* from ferny brake,
The coot dives merry on the lake,
The saddest heart might pleasure take
To see all nature gay.
But June is to our sovereign dear
The heaviest month in all the year:

* The pit, or prison vault.

* An ancient word for the cry of deer.

Too well his cause of grief you know,
June saw his father's overthrow.
Wo to the traitors who could bring
The princely boy against his king!
Still in his conscience burns the sting.
In offices as strict as lent,
King James's June is ever spent.

XVI.

'When last this ruthful month was come
And in Linlithgow's holy dome
The king, as wont, was praying;
While for his royal father's soul,
The chanters sung, the bells did toll,
The bishop mass was saying—
For now the year brought round again
The day the luckless king was slain—
In Katharine's aisle the monarch knelt,
With sackcloth shirt, and iron belt,
And eyes with sorrow streaming;
Around him, in their stalls of state,
The thistle's knight-companions sate,
Their banners o'er them beaming.
I, too, was there, and, sooth to tell,
Bedeafen'd with the jingling knell,
Was watching where the sunbeams fell,
Through the stain'd casement gleaming;
But, while I mark'd what next befell,
It seem'd as I were dreaming.
Stepp'd from the crowd a ghostly wight,
In azure gown, with cincture white,
His forehead bald, his head was bare,
Down hung at length his yellow hair.—
Now mock me not when, good my lord,
I pledge to you my knightly word,
That, when I saw his placid grace,
His simple majesty of face,
His solemn bearing, and his pace
So stately gliding on,—
Seem'd to me ne'er did limner paint
So just an image of the saint
Who propp'd the virgin in her faint,—
The loved apostle John.

XVII.

"He stepp'd before the monarch's chair
And stood with rustic plainness there,
And little reverence made;
Nor head, nor body, bow'd nor bent,
But on the desk his arm he lent,
And words like these he said,
In a low voice,—but never tone
So thrill'd through vein, and nerve, and bone:—
'My mother sent me from afar,
Sir king, to warn thee not to war,—
Wo waits on thine array;
If war thou wilt, of woman fair,
Her witching wiles and wanton snare,
James Stuart, doubly warn'd beware:
God keep thee as he may!'
The wondering monarch seem'd to seek
For answer, and found none;
And when he raised his head to speak,
The monitor was gone.
The marshall and myself had cast
To stop him as he outward past;
But, lighter than the whirlwind's blast
He vanish'd from our eyes,
Like sunbeam on the billow cast,
That glances but, and dies."—

XVIII.

While Lindesay told this marvel strange,
The twilight was so pale,
He mark'd not Marmion's colour change,
While listening to the tale:
But, after a suspended pause,
The baron spoke:—"Of nature's laws
So strong I held the force,
That never superhuman cause
Could e'er control their course;
And, three days since, had judged your aim
Was but to make your guest your game.
But I have seen, since past the Tweed,
What much has changed my skeptic creed,
And made me credit aught."—He staid,
And seem'd to wish his words unsaid:
But, by that strong emotion press'd,
Which prompts us to unload our breast,
E'en when discovery's pain,
To Lindesay did at length unfold
The tale his village host had told
At Gifford, to his train.
Naught of the palmer says he there,
And naught of Constance or of Clare:
The thoughts which broke his sleep, he seems
To mention but as feverish dreams.

XIX.

"In vain," said he, "to rest I spread
My burning limbs, and couch'd my head:
Fantastic thoughts return'd;
And, by their wild dominion led,
My heart within me burn'd.
So sore was the delirious goad,
I took my steed and forth I rode,
And, as the moon shone bright and cold,
Soon reach'd the camp upon the wold.
The southern entrance I past through,
And halted, and my bugle blew.
Methought an answer met my ear,—
Yet was the blast so low and drear,
So hollow, and so faintly blown,
It might be echo of my own.

XX.

"Thus judging, for a little space
I listen'd, ere I left the place;
But scarce could trust my eyes,
Nor yet can think they served me true
When sudden in the ring I view,
In form distinct of shape and hue,
A mounted champion rise.—
I've fought, lord lion, many a day,
In single fight and mix'd affray,
And ever, I myself may say,
Have borne me as a knight;
But when this unexpected foe
Seem'd starting from the gulf below,—
I care not though the truth I show,
I trembled with affright;

And as I placed in rest my spear,
My hand so shook for very fear,
I scarce could couch it right.

XXI.

"Why need my tongue the issue tell?
We ran our course,—my charger fell,—
What could he 'gainst the shock of hell?—
I roll'd upon the plain.
High o'er my head, with threatening hand,
The spectre shook his naked brand,—
Yet did the worst remain:
My dazzled eyes I upward cast,—
Not opening hell itself could blast
Their sight like what I saw!
Full on his face the moonbeam strook,—
A face could never be mistook!
I knew the stern vindictive look,
And held my breath for awe.
I saw the face of one who, fled
To foreign climes, has long been dead,—
I well believe the last;
For ne'er, from visor raised, did stare
A human warrior, with a glare
So grimly and so ghast.
Thrice o'er my head he shook the blade:
But when to good saint George I pray'd,
(The first time e'er I ask'd his aid,)
He plunged it in his sheath;
And, on his courser mounting light,
He seem'd to vanish from my sight:
The moonbeam droop'd, and deepest night
Sunk down upon the heath.—
'Twere long to tell what cause I have
To know his face that met me there,
Call'd by his hatred from the grave,
To cumber upper air;
Dead or alive, good cause had he
To be my mortal enemy."—

XXII.

Marvell'd Sir David of the mount;
Then, learn'd in story, 'gan recount
Such chance had hap'd of old,
When once, near Norham, there did fight
A spectre fell, of fiendish might,
In likeness of a Scottish knight,
With Brian Bulmer bold,
And train'd him nigh to disallow
The aid of his baptismal vow.
"And such a phantom, too, 'tis said,
With highland broadsword, targe, and plaid,
And fingers red with gore,
Is seen in Rothiemurchus's glade,
Or where the sable pine trees shade
Dark Tomantoul, and Achnaslaid,
Dromouchty, or Glenmore.
And yet, whate'er such legends say,
Of warlike demon, host, or fay,
On mountain, moor, or plain,
Spotless in faith, in bosom bold,
True son of chivalry should hold
These midnight terrors vain;
For seldom have such spirits power
To harm, save in the evil hour,
When guilt we meditate within,
Or harbour unrepented sin."
Lord Marmion turn'd him half aside,
And twice to clear his voice he tried,
Then press'd Sir David's hand,—
But naught, at length, in answer said;
And here their farther converse staid,
Each ordering that his band
Should bowne them with the rising day,
To Scotland's camp to take their way,—
Such was the king's command.

XXIII.

Early they took Dun-Edin's road,
And I could trace each step they trode;
Hill, brook, nor dell, nor rock, nor stone,
Lies on the path to me unknown.
Much might it boast of storied lore;
But, passing such digression o'er,
Suffice it that their route was laid
Across the furzy hills of Braid.
They pass'd the glen and scanty rill,
And climb'd the opposing bank, until
They gain'd the top of Blackford Hill.

XXIV.

Blackford! on whose uncultured breast,
Among the broom, and thorn, and whin,
A truant boy, I sought the nest,
Or listed, as I lay at rest,
While rose, on breezes thin,
The murmur of the city crowd,
And, from his steeple jangling loud,
Saint Gile's mingling din—
Now, from the summit of the plain,
Waves all the hill with yellow grain;
And, o'er the lanscape as I look,
Naught do I see unchanged remain,
Save the rude cliffs and chiming brook:
To me they make a heavy moan
Of early friendships past and gone.

XXV.

But different far the change has been,
Since Marmion, from the crown
Of Blackford, saw that martial scene
Upon the bent so brown:
Thousand pavilions, white as snow,
Spread all the Borough-moor below,
Upland, and dale, and down:—
A thousand did I say? I ween,
Thousand on thousands there were seen,
That checker'd all the heath between
The streamlet and the town:
In crossing ranks extending far,
Forming a camp irregular;
Oft giving way where still there stood
Some relics of the old oak wood,
That darkly huge did intervene,
And tamed the glaring white with green:
In these extended lines there lay
A martial kingdom's vast array.

XXVI.

For from Hebudes, dark with rain,
To eastern Lodon's fertile plain,

And from the southern Redswire edge
To farthest Rosse's rocky ledge;
From west to east, from south to north,
Scotland sent all her warriors forth.
Marmion might hear the mingled hum
Of myriads up the mountain come;
The horses' tramp, and tingling clank
Where chiefs review'd their vassal rank,
And charger's shrilling neigh;
And see the shifting lines advance,
While frequent flash'd, from shield and lance,
The sun's reflected ray.

XXVII.

Thin curling in the morning air,
The wreaths of falling smoke declare
To embers now the brand decay'd,
Where the night-watch their fires had made.
They saw, slow rolling on the plain,
Full many a baggage-cart and wain,
And dire artillery's clumsy car,
By sluggish oxen tugg'd to war;
And there were Bothwick's sisters seven,*
And culverins which France had given.
Ill-omen'd gift! the guns remain
The conqueror's spoil on Flodden plain.

XXVIII.

Nor mark'd they less, where in the air
A thousand streamers flaunted fair;
Various in shape, device, and hue,
Green, sanguine, purple, red, and blue,
Broad, narrow, swallow-tail'd, and square,
Scroll, pennon, pensil, bandrol,† there
O'er the pavilions flew.
Highest and midmost, was descried
The royal banner floating wide:
The staff a pine tree strong and straight,
Pitch'd deeply in a massive stone,
Which still in memory is shown,
Yet bent beneath the standard's weight,
Whene'er the western wind unroll'd,
With toil, the huge and cumbrous fold,
And gave to view the dazzling field,
Where, in proud Scotland's royal shield,
The ruddy lion ramp'd in gold.

XXIX.

Lord Marmion view'd the landscape bright,—
He view'd it with a chief's delight,—
Until within him burn'd his heart,
And lightning from his eye did part,
As on the battle-day;
Such glance did falcon never dart,
When stooping on his prey.
"O! well, lord-lion, hast thou said,
Thy king from warfare to dissuade
Were but a vain essay;
For, by St. George, were that host mine,
Not power infernal, nor divine,
Should once to peace my soul incline,
Till I had dimm'd their armour's shine
In glorious battle-fray!"—

Answer'd the bard, of milder mood:
"Fair is the sight,—and yet 'twere good,
That kings would think withal,
When peace and wealth their land has bless'd,
'Tis better to sit still at rest,
Than rise, perchance, to fall."

XXX.

Still on the spot Lord Marmion stay'd,
For fairer scene he ne'er survey'd.
When sated with the martial show
That peopled all the plain below,
The wandering eye could o'er it go,
And mark the distant city glow
With gloomy splendour red;
For on the smoke-wreaths, huge and slow
That round her sable turret's flow,
The morning beams were shed,
And tinged them with a lustre proud,
Like that which streaks a thunder-cloud.
Such dusky grandeur clothed the height,
Where the hugecastle holds its state,
And all the steep slope down,
Whose ridgy back heaves to the sky,
Piled deep and massy, close and high,
Mine own romantic town!
But northward far, with purer blaze,
On Ochil mountains fell the rays,
And, as each heathy top they kiss'd,
It gleam'd a purple amethyst.
Yonder the shores of Fife you saw;
Here Preston-bay, and Berwick-law;
And, broad between them roll'd,
The gallant Frith the eye might note,
Whose islands on its bosom float
Like emeralds chased in gold.
Fitz-Eustace' heart felt closely pent;
As if to give his rapture vent,
The spur he to his charger lent,
And raised his bridal hand,
And, making demi-vault in air,
Cried, "Where's the coward that would not dare
To fight for such a land!"
The lion smiled his joy to see;
Nor Marmion's frown repress'd his glee.

XXXI.

Thus while they look'd a flourish proud,
Where mingled trump and clarion loud,
And fife, and kettle-drum,
And sackbut deep, and psaltery,
And warpipe with discordant cry,
And cymbal clattering to the sky,
Making wild music bold and high,
Did up the mountain come:
The whilst the bells, with distant chime,
Merrily toll'd the hour of prime,
And thus the lion spoke:—
"Thus clamour'd still the war-notes, when
The king to mass his way has ta'en,
Or to St. Catherine's of Sienne,
Or chapel of St. Rocque.
To you they speak of martial fame;
But me remind of peaceful game,
When blither was their cheer,

* Seven culverins, so called, cast by one Borthwick.
† Each of these feudal ensigns intimated the different rank of those entitled to display them.

Thrilling in Falkland woods the air,
In signal none his steed should spare,
But strive which foremost might repair
To the downfall of the deer.

XXXII.

"Nor less," he said,—"when looking forth,
I view yon empress of the north
Sit on her hilly throne;
Her palace's imperial bowers,
Her castle, proof to hostile powers,
Her stately halls and holy towers—
Nor less," he said, "I moan
To think what wo mischance may bring,
And how these merry bells may ring
The death dirge of our gallant king;
Or, with their larum, call
The burghers forth to watch and ward,
'Gainst southern sack and fires to guard
Dun-Edin's leaguer'd wall.—
But not for my presaging thought,
Dream conquest sure, or cheaply bought!
Lord Marmion, I say nay!—
God is the guider of the field,
He breaks the champion's spear and shield,
But thou thyself shalt say,
When joins yon host in deadly stowre,
That England's dames must weep in bower,
Her monks the death-mass sing;
For never saw'st thou such a power
Led on by such a king."
And now, down winding to the plain,
The barriers of the camp they gain,
And there they make a stay.—
There stays the minstrel, till he fling
His hand o'er every border string,
And fit his harp the pomp to sing
Of Scotland's ancient court and king,
In the succeeding lay.

INTRODUCTION TO CANTO V.

TO GEORGE ELLIS, ESQ.

Edinburgh.

When dark December glooms the day,
And takes our autumn joys away;
When short and scant the sunbeam throws,
Upon the weary waste of snows,
A cold and profitless regard,
Like patron on a needy bard;
When sylvan occupation's done,
And o'er the chimney rests the gun,
And hang, in idle trophy, near,
The game pouch, fishing-rod, and spear;
When wiry terrier, rough and grim,
And greyhound, with his length of limb,
And pointer, now employ'd no more,
Cumber our parlour's narrow floor;
When in his stall the impatient steed
Is long condemn'd to rest and feed;
When from our snow-encircled home,
Scarce cares the hardiest step to roam,
Since path is none, save that to bring
The needful water fom the spring;
When wrinkled news-page, thrice-conn'd o'er,
Beguiles the dreary hour no more,
And darkling politician, cross'd,
Inveighs against the lingering post,
And answering housewife sore complains
Of carrier's snow-impeded wains:
When such the country cheer, I come,
Well pleased, to seek our city home;
For converse, and for books to change
The forest's melancholy range,
And welcome, with renew'd delight,
The busy day and social night.
Not here need my desponding rhyme
Lament the ravages of time,
As erst by Newark's riven towers,
And Ettrick stripp'd of forest bowers.*
True,—Caledonia's queen is changed,
Since, on her dusky summit ranged,
Within its steepy limits pent,
By bulwark, line, and battlement,
And flanking towers, and laky flood,
Guarded and garrison'd she stood,
Denying entrance or resort,
Save at each tall embattled port;
Above whose arch, suspended, hung
Portcullis spiked with iron prong.
That long is gone,—but not so long,
Since, early closed, and opening late,
Jealous revolved the studded gate,
Whose task, from eve to morning tide,
A wicket churlishly supplied.
Stern then, and steel-girt was thy brow,
Dun-Edin! O, how alter'd now,
When safe amid thy mountain court
Thou sit'st, like empress at her sport,
And, liberal, unconfined, and free,
Flinging thy white arms to the sea,
For thy dark cloud with umber'd lower,
That hung o'er cliff, and lake, and tower,
Thou gleam'st against the western ray
Ten thousand lines of brighter day.
Not she, the championess of old,
In Spenser's magic tale enroll'd,—
She for the charmed spear renown'd,
Which forced each knight to kiss the ground,—
Not she more changed, when placed at rest,
What time she was Malbecco's guest,†
She gave to flow her maiden vest;
When from the corslet's grasp relieved,
Free to the sight her bosom heaved;
Sweet was her blue eye's modest smile,
Erst hidden by the aventayle;
And down her shoulders graceful roll'd
Her locks profuse, of paly gold.
They who whilome, in midnight fight,
Had marvell'd at her matchless might,
No less her maiden charms approved,
But looking liked, and liking loved.‡
The sight could jealous pangs beguile,
And charm Malbecco's charms awhile;

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* See Introduction to Canto II
† See "The Fairy Queen," Book III., Canto IX.
‡ "For every one her liked, and every one her loved."
Spenser, as above.

And he, the wandering squire of dames,
Forgot his Columbella's claims,
And passion, erst unknown, could gain
The breast of blunt Sir Satyrane;
Nor durst light Paridel advance,
Bold as he was, a looser glance.—
She charm'd, at once, and tamed the heart,
Incomparable Britomarte!
So thou, fair city! disarray'd
Of battled wall, and rampart's aid,
As stately seem'st, but lovelier far
Than in that panoply of war.
Nor deem that from thy fenceless throne
Strength and security are flown;
Still, as of yore, the queen of the north!
Still canst thou send thy children forth.
Ne'er readier at alarm-bell's call
Thy burghers rose to man thy wall,
Than now, in danger, shall be thine,
Thy dauntless voluntary line;
For fosse and turret proud to stand,
Their breasts the bulwarks of the land.
Thy thousands, train'd to martial toil,
Full red would stain their native soil,
Ere from thy mural crown there fell
The slightest knosp, or pinnacle.
And if it come,—as come it may,
Dun-Edin! that eventful day,
Renown'd for hospitable deed,
That virtue much with heaven may plead,
In patriarchal times whose care
Descending angels deign'd to share;
That claim may wrestle blessings down
On those who fight for the good town,
Destined in every age to be
Refuge of injured royalty;
Since first, when conquering York arose,
To Henry meek she gave repose,
Till late, with wonder, grief, and awe,
Great Bourbon's relics, sad she saw.
Truce to these thoughts!—for, as they rise,
How gladly I avert mine eyes,
Bodings, or true or false, to change,
For fiction's fair romantic range,
Or for tradition's dubious light,
That hovers 'twixt the day and night:
Dazzling alternately and dim,
Her wavering lamp I'd rather trim,
Knights, squires, and lovely dames to see,
Creation of my fantasy,
Then gaze abroad on reeky fen,
And make of mists invading men.—
Who loves not more the night of June
Than dull December's gloomy noon?
The moonlight than the fog of frost?
And can we say, which cheats the most?
But who shall teach my harp to gain
A sound of the romantic strain,
Whose Anglo-Norman tones whilere
Could win the royal Henry's ear,
Famed Beauclerc call'd, for that he loved
The minstrel, and his lay approved?
Who shall these lingering notes redeem,
Decaying on oblivion's stream;
Such notes as from the Breton tongue
Marie translated, Blondal sung?—
O! born, time's ravage to repair,
And make the dying muse thy care;
Who, when his scythe her hoary foe
Was poising for the final blow,
The weapon from his hand could wring
And break his glass, and shear his wing,
And bid, reviving in his strain,
The gentle poet live again;
Thou, who canst give to lightest lay
An unpedantic moral gay,
Nor less the dullest theme bid flit
On wings of unexpected wit;
In letters, as in life, approved,
Example honour'd, and beloved,
Dear Ellis! to the bard impart
A lesson of thy magic art,
To win at once the head and heart,—
At once to charm, instruct, and mend,
My guide, my pattern, and my friend!
Such minstrel lesson to bestow
Be long thy pleasing task,—but, O!
No more by thy example teach
What few can practise, all can preach,
With even patience to endure
Lingering disease, and painful cure,
And boast affliction's pangs subdued
By mild and manly fortitude.
Enough the lesson has been given;
Forbid the repitition, Heaven!
Come listen, then! for thou hast known
And loved the minstrel's varying tone,
Who, like his border sires of old,
Waked a wild measure, rude and bold,
Till Windsor's oaks, and Ascot plain,
With wonder heard the northern strain.
Come, listen!—bold in thy applause,
The bard shall scorn pedantic laws,
And as the ancient art could stain
Achievements on the storied pane,
Irregularly traced and plann'd,
But yet so glowing and so grand;
So shall he strive, in changeful hue,
Field, feast, and combat, to renew,
And loves, and arm, and harpers' glee,
And all the pomp of chivalry.

Canto V.

THE COURT.

I.

The train has left the hills of Braid;
The barrier guard have open made
(So Lindesay bade) the palisade,
That closed the tented ground,
Their men the warders backward drew,
And carried pikes as they rode through,
Into its ample bound.
Fast ran the Scottish warriors there,
Upon the southern band to stare;
And envy with their wonder rose,
To see such well-appointed foes;
Such length of shafts, such mighty bows,
So huge, that many simply thought,
But for a vaunt such weapons wrought;

And little deem'd their force to feel
Through links of mail, and plates of steel,
When, rattling upon Flodden vale,
The cloth-yard arrows flew like hail.

II.

Nor less did Marmion's skilful view
Glance every line and squadron through;
And much he marvell'd one small land
Could marshal forth such various band:
For men-at-arms were here,
Heavily sheathed in mail and plate,
Like iron towers for strength and weight,
On Flemish steeds of bone and height,
With battle-axe and spear.
Young knights and squires, a lighter train,
Practised their chargers on the plain,
By aid of leg, of hand, and rein,
Each warlike feat to show;
To pass, to wheel, the croup to gain,
And high curvett, that none in vain
The sword-sway might descend amain
On foeman's casque below.
He saw the hardy burghers there
March arm'd, on foot, with faces bare,
For visor they wore none,
Nor waving plume, nor crest of knight;
But burnish'd were their corslets bright,
Their brigantines, and gorgets light,
Like very silver shone.
Long pikes they had for standing fight,
Two-handed swords they wore,
And many wielded mace of weight,
And bucklers bright they bore.

III.

On foot the yeomen, too, but dress'd
In his steel jack, a swarthy vest,
With iron quilted well;
Each at his back, (a slender store,)
His forty days' provision bore,
As feudal statutes tell.
His arms were halbert, axe, or spear,
A cross-bow there, a hagbut here,
A dagger-knife, and brand—
Sober he seem'd, and sad of cheer,
As loth to leave his cottage dear,
And march to foreign strand;
Or musing, who would guide his steer,
To till the fallow land.
Yet deem not in his thoughtful eye
Did aught of dastard terror lie;—
More dreadful far his ire
Than theirs, who, scorning danger's name,
In eager mood to battle came,
Their valour like light straw on flame,
A fierce but fading fire.

IV.

Not so the borderer:—bred to war,
He knew the battle's din afar,
And joy'd to hear it swell.
His peaceful day was slothful ease;
Not harp, nor pipe, his ear could please,
Like the loud slogan yell.
On active steed, with lance and blade,
The light arm'd pricker plied his trade,
Let nobles fight for fame:
Let vassals follow where they lead,
Burghers, to guard their townships, bleed,
But war's the borderers' game.
Their gain, their glory, their delight,
To sleep the day, maraud the night,
O'er mountain, moss, and moor;
Joyful to fight they took their way,
Scarce caring who might win the day,
Their booty was secure.
These, as Lord Marmion's train pass'd by,
Look'd on, at first, with careless eye,
Nor marvell'd aught, well taught to know
The form and force of English bow.
But when they saw the lord array'd
In splendid arms, and rich brocade,
Each borderer to his kinsman said,
"Hist, Ringan! seest thou there!
Canst guess which road they'll homeward ride.
O! could we but, on border side,
By Eusdale glen, or Liddell's tide,
Beset a prize so fair!
That fangless lion, too, their guide,
Might chance to lose his glistering hide;
Brown Maudlin, of that doublet pied,
Could make a kirtle rare."

V.

Next, Marmion mark'd the Celtic race
Of different language, form, and face,
A various race of man;
Just then the chiefs their tribes array'd,
And wild and garish semblance made,
The checker'd trews, and belted plaid;
And varying notes the war-pipes bray'd,
To every varying clan;
Wild through their red or sable hair
Look'd out their eyes, with savage stare,
On Marmion as he past;
Their legs above the knee was bare;
Their frame was sinewy, short, and spare,
And harden'd to the blast;
Of taller race, the chiefs they own
Were by the eagle's plumage known.
The hunted red deer's undress'd hide
Their hairy buskins well supplied;
The graceful bonnet deck'd their head;
Back from their shoulders hung the plaid
A broadsword of unwieldly length,
A dagger proved for edge and strength,
A studded targe they wore,
And quivers, bows, and shafts,—but, O!
Short was the shaft, and weak the bow,
To that which England bore.
The Isles-men carried at their backs
The ancient Danish battle-axe,
They raised a wild and wondering cry,
As with his guide rode Marmion by.
Loud were their clamouring tongues, as when
The clanging sea-fowl leave the fen,
And, with their cries discordant mix'd,
Grumbled and yell'd the pipes betwixt.

VI.

Thus through the Scottish camp they pass'd
And reach'd the city gate at last,

Where all around, a wakeful guard,
Arm'd burghers kept their watch and ward.
Well had they cause of jealous fear,
When lay encamp'd, in field so near,
The borderer and the mountaineer.
As through the bustling streets they go,
All was alive with martial show;
At every turn, with dinning clang,
The armourer's anvil clash'd and rang,
Or toil'd the swarthy smith, to wheel
The bar that arms the charger's heel;
Or axe, or falchion to the side
Of jarring grindstone was applied.
Page, groom, and squires, with hurrying pace,
Through street, and lane, and market-place,
Bore lance, or casque, or sword;
While burghers, with important face,
Described each new-come lord,
Discuss'd his lineage, told his name,
His following,* and his warlike fame.—
The lion led to lodging meet,
Which high o'erlook'd the crowded street;
There must the baron rest,
Till past the hour of vesper tide,
And then to Holy-Rood must ride,—
Such was the king's behest.
Meanwhile the lion's care assigns
A banquet rich, and costly wines,
To Marmion and his train;
And when the appointed hour succeeds,
The baron dons his peaceful weeds,
And following Lindesay as he leads,
The palace halls they gain.

VII.

Old Holy-Rood rung merrily,
That night, with wassel, mirth and glee:
King James within her princely bower
Feasted the chiefs of Scotland's power,
Summon'd to spend the parting hour;
For he had charged, that his array
Should Southward march by break of day.
Well loved that splendid monarch aye
The banquet and the song,
By day the tourney, and by night
The merry dance, traced fast and light,
The masquers quaint, the pageant bright,
The revel loud and long.
This feast outshone his banquets past;
It was his blithest—and his last.
The dazzling lamps from gallery gay,
Cast on the court a dancing ray;
Here to the harp did minstrels sing;
There ladies touch'd a softer string;
With long-ear'd cap, and motely vest,
The licensed fool retail'd his jest;
His magic tricks the juggler plied;
At dice and draughts the gallants vied;
While some, in close recess apart,
Courted the ladies of their heart,
Nor courted them in vain;
For often, in the parting hour,
Victorious love asserts his power
O'er coldness and disdain;
And flinty is her heart, can view
To battle march a lover true,—
Can hear, perchance, his last adieu,
Nor own her share of pain.

VIII.

Through this mix'd crowd of glee and game,
The king to greet Lord Marmion came,
While, reverend, all made room.
An easy task it was, I trow,
King James's manly form to know,
Although, his courtesy to show,
He doff'd, to Marmion bending low,
His broider'd cap and plume.
For royal were his garb and mien,
His cloak, of crimson velvet piled,
Trimm'd with the fur of martin wild;
His vest of changeful satin sheen,
The dazzled eye beguiled;
His gorgeous collar hung adown,
Wrought with the badge of Scotland's crown,
The thistle brave, of old renown:
His trusty blade, Toledo right,
Descended from a baldric bright;
White were his buskins, on the heel
His spurs inlaid of gold and steel;
His bonnet, all of crimson fair,
Was button'd with a ruby rare:
And Marmion deem'd he ne'er had seen
A prince of such a noble mien.

IX.

The monarch's form was middle size;
For feat of strength, or exercise,
Shaped in proportion fair;
And hazel was his eagle eye,
And auburn of the deepest dye
His short curl'd beard and hair.
Light was his footstep in the dance,
And firm his stirrup in the lists;
And, O! he had that merry glance
That seldom lady's heart resists.
Lightly from fair to fair he flew,
And loved to plead, lament, and sue;
Suit lightly won, and short-lived pain,
For monarchs seldom sigh in vain.
I said he joy'd in banquet-bower;
But, mid his mirth, 'twas often strange,
How suddenly his cheer would change,
His look o'ercast and lower,
If, in a sudden turn, he felt
The pressure of his iron belt,
That bound his breast in penance pain,
In memory of his father slain.
Even so 'twas strange how evermore,
Soon as the passing pang was o'er,
Forward he rush'd, with double glee,
Into the stream of revelry:
Thus, dim-seen object of affright
Startles the courser in his flight,
And half he halts, half springs aside;
But feels the quickening spur applied,
And, straining on the tighten'd rein,
Scours doubly swift o'er hill and plain.

* *Following*—Feudal retainers.

X.

O'er James's heart, the courtiers say,
Sir Hugh the Heron's wife held sway:
To Scotland's court she came,
To be a hostage for her lord,
Who Cessford's gallant heart had gored,
And with the king to make accord,
Had sent his lovely dame.
Nor to that lady free alone
Did the gay king allegiance own;
For the fair queen of France
Sent him a Turquois ring, and glove,
And charged him, as her knight and love,
For her to break a lance;
And strike three strokes with Scottish brand,
And march three miles on southron land,
And bid the banners of his band
In English breezes dance.
And thus, for France's queen he drest
His manly limbs in mailed vest;
And thus admitted English fair,
His inmost counsels still to share;
And thus, for both, he madly plann'd
The ruin of himself and land!
And yet, the sooth to tell,
Nor England's fair, nor France's queen,
Were worth one pearl-drop bright and sheen,
From Margaret's eyes that fell,—
His own Queen Margaret, who, in Lithgow's bower,
All lonely sat, and wept the weary hour.

XI.

The queen sits lone in Lithgow pile,
And weeps the weary day,
The war against her native soil,
Her monarch's risk in battle broil;—
And in gay Holy-Rood, the while,
Dame Heron rises with a smile
Upon the harp to play.
Fair was her rounded arm, as o'er
The strings her fingers flew;
And as she touch'd, and tuned them all,
Ever her bosom's rise and fall
Was plainer given to view;
For all, for heat, was laid aside,
Her wimple, and her hood untied.
And first she pitch'd her voice to sing,
Then glanced her dark eye on the king,
And then around the silent ring;
And laugh'd, and blush'd, and oft did say,
Her pretty oath, by yea and nay,
She could not, would not, durst not play!
At length, upon the harp, with glee,
Mingled with arch simplicity,
A soft, yet lively air she rung,
While thus the wily lady sung.

XII.

LOCHINVAR.

LADY HERON'S SONG.

O, young Lochinvar is come out of the west,
Through all the wide border his steed was the best;
And save his good broadsword he weapons had none,
He rode all unarm'd, and he rode all alone.
So faithful in love, and so dauntless in war,
There never was knight like the young Lochinvar.

He stay'd not for brake, and he stopp'd not for stone,
He swam the Eske river where ford there was none;
But, ere he alighted at Netherby gate,
The bride had consented, the gallant came late:
For a laggard in love, and a dastard in war,
Was to wed the fair Ellen of brave Lochinvar.

So boldly he enter'd the Netherby hall,
Among bride's-men, and kinsmen, and brothers, and all:
Then spoke the bride's father, his hand on his sword,
(For the poor craven bridegroom said never a word,)
"O come ye in peace here, or come ye in war,
Or to dance at our bridal, young Lord Lochinvar?"

"I long woo'd your daughter, my suit you denied:
Love swells like the Solway, but ebbs like its tide;
And now am I come, with this lost love of mine,
To lead but one measure, drink one cup of wine.
There are maidens in Scotland, more lovely by far,
That would gladly be bride to the young Lochinvar."

The bride kiss'd the goblet: the knight took it up,
He quaff'd off the wine, and he threw down the cup.
She look'd down to blush, and she look'd up to sigh,
With a smile on her lips, and a tear in her eye,
He took her soft hand, ere her mother could bar,—
"Now tread we a measure!" said young Lochinvar.

So stately his form, and so lovely his face,
That never a hall such a galliard did grace;
While her mother did fret, and her father did fume,
And the bride groom stood dangling his bonnet and plume;
And the bride-maidens whisper'd, "'Twere better by far
To have match'd our fair cousin with young Lochinvar."

One touch to her hand, and one word in her ear,
When they reach'd the hall door, and the charger stood near;
So light to the croup the fair lady he swung,
So light to the saddle before her he sprung!
"She is won! we are gone, over bank, bush, and scaur;
They'll have fleet steeds that follow," quoth young Lochinvar.

There was mounting 'mong Grœmes of the Netherby clan;
Forsters, Fenwicks, and Musgraves, they rode and they ran:
There was racing and chasing, on Cannobie Lee,
But the lost bride of Netherby ne'er did they see.

So daring in love, and so dauntless in war,
Have ye e'er heard of gallant like young Lochinvar?

XIII.

The monarch o'er the syren hung,
And beat the measure as she sung;
And, pressing closer, and more near,
He whisper'd praises in her ear.
In loud applause, the courtiers vied;
And ladies wink'd, and spoke aside.
The witching dame to Marmion threw
A glance, where seem'd to reign
The pride that claims applauses due,
And of her royal conquest, too,
A real or feign'd disdain:
Familiar was the look, and told,
Marmion and she were friends of old.
The king observed their meeting eyes,
With something like displeased surprise;
For monarchs ill can rivals brook,
E'en in a word, or smile, or look.
Straight took he forth the parchment broad,
Which Marmion's high commission show'd:
"Our borders sack'd by many a raid,
Our peaceful liegemen robb'd," he said;
"On day of truce our warden slain,
Stout Barton kill'd his vessels ta'en—
Unworthy were we here to reign,
Should these for vengeance cry in vain;
Our full defiance, hate, and scorn,
Our herald has to Henry borne."

XIV.

He paused, and led where Douglas stood,
And with stern eye the pageant view'd:
I mean that Douglas, sixth of yore,
Who coronet of Angus bore,
And, when his blood and heart were high,
Did the third James in camp defy,
And all his minions led to die
On Lauders dreary flat:
Princes and favourites long grew tame,
And trembled at the homely name
Of Archibald Bell-the-cat;
The same who left the dusky vale
Of Hermitage in Liddesdale,
Its dungeons, and its towers,
Where Bothwell's turrets brave the air,
And Bothwell bank is blooming fair,
To fix his princely bowers.
Though now, in age, he had laid down
His armour for the peaceful gown,
And for a staff his brand;
Yet often would flash forth the fire,
That could, in youth, a monarch's ire
And minion's pride withstand;
And e'en that day, at council board,
Unapt to sooth his sovereign's mood,
Against the war had Angus stood,
And chafed his royal lord.

XV.

His giant form, like ruin'd tower,
Though fallen its muscles' brawny vaunt,
Huge-boned, and tall, and grim, and gaunt,
Seem'd o'er the gaudy scene to lower:
His locks and beard in silver grew;
His eyebrows kept their sable hue.
Near Douglas when the monarch stood,
His bitter speech he thus pursued:—
"Lord Marmion, since these letters say,
That in the north you needs must stay,
While slightest hopes of peace remain,
Uncourteous speech it were, and stern,
To say—Return to Lindisfarn,
Until my herald come again.—
Then rest you in Tantallon hold;
Your host shall be the Douglass bold,—
A chief unlike his sires of old.
He wears their motto on his blade,
Their blazon o'er his towers display'd;
Yet loves his sovereign to oppose,
More than to face his country's foes.
And, I bethink me, by St. Stephen,
But e'en this morn to me was given
A prize, the first fruits of the war,
Ta'en by a galley from Dunbar,
A bevy of the maids of heaven.
Under your guard, these holy maids
Shall safe return to cloister shades,
And, while they at Tantallon stay,
Requiem for Cochran's soul may say."
And, with the slaughter'd favourite name,
Across the monarch's brow there came
A cloud of ire, remorse, and shame.

XVI.

In answer naught could Angus speak;
His proud heart swell'd well nigh to break:
He turn'd aside, and down his cheek
A burning tear there stole.
His hand the monarch sudden took,
That sight his kind heart could not brook;
"Now, by the Bruce's soul,
Angus, my hasty speech forgive!
For sure as doth his spirit live,
As he said of the Douglas old,
I well may say of you,—
That never king did subject hold,
In speech more free, in war more bold,
More tender, and more true;*
Forgive me, Douglas, once again."—
And, while the king his hand did strain,
The old man's tears fell down like rain.
To seize the moment Marmion tried,
And whisper'd to the king aside:
"O! let such tears unwonted plead
For respite short from dubious deed!
A child will weep a bramble's smart,
A maid to see her sparrow part,
A stripling for a woman's heart:
But wo awaits a country, when
She sees the tears of bearded men.
Then, O! what omen, dark and high
When Douglas wets his manly eye!"

XVII.

Displeased was James, that stranger view'd
And tamper'd with his changing mood.

* O, Dowglas! Dowglas!
Tendir and trew.—*The Houlate.*

"Laugh those that can, weep those that may,"
Thus did the fiery monarch say,
"Southward I march by break of day:
And if within Tantallon strong,
The good Lord Marmion tarries long,
Perchance our meeting next may fall
At Tamworth, in his castle hall."—
The haughty Marmion felt the taunt,
And answer'd, grave, the royal vaun:
"Much honour'd were my humble home,
If in its hall king James would come;
But Nottingham has archers good,
And Yorkshiremen are stern of mood;
Northumbrian prickers wild and rude.
On Derby hills the paths are steep:
In Ouse and Tyne the fords are deep:
And many a banner will be torn,
And many a knight to earth be borne,
And many a sheaf of arrows spent,
Ere Scotland's king shall cross the Trent:
Yet pause, brave prince, while yet you may."
The monarch lightly turn'd away,
And to his nobles loud did call,—
"Lords, to the dance,—a hall! a hall!"*
Himself his cloak and sword flung by,
And led dame Heron gallantly;
And minstrels at the royal order,
Sung out—"Blue bonnets o'er the border."

XVIII.

Leave we these revels now, to tell
What to St. Hilda's maids befell,
Whose galley, as they sail'd again
To Whitby, by a Scot was ta'en.
Now at Dun-Edin did they bide,
Till James should of their fate decide;
And soon, by his command,
Were gently summon'd to prepare
To journey under Marmion's care,
As escort honour'd, safe, and fair,
Again to English land.
The abbess told her chaplet o'er,
Nor knew which saint she should implore;
For, when she thought of Constance, sore
She fear'd Lord Marmion's mood.
And judge what Clara must have felt!
The sword, that hung in Marmion's belt,
Had drunk De Wilton's blood.
Unwittingly, King James had given,
As guard to Whitby's shades,
The man most dreaded under heaven
By these defenceless maids;
Yet what petition could avail,
Or who would listen to the tale
Of woman, prisoner, and nun,
Mid bustle of a war begun?
They deem'd it hopeless to avoid
The convoy of their dangerous guide.

XIX.

Their lodging, so the king assign'd,
To Marmion's as their guardian, join'd;
And thus it fell, that, passing nigh,
The palmer caught the abbess' eye,
Who warn'd him by a scroll,
She had a secret to reveal,
That much concern'd the church's weal,
And health of sinner's soul;
And with deep charge of secrecy,
She named a place to meet,
Within an open balcony,
That hung from dizzy pitch, and high,
Above the stately street;
To which, as common to each home,
At night they might in secret come.

XX.

At night, in secret, there they came,
The palmer and the holy dame.
The moon among the clouds rode high,
And all the city hum was by.
Upon the street, where late before
Did din of war and warriors roar,
You might have heard a pebble fall,
A beetle hum, a cricket sing,
An owlet flap his boding wing
On Gile's steeple tall.
The antique buildings, climbing high,
Whose Gothic frontlets sought the sky,
Were here wrapt deep in shade;
There on their brows the moonbeam broke
Through the faint wreaths of silvery smoke,
And on the casement play'd.
And other light was none to see,
Save torches gliding far,
Before some chieftain of degree,
Who left the royal revelry
To bowne him for the war,—
A solemn scene the abbess chose!
A solemn hour, her secret to disclose.

XXI.

"O, holy palmer!" she began,—
"For sure he must be sainted man,
Whose blessed feet have trod the ground
Where the Redeemer's tomb is found;—
For his dear church's sake, my tale
Attend, nor deem of light avail,
Though I must speak of earthly love,—
How vain to those who wed above!
De Wilton and Lord Marmion woo'd
Clara de Clare, of Gloster's blood;
(Idle it were of Whitby's dame,
To say of that same blood I came;)
And once, when jealous rage was high,
Lord Marmion said despiteously,
Wilton was traitor in his heart,
And had made league with Martin Swart,
When he came here on Simnel's part;
And only cowardice did restrain
His rebel aid on Stokefield's plain,—
And down he threw his glove:—the thing
Was tried, as wont, before the king;
Where frankly did De Wilton own,
That Swart in Guelders he had known;
And that between them then there went
Some scroll of courteous compliment.
For this he to his castle sent;
But when his messenger return'd,
Judge how De Wilton's fury burn'd!

* The ancient cry to make room for a dance, or pageant.

For in his packet there were laid
Letters that claim'd disloyal aid,
And proved King Henry's cause betray'd.
His fame thus blighted, in the field
He strove to clear, by spear and shield;—
To clear his fame in vain he strove,
For wondrous are His ways above!
Perchance some form was unobserved:
Perchance in prayer, or faith he swerved;
Else how could guiltless champion quail,
Or how the blessed ordeal fail?

XXII.

'His squire, who now De Wilton saw
As recreant doom'd to suffer law,
Repentant, own'd in vain,
That, while he had the scrolls in care,
A stranger maiden, passing fair,
Had drench'd him with a beverage rare;
His words no faith could gain.
With Clare alone he credence won,
Who, rather than wed Marmion,
Did to St. Hilda's shrine repair,
To give our house her livings fair,
And die a vestal votaress there—
The impulse from the earth was given,
But bent her to the paths of heaven.
A purer heart a lovelier maid,
Ne'er shelter'd her in Whitby's shade,
No, not since Saxon Edelfled;
Only one trace of earthly stain,
That for her lover's loss
She cherishes a sorrow vain,
And murmurs at the cross.—
And then her heritage,—it goes
Along the banks of Tame;
Deep fields of grain the reaper mows,
In meadows rich the heifer lows,
The falconer, and huntsman, knows
Its woodlands for the game.
Shame were it to Saint Hilda dear,
And I, her humble votaress here,
Should do a deadly sin.
Her temple spoil'd before mine eyes,
If this false Marmion such a prize
By my consent should win;
Yet hath our boisterous monarch sworn,
That Clare shall from our house be torn:
And grievous cause have I to fear,
Such mandate doth Lord Marmion bear.

XXIII.

"Now, prisoner, helpless, and betray'd
To evil power, I claim thine aid,
By every step that thou hast trod
To holy shrine, and grotto dim,
By every martyr's tortured limb,
By angel, saint, and seraphim,
And by the church of God!
For mark:—When Wilton was betray'd,
And with his squire forged letters laid,
She was, alas! that sinful maid,
By whom the deed was done,—
O! shame and horror to be said,
She was a perjured nun?
No clerk in all the land, like her,
Traced quaint and varying character.
Perchance you may a marvel deem,
That Marmion's paramour
(For such vile thing she was) should scheme
Her lover's nuptial hour;
But o'er him thus she hoped to gain,
As privy to his honour's stain,
Illimitable power.
For this she secretly retain'd
Each proof that might the plot reveal,
Instructions with his hand and seal:
And thus Saint Hilda deign'd,
Though sinners perfidy impure,
Her house's glory to secure,
And Clare's immortal weal.

XXIV.

"'Twere long and needless, here to tell,
How to my hand these papers fell;
With me they must not stay.
Saint Hilda keep her abbess true!
Who knows what outrage he might do
While journeying by the way.—
O blessed saint, if e'er again
I venturous leave thy calm demain,
To travel or by land or main,
Deep penance may I pay!
Now, saintly palmer, mark my prayer:
I give this packet to thy care,
For thee to stop they will not dare;
And, O! with cautious speed!
To Wolsey's hand the papers bring,
That he may show them to the king;
And, for thy well-earn'd meed,
Thou holy man, at Whitby's shrine
A weekly mass shall still be thine,
While priests can sing and read.—
What ail'st thou?—Speak!"—For as he took
The charge a strong emotion shook
His frame; and, ere reply,
They heard a faint, yet shrilly tone,
Like distant clarion feebly blown,
That on the breeze did die;
And loud the abbess shriek'd in fear,
"Saint Withold save us!—What is here?
Look at yon city cross!
See on its battled tower appear
Phantoms, that scutcheons seem to rear
And blazon banners toss!"

XXV.

Dun-Edin's cross, a pillar'd stone,
Rose on a turret octagon;
(But now is razed that monument,
Whence royal edict rang,
And voice of Scotland's law was sent
In glorious trumpet clang.
O! be his tomb as lead to lead,
Upon its dull destroyer's head!
A minstrel's malison* is said.—)
Then on its battlements they saw
A vision, passing nature's law,
Strange, wild, and dimly seen;

* *i. e.* curse.

Figures that seem'd to rise and die,
Gibber and sign, advance and fly,
While naught confirm'd could ear or eye
Discern of sound or mien.
Yet darkly did it seem, as there
Heralds and pursuivants prepare,
With trumpet sound, and blazon'd fair,
A summons to proclaim;
But indistinct the pageant proud,
As fancy forms of midnight cloud,
When flings the moon upon her shroud
A wavering tinge of flame;
It flits, expands, and shifts, till loud,
From midmost of the spectre crowd,
This awful summons came:

XXVI.

"Prince, prelate, potentate, and peer,
Whose names I now shall call,
Scottish, or foreigner, give ear!
Subjects of him who sent me here,
At his tribunal to appear,—
I summon one and all:
I cite you by each deadly sin,
That e'er hath soil'd your hearts within;
I cite you by each brutal lust,
That e'er defiled your earthly dust,
By wrath, by pride, by fear,
By each o'ermastering passion's tone,
By the dark grave, and dying groan!
When forty days are past and gone,
I cite you, at your monarch's throne,
To answer and appear."—
Then thunder'd forth a roll of names:
The first was thine, unhappy James!
Then all thy nobles came;
Crawford, Glencairn, Montrose, Argyle,
Ross, Bothwell, Forbes, Lennox, Lyle,—
Why should I tell their separate style?
Each chief of birth and fame,
Of lowland, highland, border, isle,
Foredoomed to Flodden's carnage pile,
Was cited there by name;
And Marmion, Lord of Fontenaye,
Of Lutterward, and Scrivelbay,
De Wilton, erst of Aberley,
The self same thundering voice did say,—
But then another spoke:
"Thy fatal summons I deny,
And thine infernal lord defy,
Appealing me to Him on high,
Who burst the sinner's yoke."
At that dread accent, with a scream,
Parted the pageant like a dream,
The summoner was gone.
Prone on her face the abbess fell,
And fast, and fast, her beads did tell;
Her nuns came startled by the yell,
And found her there alone.
She mark'd not, at the scene aghast,
What time, or how, the palmer pass'd.

XXVII.

Shift we the scene.—The camp doth move,
Dun-Edin's streets are empty now,
Save when, for weal of those they love,
To pray the prayer and vow the vow,
The tottering child, the anxious fair,
The gray-haired sire, with pious care,
To chapels and to shrines repair.—
Where is the palmer now? and where
The abbess, Marmion, and Clare!—
Bold Douglas! to Tantallon fair
They journey in thy charge:
Lord Marmion rode on his right hand,
The palmer still was with the band;
Angus, like Lindesay, did command,
That none should roam at large.
But in that palmer's alter'd mien
A wondrous change might now be seen;
Freely he spoke of war,
Of marvels wrought by single hand,
When lifted for a native land;
And still look'd high as if he plann'd
Some desperate deed afar.
His courser would he feed and stroke,
And, tucking up his sable frock,
Would first his metal bold provoke,
Then soothe and quell his pride.
Old Hubert said, that never one
He saw, except Lord Marmion,
A steed so fairly ride.

XXVIII.

Some half-hour's march behind, there came,
By Eustace govern'd fair,
A troop escorting Hilda's dame,
With all her nuns and Clare.
No audience had Lord Marmion sought;
Ever he fear'd to aggravate
Clara de Clare's suspicious hate;
And safer 'twas he thought,
To wait till from the nuns removed,
The influence of kinsmen loved,
And suit by Henry's self approved,
Her slow consent had wrought.
His was no flickering flame, that dies
Unless when fann'd by looks and sighs,
And lighted oft at lady's eyes;
He long'd to stretch his wide command
O'er luckless Clara's ample land:
Besides, when Wilton with him vied,
Although the pang of humbled pride
The place of jealousy supplied,
Yet conquest, by that meanness won,
He almost loathed to think upon,
Led him, at times, to hate the cause
Which made him burst through honour's laws.
If e'er he lov'd 'twas her alone,
Who died within that vault of stone.

XXIX.

And now when close at hand they saw
North-Berwick's town, and lofty Law,
Fitz-Eustace bade them pause awhile
Before a venerable pile,
Whose turrets view'd afar
The lofty Bass, the Lambie Isle,
The ocean's peace or war.
At tolling of a bell, forth came
The convent's venerable dame,
And pray'd saint Hilda's abbess rest
With her a loved and honour'd guest,

Till Douglas should a bark prepare,
To waft her back to Whitby fair.
Glad was the abbess, you may guess,
And thank'd the Scottish prioress:
And tedious 'twere to tell, I ween,
The courteous speech that pass'd between.
O'erjoy'd the nuns their palfreys leave;
But when fair Clara did intend,
Like them, from horseback to descend,
Fitz-Eustace said,—"I grieve,
Fair lady, grieve e'en from my heart,
Such gentle company to part;—
Think not discourtesy,
But lords' commands must be obey'd;
And Marmion and the Douglas said,
That you must wend with me.
Lord Marmion hath a letter broad,
Which to the Scottish earl he show'd,
Commanding, that beneath his care,
Without delay, you shall repair
To your good kinsmen, Lord Fitz-Clare."

XXX.

The startled abbess loud exclaim'd;
But she at whom the blow was aim'd,
Grew pale as death, and cold as lead;—
She deem'd she heard her death doom read.
"Cheer thee, my child!" the abbess said,
"They dare not tear thee from my hand,
To ride alone with armed band."—
"Nay, holy mother, nay,"
Fitz-Eustace, said "the lovely Clare
Will be in Lady Angus' care,
In Scotland while we stay;
And, when we move, an easy ride
Will bring us to the English side,
Female attendants to provide
Befitting Gloster's heir;
Nor thinks, nor dreams, my noble lord,
By slightest look, or act, or word,
To harass lady Clare;
Her faithful guardian he will be,
Nor sue for slightest courtesy
That even to stranger falls,
Till he shall place her, safe and free,
Within her kinsman's halls."
He spoke, and blush'd with earnest grace
His faith was painted on his face,
And Clare's worst fear relieved.
The lady abbess loud exclaim'd
On Henry, and the Douglas blamed,
Entreated threaten'd grieved;
To martyr, saint, and prophet pray'd,
Against Lord Marmion inveigh'd,
And call'd the prioress to aid,
To curse with candle, bell, and book.—
Her head the grave Cistertian shook:
'The Douglas and the king," she said,
"In their commands will be obey'd;
Grieve not, nor dream that harm can fall
The maiden in Tantallon hall."

XXXI.

The abbess, seeing strife was vain,
Assumed her wonted state again,—
For much of state she had,—
Composed her veil, and raised her head,
And—"Bid," in solemn voice she said,
"Thy master, bold and bad,
The records of his house turn o'er,
And, when he there shall written see,
That one of his own ancestry
Drove the monks forth of Coventry,
Bid him his fate explore!
Prancing in pride of earthly trust,
His charger hurl'd him to the dust,
And, by a base plebeian thrust.
He died his band before.
God judge 'twixt Marmion and me;
He is a chief of high degree,
And I a poor recluse;
Yet oft, in holy writ, we see
Even such weak minister as me
May the oppressor bruise:
For thus, inspired, did Judith slay
The mighty in his sin,
And Jael thus, and Deborah,"—
Here hasty Blount broke in:
"Fitz-Eustace, we must march our band;
St. Anton' fire thee! wilt thou stand
All day with bonnet in thy hand,
To hear the lady preach?
By this good light! if thus we stay,
Lord Marmion, for our fond delay
Will sharper sermon teach.
Come, don thy cap, and mount thy horse;
The dame must patience take perforce."—

XXXII.

"Submit we then to force," said Clare;
"But let this barbarous lord despair
His purposed aim to win;
Let him take living, land, and life;
But to be Marmion's wedded wife
In me were deadly sin:
And if it be the king's decree,
That I must find no sanctuary,
Where even a homicide might come,
And safely rest his head,
Though at its open portals stood,
Thirsting to pour forth blood for blood,
The kinsmen of the dead,—
Yet one asylum is my own,
Against the dreaded hour;
A low, a silent, and a lone,
Where kings have little power.
One victim is before me there.—
Mother, your blessing, and in prayer
Remember your unhappy Clare!"—
Loud weeps the abbess, and bestows
Kind blessings many a one;
Weeping and wailing loud arose
Round patient Clare, the clamorous woes
Of every simple nun.
His eyes the gentle Eustace dried,
And scarce rude Blount the sight could bide.
Then took the squire her rein,
And gently led away her steed,
And, by each courteous word and deed,
To cheer her strove in vain.

XXXIII.

But scant three miles the band had rode,
When o'er a height they pass'd,
And, sudden, close, before them show'd
His towers, Tantallon vast;
Broad, massive, high, and stretching far,
And held impregnable in war.
On a projecting rock they rose,
And round three sides the ocean flows,
The fourth did battled walls enclose,
And double mound and fosse.
By narrow drawbridge, outworks strong,
Through studded gates, an entrance long
To the main court they cross.
It was a wide and stately square:
Around were lodgings fit and fair,
And towers of various form,
Which on the court projected far,
And broke its lines quadrangular.
Here was square keep, there turret high,
Or pinnacle that sought the sky,
Whence oft the warder could descry
The gathering ocean storm.

XXXIV.

Here did they rest—The princely care
Of Douglas, why should I declare,
Or say they met reception fair?
Or why the tiding say,
Which, varying, to Tantallon came,
By hurrying posts or fleeter fame,
With every varying day?
And, first, they heard king James had won
Etal, and Wark, and Ford; and then,
That Norham castle strong was ta'en.
At that sore marvell'd Marmion;—
And Douglas hoped his monarch's hand
Would soon subdue Northumberland:
But whisper'd news there came,
That, while his host inactive lay,
And melted by degrees away,
King James was dallying off the day
With Heron's wily dame.
Such acts to chronicles I yield;
Go seek them there, and see
Mine is a tale of Flodden field,
And not a history.—
At length they heard the Scottish host
On that high ridge had made their post,
Which frowns o'er Millfield plain;
And that brave Surrey many a band
Had gather'd in the southern land,
And march'd into Northumberland,
And camp at Wooler ta'en.
Marmion, like charger in the stall,
That hears, without, the trumpet-call,
Began to chafe and swear:
"A sorry thing to hide my head
In castle like a fearful maid,
When such a field is near!
Needs must I see this battle-day:
Death to my fame, if such a fray
Were fought, and Marmion away!
The Douglas too, I wot not why,
Hath 'bated of his courtesy:
No longer in his halls I'll stay."
Then bade his band they should array
For march against the dawning day.

INTRODUCTION TO CANTO VI.

TO RICHARD HEBER, ESQ.

Mertoun-House, Christmas

Heap on more wood!—the wind is chill;
But, let it whistle as it will,
We'll keep our Christmas merry still.
Each age has deem'd the new-born year
The fittest time for festal cheer:
Even, heathen yet, the savage Dane
At Iol more deep the mead did drain;
High on the beach his galleys drew,
And feasted all his pirate crew;
Then in his low and pine-built hall,
Where shields and axes deck'd the wall,
They gorged upon the half-dress'd steer;
Caroused in sees of sable beer;
While round, in brutal jest, were thrown
The half-gnaw'd rib, and marrow bone;
Or listen'd all, in grim delight,
While scalds yell'd out the joys of fight.
Then forth, in frenzy, would they hie,
While wildly loose their red locks fly,
And, dancing round the blazing pile,
They make such barbarous mirth the while,
As best might to the mind recall
The boisterous joys of Odin's hall.
And well our Christian sires of old
Loved when the year its course had roll'd,
And brought blithe Christmas back again,
With all his hospitable train.
Domestic and religious rite
Gave honour to the holy night:
On Christmas eve the bells were rung;
On Christmas eve the mass was sung:
That only night, in all the year,
Saw the stoled priest the chalice rear.
The damsel donn'd her kirtle sheen;
The hall was dress'd with holy green;
Forth to the wood did merry-men go,
To gather in the misletoe.
Then open'd wide the baron's hall,
To vassal, tenant, serf, and all;
Power laid his rod of rule aside,
And ceremony doff'd her pride.
The heir, with roses in his shoes:
That night might village partner choose;
The lord, underogating, share
The vulgar game of "post and pair."
All hail'd, with uncontroll'd delight,
And general voice, the happy night,
That to the cottage, as the crown,
Brought tidings of salvation down.
The fire, with well-dried logs supplied,
Went roaring up the chimney wide;
The huge hall-table's oaken face,
Scrubb'd till it shone, the day to grace,
Bore then upon its massive board
No mark to part the squire and lord.
Then was brought in the lusty brawn,
By old blue-coated serving-man;

Then the grim boar's-head frown'd on high,
Crested with bays and rosemary.
Well can the green-garb'd ranger tell,
How, when, and where, the monster fell;
What dogs before his death he tore,
And all the baiting of the boar.
The wassel round, in good brown bowls,
Garnish'd with ribands, blithely trowls.
There the huge surloin reek'd; hard by
Plum-porridge stood, and Christmas pie;
Nor fail'd old Scotland to produce,
At such high-tide, her savoury goose.
Then came the merry masquers in,
And carols roar'd with blithesome din;
If unmelodious was the song,
It was a hearty note, and strong.
Who lists may in their mumming see
Traces of ancient mystery;
While shirts supplied the masquerade,
And smutted cheeks the visors made;
But, O! what masquers, richly dight
Can boast of bosoms half so light!
England was merry England, when
Old Christmas brought his sports again.
'Twas Christmas broach'd the mightiest ale;
'Twas Christmas told the merriest tale;
A Christmas gambol oft could cheer
The poor man's heart through half the year.
Still linger in our northern clime
Some remnants of the good old time;
And still, within our valleys here,
We hold the kindred title dear,
E'en when, perchance, its far-fetch'd claim
To southern ear sounds empty name;
For course of blood, our proverbs deem,
Is warmer than the mountain stream,*
And thus my Christmas still I hold
Where my great-grandsire came of old
With amber beard, and flaxen hair,
And reverend, apostolic air,
The feast and holy-tide to share,
And mix sobriety with wine,
And honest mirth with thoughts divine;
Small thought was his, in after time,
E'er to be hitch'd into a rhyme.
The simple sire could only boast
That he was loyal to his cost;
The banish'd race of kings revered,
And lost his land,—but kept his beard.
In these dear halls, where welcome kin
Is with fair liberty combined;
Where cordial friendship gives the hand,
And flies constraint the magic wand
Of the fair dame that rules the land,
Little we heed the tempest drear,
While music, mirth, and social cheer,
Speed on their wings the passing year.
And Mertoun's halls are fair e'en now,
When not a leaf is on the bough.
Tweed loves them well, and turns again,
As loath to leave the sweet domain,
And holds his mirror to her face,
And clasps her with a close embrace:—
Gladly as he, we seek the dome,
And as reluctant turns us home.
How just, that, at this time of glee,
My thoughts should, Heber, turn to thee!
For many a merry hour we've known,
And heard the chimes of midnight's tone.
Cease, then, my friend! a moment cease,
And leave these classic tones in peace!
Of Roman and of Grecian lore
Sure mortal brain can hold no more.
These ancients, as Noll Bluff might say,
"Were pretty fellows in their day:"*
But time and tide o'er all prevail—
On Christmas eve a Christmas tale—
Of wonder and of war.—"Profane!
What! leave the lofty Latin strain,
Her stately prose, her verse's charms,
To hear the clash of rustic arms;
In fairy land or limbo lost,
To jostle conjuror and ghost,
Goblin and witch!"—Nay, Heber dear,
Before you touch my charter, hear;
Though Leyden aids, alas! no more
My cause with many-languaged lore,
This may I say:—in realms of death
Ulysses meets Alcides' *wraith;*
Æneas, upon Thracia's shore,
The ghost of murder'd Polydore;
For omens, we in Livy cross,
At every turn, *locutus bos.*
As grave and truly speaks that ox,
As if he told the price of stocks;
Or held, in Rome republican,
The place of common-councilman.
All nations have their omens drear,
Their legends wild of wo and fear.
To Cambria look—the peasant see,
Bethink him of Glendowerdy,
And shun "the spirit's blasted tree."
The Highlander, whose red claymore
The battle turn'd on Maida's shore,
Will, on a Friday morn, look pale,
If ask'd to tell a fairy tale;
He fears the vengeful elfin king,
Who leaves that day his grassy ring:
Invisible to human ken,
He walks among the sons of men.
Didst e'er, dear Heber, pass along
Beneath the towers of Franchemont,
Which, like an eagle's nest in air,
Hangs o'er the stream and hamlet fair?—
Deep in their vaults, the peasants say,
A mighty treasure buried lay,
Amass'd, through rapine and through wrong,
By the last Lord of Franchemont.
The iron chest is bolted hard,
A huntsman sits, its constant guard;
Around his neck his horn is hung,
His hanger in his belt is slung;
Before his feet his bloodhounds lie;
An 'twere not for his gloomy eye,
Whose withering glance no heart can brook,
As true a huntsman doth he look,

* "Blood is warmer than water,"—a proverb meant to vindicate our family predilections.

* "Hannibal was a pretty fellow, sir—a very pretty fellow in his day."—*Old Bachelor.*

As bugle e'er in brake did sound,
Or ever halloo'd to a hound.
To chase the fiend, and win the prize,
In that same dungeon ever tries
An aged Necromantic priest;
It is an hundred years, at least,
Since 'twixt them first the strife begun,
And neither yet has lost or won.
And oft the conjuror's words will make
The stubborn demon groan and quake;
And oft the bands of iron break,
Or bursts one lock, that still amain,
Fast as 'tis open'd, shuts again.
That magic strife within the tomb
May last until the day of doom,
Unless th' adept shall learn to tell
The very word that clench'd the spell,
When Franchemont lock'd the treasure-cell.
An hundred years are past and gone,
And scarce three letters has he won.
Such general superstition may
Excuse for old Pitscottie say;
Whose gossip history has given
My song the messenger from heaven,
That warn'd, in Lithgow, Scotland's king,
Nor less the infernal summoning;
May pass the monk of Durham's tale,
Whose demon fought in Gothic mail;
May pardon plead for Fordon grave,
Who told of Gifford's goblin cave.
But why such instances to you,
Who, in an instant, can review
Your treasured hoards of various lore,
And furnish twenty thousand more?
Hoards, not like theirs whose volumes rest
Like treasures in the Franchemont chest;
While gripple owners still refuse
To others what they cannot use,—
Give them the priest's whole century,
They shall not spell you letters three;
Their pleasure in the books the same
The magpie takes in pilfer'd gem.
Thy volumes, open as thy heart,
Delight, amusement, science, art,
To every ear and eye impart;
Yet who, of all who thus employ them,
Can, like the owner's self, enjoy them?
But, hark! I hear the distant drum:
The day of Flodden field is come.—
Adieu, dear Heber! life and health,
And store of literary wealth.

Canto VI.

THE BATTLE.

I.

While great events were on the gale,
And each hour brought a varying tale,
And the demeanour, changed and cold,
Of Douglas, fretted Marmion bold,
And, like the impatient steed of war,
He snuff'd the battle from afar;
And hopes were none, that back again
Herald should come from Terouenne,
Where England's king in leaguer lay,
Before decisive battle-day;—
While these things were, the mournful Clare
Did in the dame's devotions share:
For the good countess ceaseless pray'd,
To Heaven and saints, her sons to aid,
And, with short interval, did pass
From prayer to book, from book to mass,
And all in high baronial pride,—
A life both dull and dignified;—
Yet as Lord Marmion nothing press'd
Upon her intervals of rest,
Dejected Clara well could bear
The formal state, the lengthen'd prayer,
Though dearest to her wounded heart
The hours that she might spend apart.

II.

I said, Tantallon's dizzy steep
Hung o'er the margin of the deep.
Many a rude tower and rampart there
Repell'd the insult of the air,
Which, when the tempest vex'd the sky,
Half breeze, half spray, came whistling by
Above the rest, a turret square
Did o'er its Gothic entrance bear,
Of sculpture rude, a stony shield;
The Bloody Heart was in the field.
And in the chief three mullets stood,
The cognizance of Douglas blood.
The turret held a narrow stair,
Which, mounted, gave you access where
A parapet's embattled row
Did seaward round the castle go.
Sometimes in dizzy steps descending,
Sometimes in narrow circuit bending,
Sometimes in platform broad extending,
Its varying circle did combine
Bulwark, and bartizan, and line,
And bastion, tower, and vantage-coign;
Above the booming ocean leant
The far-projecting battlement;
The billows burst, in ceaseless flow,
Upon the precipice below,
Where'er Tantallon faced the land,
Gate-works, and walls, were strongly mann'd;
No need upon the sea-girt side;
The steepy rock and frantic tide,
Approach of human step denied:
And thus these lines and ramparts rude,
Were left in deepest solitude.

III.

And, for they were so lonely, Clare
Would to these battlements repair,
And muse upon her sorrows there,
And list the sea-bird's cry;
Or, slow like noontide ghost, would glide
Along the dark gray bulwark's side,
And ever on the heaving tide
Look down with weary eye.
Oft did the cliff, and swelling main,
Recall the thoughts of Whitby's fame,—
A home she ne'er might see again:
For she had laid adown,

So Douglas bade, the hood and veil,
And frontlet of the cloister pale,
And Benedictine gown:
It were unseemly sight he said,
A novice out of convent shade.—
Now her bright locks, with sunny glow,
Again adorn'd her brow of snow;
Her mantle rich, whose borders, round,
A deep and fretted broidery bound,
In golden foldings sought the ground;
Of holy ornament, alone
Remain'd a cross of ruby stone;
And often did she look
On that which in her hand she bore,
With velvet bound, and broider'd o'er
Her breviary book.
In such a place, so lone, so grim,
At dawning pale, or twilight dim,
It fearful would have been,
To meet a form so richly dress'd,
With book in hand, and cross on breast,
And such a woful mien.
Fitz-Eustace, loitering with his bow
To practise on the gull and crow,
Saw her, at distance, gliding slow,
And did by Mary swear,—
Some lovelorn fay she might have been,
Or, in romance, some spell-bound queen;
For ne'er, in work-day world, was seen
A form so witching fair.

IV.

Once walking thus at evening tide,
It chanced a gliding sail she spied,
And, sighing, thought—"The abbess there,
Perchance, does to her home repair;
Her peaceful rule, where duty, free,
Walks hand in hand with charity;
Where oft devotion's tranced glow
Can such a glimpse of heaven bestow,
That the enraptured sisters see
High vision, and deep mystery;
The very form of Hilda fair,
Hovering upon the sunny air,
And smiling on her votaries' prayer.
O! wherefore, to my duller eye,
Did still the saint her form deny!
Was it, that, seared by sinful scorn,
My heart could neither melt nor burn?
Or lie my warm affections low
With him, that taught them first to glow!
Yet, gentle abbess, well I knew,
To pay thy kindness grateful due,
And well could brook the mild command,
That rule thy simple maiden band.—
How different now! condemn'd to bide
My doom from this dark tyrant's pride.
But Marmion has to learn, ere long,
That constant mind, and hate of wrong,
Descended to a feeble girl
From red De Clare, stout Gloster's earl;
Of such a stem a sapling weak,
He ne'er shall bend, although he break.

V.

"But see!—what makes this armour here?"
For in her path there lay
Targe, corselet, helm;—she view'd them near.—
"The breastplate pierced!—Ay, much I fear,
Weak fence wert thou 'gainst foeman's spear
That hath made fatal entrance here,
As these dark blood-gouts say.—
Thus Wilton!—O! not corselet's ward,
Not truth, as diamond pure and hard,
Could be thy manly bosom's guard
On you disastrous day!"—
She raised her eyes in mournful mood,—
Wilton himself before her stood!
It might have seem'd his passing ghost,
For every youthful grace was lost;
And joy unwonted, and surprise,
Gave their strange wildness to his eyes.
Expect not, noble dames and lords,
That I can tell such scene in words:
What skilful limner e'er would choose
To paint the rainbow's varying hues.
Unless to mortal it were given
To dip his brush in dies of heaven?
Far less can my weak line declare
Each changing passion's shade;
Brightening to rapture from despair,
Sorrow, surprise, and pity there,
And joy, with her angelic air,
And hope, that paints the future fair,
Their varying hues display'd:
Each o'er its rival's ground extending,
Alternate conquering, shifting, blending
Till all, fatigued, the conflict yield,
And mighty love retains the field.
Shortly I tell what then he said,
By many a tender word delay'd,
And modest blush, and bursting sigh,
And question kind, and fond reply.

VI.

DE WILTON'S HISTORY.

"Forget we that disastrous day,
When senseless in the lists I lay.
Thence dragg'd,—but how I cannot know
For sense and recollection fled,
I found me on a pallet low,
Within my ancient beademan's shed.
Austin,—remember'st thou, my Clare,
How thou didst blush when the old man
When first our infant love began,
Said we would make a matchless pair?
Menials, and friends, and kinsmen fled
From the degraded traitor's bed,—
He, only, held my burning head,
And tended me for many a day!
While wounds and fever held their sway
But far more needful was his care
When sense return'd, to wake despair
For I did tear the closing wound,
And dash me frantic on the ground,
If e'er I heard the name of Clare.
At length, to calmer reason brought,
Much by his kind attendance wrought,
With him I left my native strand,
And, in a palmer's weeds array'd,
My hated name and form to shade,
I journey'd many a land;

No more a lord of rank and birth,
But mingled with the dregs of earth.
Oft Austin for my reason fear'd,
When I would sit, and deeply brood
On dark revenge, and deeds of blood,
Or wild mad schemes uprear'd.
My friend at length fell sick, and said,
God would remove him soon;
And, while upon his dying bed,
He begg'd of me a boon—
If ere my deadliest enemy
Beneath my brand should conquer'd lie,
E'en then my mercy should awake,
And spare his life for Austin's sake.

VII.

"Still restless as a second Cain,
To Scotland next my route was ta'en,
Full well the paths I knew.
Fame of my fate made various sound,
That death in pilgrimage I found,
That I had perish'd of my wound,—
None cared which tale was true:
And living eye could never guess
De Wilton in his palmer's dress:
For, now that sable slough is shed,
And trimm'd my shaggy beard and head,
I scarcely know me in the glass.
A chance most wondrous did provide,
That I should be that baron's guide—
I will not name his name!—
Vengeance to God alone belongs;
But, when I think on all my wrongs,
My blood is liquid flame!
And ne'er the time shall I forget,
When, in a Scottish hostel set,
Dark looks we did exchange;
What were his thoughts I cannot tell;
But in my bosom muster'd hell
Its plans of dark revenge.

VIII.

"A word of vulgar augury,
That broke from me, I scarce knew why,
Brought on a village tale;
Which wrought upon his moody sprite,
And sent him armed forth by night.
I borrow'd steed and mail,
And weapons, from his sleeping band;
And, passing from a postern door,
We met, and 'counter'd, hand to hand,—
He fell on Gifford moor.
For the death stroke my brand I drew
(O then my helmed head he knew,
The palmer's cowl was gone,)
Then had three inches of my blade
The heavy debt of vengeance paid,—
My hand the thought of Austin stay'd
I left him there alone.—
O, good old man! e'en from the grave,
Thy spirit could thy master save:
If I had slain my foeman, ne'er
Had Whitby's abbess, in her fear,
Given to my hand this packet dear,
Of power to clear my injured fame,
And vindicate De Wilton's name.—
Perchance you heard the abbess tell
Of the strange pageantry of hell,
That broke our secret speech—
It rose from the infernal shade,
Or featly was some juggler play'd,
A tale of peace to teach.
Appeal to Heaven I judged was best,
When my name came among the rest.

IX.

"Now here, within Tantallon hold,
To Douglas late my tale I told,
To whom my house was known of old.
Won by my proofs, his falchion bright,
This eve anew shall dub me knight.
These were the arms that once did turn
The tide of fight on Otterburne,
And Harry Hotspur forced to yield,
When the dead Douglas won the field.
These Angus gave—his armour's care,
Ere morn, shall every breach repair;
For naught, he said, was in his halls,
But ancient armour on the walls,
And aged chargers in the stalls,
And women, priests, and gray-hair'd men;
The rest were all in Twisel glen.*
And now I watch my armour here,
By law of arms, till midnight's near;
Then, once again a belted knight,
Seek Surrey's camp with dawn of light.

X.

"There soon again we meet, my Clare!
This baron means to guide thee there:
Douglas reveres his king's command,
Else would he take thee from his band.
And there thy kinsman, Surrey, too,
Will give De Wilton justice due.
Now meeter far for martial broil,
Firmer my limbs, and strung by toil,
Once more"——"O, Wilton! must we then
Risk new-found happiness again,
Trust fate of arms once more?
And is there not an humble glen,
Where we, content and poor,
Might build a cottage in the shade,
A shepherd thou, and I to aid
Thy task on dale and moor?—
That reddening brow!—too well I know,
Not even thy Clare can peace bestow,
While falsehood stains thy name:
Go then to fight! Clare bids thee go
Clare can a warrior's feelings know,
And weep a warrior's shame;
Can Red Earl Gilbert's spirit feel,
Buckle the spurs upon thy heel,
And belt thee with thy brand of steel,
And send thee forth to fame!"—

XI.

That night, upon the rocks and bay,
The midnight moonbeam slumbering lay,
And pour'd its silver light, and pure,
Through loop hole, and through embrazure
Upon Tantallon tower and hall;

* Where James encamped before taking post at Flodden

But chief were arched windows wide
Illuminate the chapel's pride,
The sober glances fall.
Much was there need; though, seam'd with scars,
Two veterans of the Douglas' wars,
Though two gray priests were there,
And each a blazing torch held high,
You could not by their blaze descry
The chapel's carving fair.
Amid that dim and smoky light,
Checkering the silvery moonshine bright,
A bishop by the altar stood,
A noble lord of Douglas' blood,
With mitre sheen, and rocquet white.
Yet show'd his meek and thoughtful eye
But little pride of prelacy;
More pleased that, in a barbarous age,
He gave rude Scotland Virgil's page,
Than that beneath his rule he held
The bishopric of fair Dunkeld.
Beside him ancient Angus stood,
Doff'd his fair gown and sable hood;
O'er his huge form, and visage pale,
He wore a cap and shirt of mail;
And lean'd his large and wrinkled hand
Upon the huge and sweeping brand
Which wont, of yore, in battle fray,
His foeman's limbs to shred away,
As wood-knife lops the sapling spray.
He seem'd as from the tombs around,
Rising at judgment-day,
Some giant Douglas may be found
In all his old array;
So pale his face, so huge his limb,
So old his arms, his look so grim.

XII.

Then at the altar Wilton kneels,
And Clare the spurs bound on his heels;
And think what next he must have felt,
At buckling of the falchion belt,
And judge how Clara changed her hue,
While fastening to her lover's side
A friend, which, though in danger tried,
He once had found untrue!
Then Douglas struck him with his blade:
"Saint Michael and saint Andrew aid,
I dub thee knight.
Arise, Sir Ralph, De Wilton's heir!
For king, for church, for lady fair,
See that thou fight."—
And Bishop Gawain, as he rose,
Said—"Wilton! grieve not for thy woes,
Disgrace, and trouble;
For he, who honour best bestows,
May give thee double."—
De Wilton sobb'd, for sob he must—
"Where'er I meet a Douglas, trust,
That Douglas is my brother!"
"Nay, nay," old Angus said, "not so;
To Surrey's camp thou now must go,
Thy wrongs no longer smother.
I have two sons in yonder field;
And, if thou meet'st them under shield,
Upon them bravely—do thy worst;
And foul fall him that blenches first!"

XIII.

Not far advanced was morning day,
When Marmion did his troop array
To Surrey's camp to ride;
He had safe conduct for his band,
Beneath the royal seal and hand,
And Douglas gave a guide;
The ancient earl, with stately grace,
Would Clara on her palfrey place,
And whisper'd, in an under tone,
"Let the hawk stoop, his prey is flown."
The train from out the castle drew,
But Marmion stopp'd to bid adieu:—
"Though something I might plain," he said,
"Of cold respect to stranger guest,
Sent hither by your king's behest,
While in Tantallon's towers I stay'd;
Part we in friendship from your land,
And, noble earl, receive my hand."
But Douglas round him drew his cloak,
Folded his arms, and thus he spoke:—
"My manors, halls, and bowers, shall still
Be open, at my sovereign's will,
To each one whom he lists, howe'er
Unmeet to be the owner's peer.
My castles are my king's alone,
From turret to foundation stone—
The hand of Douglas is his own;
And never shall in friendly grasp
The hand of such as Marmion clasp."

XIV.

Burn'd Marmion's swarthy cheek like fire,
And shook his very frame for ire,
And—"This to me!" he said,—
"An 'twere not for thy hoary beard,
Such hand as Marmion's had not spared
To cleave the Douglas' head!
And, first, I tell thee, haughty peer,
He, who does England's message here,
Although the meanest in her state,
May well, proud Angus, be thy mate:
And, Douglas, more I tell thee here,
E'en in thy pitch of pride,
Here, in thy hold, thy vassals near,
(Nay, never look upon your lord,
And lay your hands upon your sword,)
I tell thee, thou'rt defied!
And if thou saidst, I am not peer
To any lord in Scotland here,
Lowland or highland, far or near,
Lord Angus, thou hast lied!"
On the earl's cheek the flush of rage
O'ercame the ashen hue of age:
Fierce he broke forth: "And darest thou then
To beard the lion in his den,
The Douglas in his hall?
And hopest thou hence unscath'd to go?
No, by St. Bride of Bothwell, no!—
Up drawbridge, grooms—what, warder, ho!
Let the portcullis fall."
Lord Marmion turn'd,—well was his need,
And dash'd the rowels in his steed,
Like arrow through the archway sprung,
The ponderous gate behind him rung:

To pass there was such scanty room,
The bars, descending, razed his plume.

XV.

The steed along the drawbridge flies,
Just as it trembled on the rise;
Not lighter does the swallow skim
Along the smooth lake's level brim:
And when Lord Marmion reach'd his band,
He halts and turn'd with clenched hand,
And shout of loud defiance pours,
And shook his gauntlet at the towers.
"Horse! horse!" the Douglas cried, "and chase!"
But soon he rein'd his fury's pace;
"A royal messenger he came,
Though most unworthy of the name.—
A letter forged! St. Jude to speed!
Did ever knight so foul a deed?
At first in heart it liked me ill,
When the king praised his clerkly skill.
Thanks to St. Bothan, son of mine,
Save Gawain, ne'er could pen a line:
So swore I, and I swear it still,
Let my boy-bishop fret his fill.—
St. Mary mend my fiery mood!
Old age ne'er cools the Douglas' blood,
I thought to slay him where he stood.—
'Tis pity of him, too," he cried:
"Bold can he speak, and fairly ride:
I warrant him a warrior tried."—
With this his mandate he recalls,
And slowly seeks his castle's halls.

XVI.

The day in Marmion's journey wore;
Yet, ere his passion's gust was o'er,
They cross'd the heights of Stanrig-moor.
His troop more closely there he scann'd,
And miss'd the palmer from the band.
"Palmer or not," young Blount did say,
"He parted at the peep of day;
Good sooth it was in strange array."
"In what array?" said Marmion, quick,
"My lord, I ill can spell the trick;
But all night long, with clink and bang,
Close to my couch did hammers clang;
At dawn the falling drawbridge rang,
And, from a loop-hole while I peep,
Old Bell-the-cat came from the keep,
Wrapp'd in a gown of sables fair,
As fearful of the morning air;
Beneath, when that was blown aside,
A rusty shirt of mail I spied,
By Archibald won in bloody work,
Against the Saracen and Turk:
Last night it hung not in the hall;
I thought some marvel would befall.
And next I saw them saddled lead
Old Cheviot forth, the earl's best steed;
A matchless horse, though something old,
Prompt to his paces, cool and bold
I heard the sheriff Sholto say,
The earl did much the master* pray
To use him on the battle day;
But he preferr'd"—"Nay, Henry, cease!
Thou sworn horse-courser, hold thy peace.
Eustace, thou bear'st a brain—I pray,
What did Blount see at break of day?"

XVII.

"In brief, my lord, we both descried
(For I then stood by Henry's side)
The palmer mount, and outward ride,
Upon the earl's own favourite steed;
All sheath'd he was in armour bright,
And much resembled that same knight,
Subdued by you in Cotswold fight:
Lord Angus wish'd him speed."
The instant that Fitz-Eustace spoke,
A sudden light on Marmion broke;—
"Ah! dastard fool! to reason lost!"
He mutter'd; "'Twas not fay nor ghost,
I met upon the moonlight wold,
But living man of earthly mould.—
O dotage blind and gross!
Had I but fought as wont, one thrust
Had laid De Wilton in the dust,
My path no more to cross.—
How stand we now?—he told his tale
To Douglas; and with some avail;
'Twas therefore gloom'd his rugged brow.—
Will Surrey dare to entertain,
'Gainst Marmion, charge disproved and vain?
Small risk of that, I trow.
Yet Clare's sharp questions must I shun;
Must separate Constance from the nun
O what a tangled web we weave,
When first we practise to deceive!—
A palmer, too!—no wonder why
I felt rebuked beneath his eye:
I might have known there was but one
Whose look could quell Lord Marmion."

XVIII.

Stung with these thoughts, he urged to speed
His troop, and reach'd, at eve, the Tweed,
Where Lennel's convent closed their march.
(There now is left but one frail arch,
Yet mourn thou not its cells;
Our time a fair exchange has made;
Hard by, in hospitable shade,
A reverend pilgrim dwells,
Well worth the whole Bernardine brood,
That e'er wore sandal, frock, or hood.)
Yet did Saint Bernard's abbot there
Give Marmion entertainment fair,
And lodging for his train, and Clare.
Next morn the baron climb'd the tower,
To view afar the Scottish power,
Encamp'd on Flodden edge;
The white pavilions made a show,
Like remnants of the winter snow,
Along the dusky ridge.
Long Marmion look'd:—at length his eye
Unusual movement might descry,
Amid the shifting lines:
The Scottish host drawn out appears,
For, flashing on the hedge of spears
The eastern sunbeam shines.

* His eldest son, the master of Angus.

Their front now deepening, now extending,
Their flank inclining, wheeling, bending,
Now drawing back, and now descending,
The skilful Marmion well could know
They watch the motion of some foe,
Who traversed on the plain below.

XIX.

Even so it was:—From Flodden ridge
The Scots beheld the English host
Leave Barmore-wood, their evening post,
And heedful watch'd them as they cross'd
The Till by Twisel bridge.
High sight it is, and haughty, while
They dive into the deep defile;
Beneath the cavern'd cliff they fall,
Beneath the castle's airy wall.
By rock, by oak, by hawthorn tree,
Troop after troop are disappearing;
Troop after troop their banners rearing
Upon the eastern bank you see.
Still pouring down the rocky den,
Where flows the sullen Till,
And rising from the dim wood glen,
Standards on standards, men on men,
In slow succession still,
And sweeping o'er the Gothic arch,
And pressing on, in ceaseless march,
To gain the opposing hill.
That morn, to many a trumpet-clang,
Twisel! thy rock's deep echo rang;
And many a chief of birth and rank,
Saint Helen! at thy fountain drank.
Thy hawthorn glade, which now we see
In springtide bloom so lavishly,
Had then from many an axe its doom,
To give the marching columns room.

XX.

And why stands Scotland idly now,
Dark Flodden! on thy airy brow,
Since England gains the pass the while,
And struggles through the deep defile?
What checks the fiery soul of James?
Why sits that champion of the dames
Inactive on his steed,
And sees, between him and his land,
Between him and Tweed's southern strand,
His host lord Surrey lead?
What vails the vain knight-errant's brand!—
O, Douglas, for thy leading wand!
Fierce Randolph, for thy speed!
O for one hour of Wallace wight,
Or well-skill'd Bruce, to rule the fight,
And cry—"Saint Andrew and our right!"
Another sight had seen that morn,
From fate's dark book a leaf been torn,
And Flodden had been Bannock-bourne!—
The precious hour has pass'd in vain,
And England's host has gain'd the plain;
Wheeling their march, and circling still,
Around the base of Flodden-hill.

XXI.

Ere yet the bands met Marmion's eye,
Fitz-Eustace shouted loud and high,—
"Hark! hark! my lord, an English drum!
And see, ascending squadrons come
Between Tweed's river and the hill,
Foot, horse, and cannon:—hap what hap,
My basnet to a 'prentice cap,
Lord Surrey's o'er the Till!
Yet more! yet more!—how fair array'd
They file from out the hawthorn shade,
And sweep so gallant by!
With all their banners bravely spread,
And all their armour flashing high,
Saint George might waken from the dead,
To see fair England's standards fly."—
"Stint in thy prate," quoth Blount, "thou'dst best
And listen to our lord's behest."—
With kindling brow Lord Marmion said—
"This instant be our band array'd;
The river must be quickly cross'd,
That we may join Lord Surrey's host.
If fight king James—as well I trust,
That fight he will, and fight he must,—
The Lady Clare behind our lines
Shall tarry, while the battle joins."

XXII.

Himself he swift on horseback threw,
Scarce to the abbot bade adieu,
Far less would listen to his prayer,
To leave behind the helpless Clare.
Down to the Tweed his band he drew,
And mutter'd, as the flood they view,
"The pheasant in the falcon's claw,
He scarce will yield to please a daw:
Lord Angus may the abbot awe,
So Clare shall bide with me."
Then on that dangerous ford, and deep,
Where to the Tweed Leat's eddies creep,
He ventured desperately:
And not a moment will he bide,
Till squire, or groom, before him ride;
Headmost of all he stems the tide,
And stems it gallantly.
Eustace held Clare upon her horse,
Old Hubert led her rein,
Stoutly they braved the current's course,
And, though far downward driven per force,
The southern bank they gain;
Behind them, straggling, came to shore,
As best they might, the train:
Each o'er his head his yew-bow bore,
A caution not in vain;
Deep need that day that every string,
By wet unharm'd should sharply ring.
A moment then Lord Marmion stay'd,
And breathed his steed, his men array'd,
Then forward moved his band,
Until, Lord Surrey's rear-guard won,
He halted by a cross of stone,
That, on a hillock, standing lone,
Did all the field command.

XXIII.

Hence might they see the full array
Of either host, for deadly fray;
Their marshall'd line stretch'd east and west,
And fronted north and south

And distant salutation past
From the loud cannon mouth:
Not in the close successive rattle,
That breathes the voice of modern battle,
But slow and far between.—
The hillock gain'd, Lord Marmion stay'd:
"Here, by this cross," he gently said,
"You well may view the scene.
Here shalt thou tarry, lovely Clare:
O think of Marmion in thy prayer!
Thou wilt not!—well,—no less my care
Shall, watchful, for thy weal prepare.—
You, Blount and Eustace, are her guard,
With ten pick'd archers of my train;
With England if the day go hard,
To Berwick speed amain.—
But, if we conquer, cruel maid!
My spoils shall at your feet be laid,
When here we meet again."—
He waited not for answer there;
And would not mark the maid's despair,
Nor heed the discontented look
From either squire; but spurr'd amain,
And, dashing through the battle plain,
His way to Surrey took.

XXIV.

"The good Lord Marmion, by my life!
Welcome to danger's hour!
Short greeting serves in time of strife:—
Thus have I ranged my power:
Myself will rule this central host,
Stout Stanley fronts their right,
My sons command the va'ward post,
With Brian Tunstall, stainless knight;
Lord Dacre, with his horsemen light,
Shall be in rearward of the fight,
And succour those that need it most.
Now, gallant Marmion, well I know,
Would gladly to the vanguard go;
Edmund, the admiral, Tunstall there,
With thee their charge will blithely share;
There fight thine own retainers too,
Beneath De Burgh, thy steward true."—
"Thanks, noble Surrey!" Marmion said,
Nor further greeting there he paid;
But, parting like a thunderbolt,
First in the vanguard made a halt,
Where such a shout there rose
Of "Marmion! Marmion!" that the cry
Up Flodden mountain shrilling high,
Startled the Scottish foes.

XXV.

Blount and Fitz-Eustace rested still
With Lady Clare upon the hill;
On which (for far the day was spent)
The western sunbeams now were bent;
The cry they heard, its meaning knew,
Could plain their distant comrades view;
Sadly to Blount did Eustace say,
"Unworthy office here to stay,
No hope of gilded spurs to-day.—
But, see! look up—on Flodden bent,
The Scottish foe has fired his tent."
And sudden, as he spoke,
From the sharp ridges of the hill,
All downward to the banks of Till,
Was wreath'd in sable smoke;
Volumed and vast, and rolling far,
The cloud enveloped Scotland's war,
As down the hill they broke;
Nor martial shout, nor minstrel tone,
Announced their march; their tread alone,
At times one warning trumpet blown,
At times a stifled hum,
Told England, from his mountain throne
King James did rushing come.—
Scarce could they hear, or see their foes,
Until at weapon point they close.—
They close, in clouds of smoke and dust,
With sword-sway, and with lance's thrust;
And such a yell was there,
Of sudden and portentous birth,
As if men fought upon the earth,
And fiends in upper air;
O! life and death were in the shout,
Recoil and rally, charge and rout,
And triumph and despair.
Long look'd the anxious squires; their eye
Could in the darkness naught descry.

XXVI.

At length the freshening western blast
Aside the shroud of battle cast;
And, first, the ridge of mingled spears
Above the brightening cloud appears;
And in the smoke the pennons flew,
As in the storm the white sea-mew.
Then mark'd they, dashing broad and far,
The broken billows of the war,
And plumed crest of chieftains brave,
Floating like foam upon the wave,
But naught distinct they see:
Wide raged the battle on the plain;
Spears shook, and falchions flash'd amain;
Fell England's arrow-flight like rain;
Crests rose, and stoop'd, and rose again,
Wild and disorderly.
Amid the scene of tumult, high
They saw Lord Marmion's falcon fly:
And stainless Tunstall's banner white,
And Edmund Howard's lion bright,
Still bear them bravely in the fight;
Although against them come,
Of gallant Gordons many a one,
And many a stubborn highlandman,
And many a rugged border clan,
With Huntley, and with Home.

XXVII.

Far on the left, unseen the while,
Stanley broke Lennox and Argyle;
Though there the western mountaineer
Rush'd with bare bosom on the spear,
And flung the feeble targe aside,
And with both hands the broadsword plied:
'Twas vain:—But fortune, on the right,
With fickle smile, cheer'd Scotland's fight.
Then fell that spotless banner white,—
The Howard's lion fell;

Yet still Lord Marmion's falcon flew
With wavering flight, while fiercer grew
  Around the battle yell.
The border slogan rent the sky!
A Home! a Gordon! was the cry;
  Loud were the clanging blows;
Advanced,—forced back,—now low, now high,
  The pennon sunk and rose;
As bends the bark's mast in the gale,
When rent are rigging, shrouds, and sail,
  It waver'd 'mid the foes.
No longer Blount the sight could bear:—
"By heaven, and all its saints, I swear,
  I will not see it lost!
Fitz-Eustace, you with Lady Clare
May bid your beads, and patter prayer,—
  I gallop to the host."
And to the fray he rode amain,
Follow'd by all the archer train.
The fiery youth, with desperate charge,
Made, for a space, an opening large,—
  The rescued banner rose,—
But darkly closed the war around,
Like pine tree rooted from the ground,
  It sunk among the foes.
Then Eustace mounted too;—yet stay'd,
As loath to leave the helpless maid,
  When, fast as shaft can fly,
Bloodshot his eyes, his nostrils spread,
The loose rein dangling from his head,
Housing and saddle bloody red,
  Lord Marmion's steed rush'd by;
And Eustace, maddening at the sight,
  A look and sign to Clara cast,
  To mark he would return in haste,
Then plunged into the fight.

XXVIII.

Ask me not what the maiden feels,
  Left in that dreadful hour alone:
Perchance her reason stoops, or reels;
  Perchance a courage, not her own,
  Braces her mind to desperate tone.
The scatter'd van of England wheels;—
  She only said, as loud in air
  The tumult roar'd, "Is Wilton there?"
  They fly, or, madden'd by despair,
  Fight but to die,—"Is Wilton there?"
With that, straight up the hill there rode
  Two horsemen drench'd with gore,
And in their arms, a helpless load,
  A wounded knight they bore.
His hand still strain'd the broken brand;
His arms were smear'd with blood and sand:
Dragg'd from among the horses' feet,
With dinted shield, and helmet beat,
The falcon crest and plumage gone,
Can that be haughty Marmion!—
Young Blount his armour did unlace,
And, gazing on his ghastly face,
  Said—"By Saint George, he's gone!
That spear-wound has our master sped,
And see the deep cut on his head!
  Good night to Marmion."
"Unnurtured Blount! thy brawling cease:
He opes his eyes," said Eustace; "peace!"

XXIX.

When, doff'd his casque, he felt free air
Around 'gan Marmion wildly stare:
"Where's Harry Blount? Fitz-Eustace, where.
Linger ye here, ye hearts of hare?
Redeem my pennon,—charge again!
Cry—'Marmion to the rescue!'—Vain!
Last of my race, on the battle-plain
That shout shall ne'er be heard again!—
Yet my last thought is England's:—fly,
  To Dacre bear my signet-ring:
  Tell him his squadrons up to bring:—
  Fitz-Eustace, to Lord Surrey hie;
  Tunstall lies dead upon the field,
  His lifeblood stains the spotless shield:
  Edmund is down:—my life is reft;
  The admiral alone is left.
  Let Stanley charge with spur of fire,—
  With Chester charge, and Lancashire,
  Full upon Scotland's central host,
  Or victory and England's lost.—
  Must I bid twice?—hence, varlets, fly!
  Leave Marmion here alone—to die."
They parted, and alone he lay;
Clare drew her from the sight away,
Till pain rung forth a lowly moan.
And half he murmur'd,—"Is there none,
  Of all my halls have nurst,
  Page, squire, or groom, one cup to bring
  Of blessed water from the spring,
  To slake my dying thirst!"

XXX.

O, woman! in our hours of ease,
Uncertain, coy, and hard to please,
And variable as the shade
By the light quivering aspen made,—
When pain and anguish wring the brow,
A ministering angel thou!—
Scarce were the piteous accents said,
When, with the baron's casque, the maid
  To the nigh streamlet ran:
Forgot were hatred, wrongs, and fears,
The plaintive voice alone she hears,
  Sees but the dying man.
She stoop'd her by the runnel's side,
  But in abhorrence backward drew;
For, oozing from the mountain side,
Where raged the war, a dark red tide
  Was curdling in the streamlet blue.
Where shall she turn?—behold her mark
  A little fountain cell,
Where water clear as diamond spark,
  In a stone basin fell.
Above some half-worn letters say,
Drink, weary pilgrim, drink and pray
For the kind soul of Sybil Grey,
  Who built this cross and well.
She fill'd the helm, and back she hied,
And with surprise and joy espied
  A monk supporting Marmion's head;
A pious man, whom duty brought
To dubious verge of battle fought,
  To shrive the dying, bless the dead.

XXXI.

Deep drank Lord Marmion of the wave,
And as she stoop'd his brow to lave—
"Is it the hand of Clare," he said,
"Or injured Constance, bathes my head?"
Then, as remembrance rose,—
"Speak not to me of shrift or prayer!
I must redress her woes.
Short space, few words are mine, to spare:
Forgive and listen, gentle Clare!"—
"Alas!" she said, "the while,—
O think of your immortal weal!
In vain for Constance is your zeal;
She——died at Holy Isle."
Lord Marmion started from the ground,
As light as if he felt no wound;
Though in the action burst the tide,
In torrents, from his wounded side.
"Then it was truth!"—he said—"I knew
That the dark presage must be true.—
I would the fiend, to whom belongs
The vengeance due to all her wrongs,
Would spare me but a day!
For wasting fire, and dying groan,
And priests slain on the altar stone,
Might bribe him for delay.
It may not be!—this dizzy trance—
Curse on yon base marauder's lance,
And doubly cursed my failing brand!
A sinful heart makes feeble hand."
Then, fainting, down on earth he sunk,
Supported by the trembling monk.

XXXII.

With fruitless labour, Clara bound,
And strove to staunch, the gushing wound:
The monk, with unavailing cares,
Exhausted all the church's prayers.
Ever, he said, that, close and near,
A lady's voice was on his ear,
And that the priest he could not hear,
For that she ever sung,
"In the lost battle, borne down by the flying,
Where mingles war's rattle with groans of the dying!"
So the notes rung;—
"Avoid thee, fiend!—with cruel hand,
Shake not the dying sinner's sand!
O look, my son, upon yon sign
Of the Redeemer's grace divine;
O think on faith and bliss!—
By many a death-bed I have been,
And many a sinner's parting seen,
But never aught like this."—
The war, that for a space did fail,
Now trebly thundering swell'd the gale,
And—Stanley! was the cry;
A light on Marmion's visage spread,
And fired his glazing eye:
With dying hand, above his head,
He shook the fragment of his blade,
And shouted "Victory!—
Charge, Chester, charge! On, Stanley, on!"—
Were the last words of Marmion.

XXXIII.

By this, though deep the evening fell,
Still rose the battle's deadly swell,
For still the Scots, around their king,
Unbroken, fought in desperate ring,
Where's now their victor va'ward wing,
Where Huntley, and where Home?—
O for a blast of that dread horn,
On Fontarabian echoes borne,
That to King Charles did come,
When Rowland brave, and Olivier,
And every paladin and peer,
On Roncesvalles died!
Such blast might warm them, yet in vain,
To quit the plunder of the slain,
And turn the doubtful day again,
While yet on Flodden side,
Afar the royal standard flies,
And round it toils, and bleeds, and dies,
Our Caledonian pride!
In vain the wish—for, far away,
While spoil and havoc mark their way,
Near Sybil's cross the plunderers stray.—
"O, lady," cried the monk, "away!"—
And placed her on her steed,
And led her to the chapel fair
Of Tilmouth upon Tweed.
There all the night they spent in prayer,
And, at the dawn of morning, there
She met her kinsman, Lord Fitz-Clare.

XXXIV.

But as they left the darkening heath,
More desperate grew the strife of death.
The English shafts in volleys hail'd,
In headlong charge their horse assail'd;
Front, flank, and rear, the squadrons sweep,
To break the Scottish circle deep,
That fought around their king.
But yet, though thick the shafts as snow,
Though charging knights like whirlwinds go,
Though bill-men ply the ghastly blow,
Unbroken was the ring:
The stubborn spearmen still made good
Their dark impenetrable wood,
Each stepping where his comrade stood,
The instant that he fell.
No thought was there of dastard flight;—
Link'd in the serried phalanx tight,
Groom fought like noble, squire like knight,
As fearlessly and well;
Till utter darkness closed her wing
O'er their thin host and wounded king.
Then skilful Surrey's sage commands
Led back from strife his shatter'd bands;
And from the charge they drew,
As mountain waves, from wasted lands,
Sweep back to ocean blue.
Then did their loss his foeman know;
Their king, their lords, their mightiest, low,
They melted from the field as snow,
When streams are swoln and south winds blow,
Dissolves in silent dew.

Tweed's echoes heard the ceaseless plash,
While many a broken band,
Disorder'd, through her currents dash,
To gain the Scottish land;
To town and tower, to town and dale,
To tell red Flodden's dismal tale,
And raise the universal wail.
Tradition, legend, tune, and song,
Shall many an age that wail prolong;
Still from the sire the son shall hear
Of the stern strife and carnage drear
Of Flodden's fatal field,
Where shiver'd was fair Scotland's spear,
And broken was her shield!

XXXV.

Day dawns upon the mountain's side—
There, Scotland! lay thy bravest pride,
Chiefs, knights, and nobles, many a one,
The sad survivors all are gone.—
View not that corpse mistrustfully,
Defaced and mangled though it be;
Nor to yon border castle high,
Look northward with upbraiding eye;
Nor cherish hope in vain,
That, journeying far on foreign strand,
The royal pilgrim to his land
May yet return again.
He saw the wreck his rashness wrought;
Reckless of life, he desperate fought,
And fell on Flodden plain:
And well in death his trusty brand,
Firm clench'd within his manly hand,
Beseem'd the monarch slain.
But, O! how changed since yon blithe night!—
Gladly I turn me from the sight,
Unto my tale again.

XXXVI.

Short is my tale:—Fitz-Eustace's care
A pierced and mangled body bare
To moated Lichfield's lofty pile;
And there, beneath the southern aisle,
A tomb, with Gothic Sculpture fair,
Did long Lord Marmion's image bear.
(Now vainly for its site you look;
'Twas levell'd, when fanatic Brook
The fair cathedral storm'd and took;
But, thanks to Heaven, and good Saint Chad,
A guerdon meet the spoiler had!)
There erst was martial Marmion found,
His feet upon a couchant hound,
His hands to heaven upraised;
And all around, on scutcheon rich,
And tablet carved, and fretted niche,
His arms and feats were blazed.
And yet, though all was carved so fair,
And priests for Marmion breathed the prayer,
The last Lord Marmion lay not there.
From Ettrick woods, a peasant swain
Follow'd his lord to Flodden plain,—
One of those flowers, whom plaintive lay
In Scotland mourns as "wede away."
Sore wounded, Sybil's cross he spied,
And dragg'd him to its foot and died,
Close by the noble Marmion's side.
The spoilers stripp'd and gash'd the slain,
And thus their corpses were mista'en;
And thus, in the proud baron's tomb,
The lowly woodsman took the room.

XXXVII.

Less easy task it were, to show
Lord Marmion's nameless grave, and low.
They dug his grave e'en where he lay,
But every mark is gone;
Time's wasting hand has done away
The simple cross of Sybil Grey,
And broke her font of stone.
But yet from out the little hill
Oozes the slender springlet still.
Oft halts the stranger there,
For thence may best his curious eye
The memorable field descry;
And shepherd boys repair
To seek the water-flag and rush,
And rest them by the hazel bush,
And plait their garlands fair;
Nor dream they sit upon the grave
That holds the bones of Marmion brave.—
When thou shalt find the little hill;
With thy heart commune, and be still.
If ever, in temptation strong,
Thou left'st the right path for the wrong:
If every devious step thus trod,
Still lead thee further from the road;
Dread thou to speak presumptuous doom
On noble Marmion's lowly tomb;
But say, "He died a gallant knight,
With sword in hand, for England's right."

XXXVIII.

I do not rhyme to that dull elf,
Who cannot image to himself,
That all through Flodden's dismal night,
Wilton was foremost in the fight;
That, when brave Surrey's steed was slain,
'Twas Wilton mounted him again;
'Twas Wilton's brand that deepest hew'd
Amid the spearmen's stubborn wood,
Unnamed by Hollinshed or Hall,
He was the living soul of all;
That, after fight, his faith made plain,
He won his faith and lands again;
And charged his old paternal shield
With bearings won on Flodden field.—
Nor sing I to that simple maid,
To whom it must in terms be said,
That king and kinsmen did agree
To bless fair Clara's constancy;
Who cannot, unless I relate,
Paint to her mind the bridal's state;
That Wolsey's voice the blessing spoke,
More, Sands, and Denny, pass'd the joke;
That bluff king Hal the curtain drew,
And Catherine's hand the stocking threw:
And afterwards for many a day,
That it was held enough to say,
In blessing to a wedded pair,
"Love they like Wilton and like Clare!"

L'ENVOY TO THE READER.

Why, then, a final note prolong
Or lengthen out a closing song,
Unless to bid the gentles speed,
Who long have listed to my rede ?*—
To statesman grave, if such may deign
To read the minstrel's idle strain,
Sound head, clean hand, and piercing wit,
And patriotic heart—as PITT!
A garland for the hero's crest,
And twined by her he loves the best;
To every lovely lady bright,
What can I wish but faithful knight?
To every faithful lover too,
What can I wish but lady true?
And knowledge to the studious sage,
And pillow to the head of age.
To thee, dear schoolboy, whom my lay
Has cheated of thy hour of play,
Light task and merry holiday!
To all, to each, a fair good night,
And pleasing dreams, and slumbers light!

THE LADY OF THE LAKE.

TO THE MOST NOBLE JOHN JAMES, MARQUIS OF ABERCORN, &c.

THIS POEM IS INSCRIBED, BY THE AUTHOR.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE scene of the following poem is laid chiefly in the vicinity of Loch-Katrine, in the Western Highlands of Perthshire. The time of action includes six days, and the transactions of each day occupy a canto.

CANTO I.

THE CHASE.

HARP of the North! that mouldering long hast hung
On the witch-elm that shades St. Fillan's spring,
And down the fitful breeze thy numbers flung,
Till envious ivy did around thee cling,
Muffling with verdant ringlet every string,—
O minstrel harp, still must thine accents sleep?
'Mid rustling leaves and fountains murmuring,
Still must thy sweeter sounds their silence keep,
Nor bid a warrior smile, nor teach a maid to weep?

Not thus, in ancient days of Caledon,
Was thy voice mute amid the festal crowd,
When lay of hopeless love, or glory won,
Aroused the fearful or subdued the proud.
At each according pause was heard aloud
Thine ardent symphony sublime and high!
Fair dames and crested chiefs attention bow'd;
For still the burthen of thy minstrelsy
Was knighthood's dauntless deed and beauty's matchless eye.

O wake once more! how rude soe'er the hand
That ventures o'er thy magic maze to stray;
O wake once more! though scarce my skill command
Some feeble echoing of thine earlier lay:
Though harsh and faint, and soon to die away,
And all unworthy of thy nobler strain;
Yet, if one heart throb higher at its sway,
The wizard note has not been touch'd in vain.
Then silent be no more! Enchantress, wake again!

I.

THE stag at eve had drunk his fill,
Where danced the moon on Monan's rill,
And deep his midnight lair had made
In lone Glenartney's hazel shade;
But when the sun his beacon red
Had kindled on Benvoirlich's head,
The deep-mouth'd bloodhound's heavy bay
Resounded up the rocky way,
And faint, from farther distance borne,
Were heard the clanging hoof and horn.

II.

As chief, who hears his warder call,
"To arms! the foemen storm the wall,"—
The antler'd monarch of the waste
Sprung from his heathery couch in haste.
But, e'er his fleet career he took,
The dewdrops from his flanks he shook;
Like crested leader proud and high,
Toss'd his beam'd frontlet to the sky;
A moment gazed adown the dale,
A moment snuff'd the tainted gale,
A moment listen'd to the cry,
That thicken'd as the chase drew nigh;
Then, as the headmost foes appear'd,
With one brave bound the copse he clear'd,
And, stretching forward free and far,
Sought the wild heaths of Uam-Var.

III.

Yell'd on the view the opening pack,
Rock, glen, and cavern, paid them back;
To many a mingled sound at once
Th' awaken'd mountain gave response.
An hundred dogs bay'd deep and strong,
Clatter'd a hundred steeds along,
Their peal the merry horns rung out,
An hundred voices join'd the shout:
With hark and whoop, and wild halloo,
No rest Benvoirlich's echoes knew.
Far from the tumult fled the roe,
Close in her covert cower'd the doe,
The falcon, from her cairn on high,
Cast on the rout a wondering eye,
Till far beyond her piercing ken
The hurricane had swept the glen.
Faint, and more faint, its failing din
Return'd from cavern, cliff, and linn,
And silence settled, wide and still,
On the lone wood and mighty hill.

IV.

Less loud the sounds of sylvan war
Disturb'd the heights of Uam-Var,

* Used generally for *tale*, or *discourse*.

And roused the cavern, where, 'tis told
A giant made his den of old:
For ere that steep ascent was won,
High in his pathway hung the sun,
And many a gallant, stay'd perforce,
Was fain to breathe his faltering horse;
And of the trackers of a deer
Scarce half the lessening pack was near;
So shrewdly, on the mountain side,
Had the bold burst their mettle tried.

V.

The noble stag was pausing now,
Upon the mountain's southern brow,
Where broad extended, far beneath,
The varied realms of fair Menteith.
With anxious eye he wander'd o'er
Mountain and meadow, moss and moor,
And ponder'd refuge from his toil,
By far Lochard or Aberfoyle.
But nearer was the copse-wood gray,
That waved and wept on Loch-Achray,
And mingled with the pine trees blue
On the bold cliffs of Ben-venue.
Fresh vigour with the hope return'd,
With flying foot the heath he spurn'd,
Held westward with unwearied race,
And left behind the panting chase.

VI.

'Twere long to tell what steeds gave o'er,
As swept the hunt through Cambus-more;
What reins were tighten'd in despair,
When rose Benledi's ridge in air;
Who flagg'd upon Bochastle's heath,
Who shunn'd to stem the flooded Teith,
For twice, that day, from shore to shore,
The gallant stag swum stoutly o'er.
Few were the stragglers, following far,
That reach'd the lake of Vennachar;
And when the Brigg of Turk was won,
The headmost horseman rode alone.

VII.

Alone, but with unbated zeal,
That horseman plied the scourge and steel;
For jaded now, and spent with toil,
Embosa'd with foam, and dark with soil,
While every gasp with sobs he drew,
The labouring stag strain'd full in view.
Two dogs of black Saint Hubert's breed,
Unmatch'd for courage, breath, and speed,
Fast on his flying traces came,
And all but won that desperate game;
For, scarce a spear's length from his haunch,
Vindictive toil'd the bloodhounds staunch;
Nor nearer might the dogs attain,
Nor farther might the quarry strain.
Thus up the the margin of the lake,
Between the precipice and brake,
O'er stock and rock their race they take.

VIII.

The hunter mark'd that mountain high,
The lone lake's western boundary,
And deem'd the stag must turn to bay,
Where that huge rampart barr'd the way,
Already glorying in the prize,
Measures his antlers with his eyes;
For the death-wound, and death-halloo,
Muster'd his breath, his whinyard drew;—
But thundering as he came prepared,
With ready arm and weapon bared,
The wily quarry shunn'd the shock,
And turn'd him from the opposing rock;
Then, dashing down a darksome glen,
Soon lost to hound and hunter's ken,
In the deep Trosach's wildest nook
His solitary refuge took.
There while, close couch'd, the thicket shed
Cold dews and wild flowers on his head,
He heard the baffled dogs in vain
Rave through the hollow pass amain,
Chiding the rocks that yell'd again.

IX.

Close on the hounds the hunter came,
To cheer them on the vanish'd game;
But, stumbling in the rugged dell,
The gallant horse exhausted fell.
Th' impatient rider strove in vain
To rouse him with the spur and rein,
For the good steed, his labours o'er,
Stretch'd his stiff limbs to rise no more.
Then touch'd with pity and remorse,
He sorrow'd o'er the expiring horse:
"I little thought, when first thy rein
I slack'd upon the banks of Seine,
That Highland eagle e'er should feed
On thy fleet limbs, my matchless steed;
Wo worth the chase, wo worth the day,
That costs thy life, my gallant gray!"

X.

Then through the dell his horn resounds,
From vain pursuit to call the hounds.
Back limp'd, with slow and crippled pace
The sulky leaders of the chase;
Close to their master's side they press'd,
With drooping tail and humbled crest;
But still the dingle's hollow throat
Prolong'd the swelling bugle-note.
The owlets started from their dream,
The eagles answer'd with their scream,
Round and around the sounds were cast
Till echo seem'd an answering blast;
And on the hunter hied his way,
To join some comrades of the day;
Yet often paused, so strange the road,
So wondrous were the scenes it show'd

XI.

The western waves of ebbing day
Roll'd o'er the glen their level way;
Each purple peak, each flinty spire,
Was bathed in floods of living fire,
But not a setting beam could glow
Within the dark ravines below,
Where twined the path in shadow hid,
Round many a rocky pyramid,
Shooting abruptly from the dell
Its thunder-splinter'd pinnacle;
Round many an insulated mass,
The native bulwarks of the pass,

Huge as the tower which builders vain
Presumptuous piled on Shinar's plain.
The rocky summits, split and rent,
Form'd turret, dome, or battlement,
Or seem'd fantastically set
With cupola or minaret,
Wild crests as pagod ever deck'd,
Or mosque of eastern architect.
Nor were these earth-born castles bare,
Nor lack'd they many a banner fair;
For, from their shiver'd brows display'd,
Far o'er th' unfathomable glade,
All twinkling with the dewdrops sheen,
The brier rose fell in streamers green,
And creeping shrubs, of thousand dyes,
Waved in the west wind's summer sighs.

XII.

Boon nature scatter'd, free and wild,
Each plant, or flower, the mountain's child.
Here eglantine embalm'd the air,
Hawthorn and hazel mingled there;
The primrose pale, and violet flower,
Found in each cliff a narrow bower;
Fox-glove and night-shade, side by side,
Emblems of punishment and pride,
Group'd their dark hues with every stain
The weather-beaten crags retain.
With boughs that quaked at every breath,
Gray birch and aspen wept beneath;
Aloft, the ash and warrior oak
Cast anchor in the rifted rock;
And, higher yet, the pine tree hung
His shatter'd trunk, and frequent flung,
Where seem'd the cliffs to meet on high,
His bows athwart the narrow'd sky.
Highest of all, where white peaks glanced,
Where glistening streamers waved and danced,
The wanderer's eye could barely view
The summer heaven's delicious blue;
So wondrous wild, the whole might seem
The scenery of a fairy dream.

XIII.

Onward, amid the copse 'gan peep
A narrow inlet, still and deep,
Affording scarce such breadth of brim,
As served the wild duck's brood to swim.
Lost for a space, through thickets veering,
But broader when again appearing,
Tall rocks and tufted knolls their face
Could on the dark blue mirror trace;
And farther as the hunter stray'd,
Still broader sweep its channels made.
The shaggy mounds no longer stood,
Emerging from entangled wood,
But, wave-encircled, seem'd to float,
Like castle girdled with its moat;
Yet broader floods extending still,
Divide them from their parent hill,
Till each, retiring, claims to be
An inlet in an island sea.

XIV.

And now, to issue from the glen,
No pathway meets the wanderer's ken,
Unless he climb, with footing nice,
A far-projecting precipice,
The broom's tough root his ladder made,
The hazel saplings lent their aid;
And thus an airy point he won,
Where gleaming with the setting sun,
One burnish'd sheet of living gold,
Loch-Katrine lay beneath him roll'd,
In all her length far winding lay,
With promontory, creek, and bay,
And islands that, empurpled bright,
Floated amid the livelier light,
And mountains, that like giants stand,
To sentinel enchanted land.
High on the south, huge Ben-venue
Down on the lake in masses threw
Crags, knolls, and mounds, confusedly hurl'd,
The fragments of an earlier world;
A wildering forest feather'd o'er
His ruin'd sides and summit hoar,
While on the north, through middle air,
Ben-an heaved high his forehead bare.

XV.

From the steep promontory gazed
The stranger, raptured and amazed.
And "What a scene was here," he cried,
"For princely pomp, or churchman's pride!
On this bold brow a lordly tower;
In that soft vale, a lady's bower:
On yonder meadow, far away,
The turrets of a cloister gray.
How blithely might the bugle horn
Chide, on the lake, the lingering morn!
How sweet, at eve, the lover's lute
Chimes, when the groves were still and mute
And, when the midnight moon should lave
Her forehead in the silver wave,
How solemn on the ear would come
The holy matin's distant hum,
While the deep peal's commanding tone
Should wake, in yonder islet lone,
A sainted hermit from his cell,
To drop a bead with every knell—
And bugle, lute, and bell, and all,
Should each bewilder'd stranger call
To friendly feast, and lighted hall.

XVI.

"Blithe were it then to wander here!
But now,—beshrew yon nimble deer,—
Like that same hermit's, thin and spare
The copse must give my evening fare
Some mossy bank my couch must be,
Some rustling oak my canopy.
Yet pass we that;—the war and chase
Give little choice of resting-place;—
A summer night, in green wood spent,
Were but to-morrow's merriment:—
But hosts may in these wilds abound,
Such as are better miss'd than found;
To meet with highland plunderer's here
Were worse than loss of steed or deer.
I am alone;—my bugle strain
May call some straggler of the train;
Or, fall the worst that may betide,
Ere now this falchion has been tried."

XVII.

But scarce again his horn he wound,
When lo! forth starting at the sound,
From underneath an aged oak,
That slanted from the islet rock,
A damsel guider of its way,
A little skiff shot to the bay,
That round the promontory steep,
Led its deep line in graceful sweep,
Eddying, in almost viewless wave,
The weeping-willow twig to lave,
And kiss with whispering sound and slow,
The beach of pebbles bright as snow.
The boat had touch'd this silver strand,
Just as the hunter left his stand,
And stood conceal'd amid the brake,
To view this lady of the lake.
The maiden paused, as if again
She thought to catch the distant strain.
With head up-raised, and look intent,
And eye and ear attentive bent,
And locks flung back, and lips apart,
Like monument of Grecian art,
In listening mood, she seem'd to stand,
The guardian nalad of the strand.

XVIII.

And ne'er did Grecian chisel trace
A nymph, a naiad, or a grace,
Of finer form, or lovelier face!
What though the sun, with ardent frown,
Had slightly tinged her cheek with brown,
The sportive toil, which, short and light,
Had died her glowing hue so bright,
Served too in hastier swell to show
Short glimpses of a breast of snow;
What though no rule of courtly grace
To measured mood had train'd her pace,—
A foot more light, a step more true,
Ne'er from the heath flower dash'd the dew;
E'en the slight harebell raised its head,
Elastic from her airy tread:
What though upon her speech there hung
The accents of the mountain tongue,—
Those silver sounds, so soft, so dear,
The list'ner held his breath to hear.

XIX.

A chieftain's daughter seem'd the maid;
Her satin snood, her silken plaid,
Her golden brooch, such birth betrayed.
And seldom was a snood amid
Such wild luxuriant ringlets hid,
Whose glossy black to shame might bring
The plumage of the raven's wing;
And seldom o'er a breast so fair,
Mantled a plaid with modest care,
And never brooch the folds combined
Above a heart more good and kind.
Her kindness and her worth to spy,
You need but gaze on Ellen's eye;
Not Katrine, in her mirror blue,
Gives back the shaggy banks more true,
Than every free-born glance confess'd
The guileless movements of her breast;
Whether joy danced in her dark eye,
Or wo or pity claim'd a sigh,
Or filial love was glowing there,
Or meek devotion pour'd a prayer,
Or tale of injury call'd forth
Th' indignant spirit of the north.
One only passion, unreveal'd,
With maiden pride the maid conceal'd
Yet not less purely felt the flame—
O need I tell that passion's name!

XX.

Impatient of the silent horn,
Now on the gale her voice was borne:
"Father," she cried; the rocks around
Loved to prolong the gentle sound.—
A while she paused, no answer came:—
"Malcolm, was thine the blast?" the name
Less resolutely utter'd fell
The echoes could not catch the swell.
"A stranger I," the huntsman said,
Advancing from the hazel shade.
The maid, alarm'd, with hasty oar,
Push'd her light shallop from the shore,
And, when a space was gain'd between
Closer she drew her bosom screen;
(So forth the startled swan would swing,
So turn to prune his ruffled wing;)
Then safe, though flutter'd and amazed,
She paused, and on the stranger gazed,
Not his the form, nor his the eye,
That youthful maidens wont to fly.

XXI.

On his bold visage middle age
Had slightly press'd its signet sage,
Yet had not quench'd the open truth
And fiery vehemence of youth;
Forward and frolic glee was there,
The will to do, the soul to dare,
The sparkling glance, soon blown to fire,
Of hasty love, or headlong ire.
His limbs were cast in manly mould,
For hardy sports, or contest bold;
And though in peaceful garb array'd,
And weaponless except his blade,
His stately mien as well implied
A high-born heart, a martial pride,
As if a baron's crest he wore,
And sheath'd in armour trod the shore.
Slighting the petty need he show'd,
He told of his benighted road;
His ready speech flow'd fair and free,
In phrase of gentlest courtesy:
Yet seem'd that tone, and gesture bland,
Less used to sue than to command.

XXII.

A while the maid the stranger eyed,
And, reassured, at length replied,
That highland halls were open still
To wilder'd wanderers of the hill.
"Nor think you unexpected come
To yon lone isle, our desert home;
Before the heath had lost the dew,
This morn, a couch was pull'd for you;

On yonder mountain's purple head
Have ptarmigan and heath-cock bled,
And our broad nets have swept the mere,
To furnish forth your evening cheer."
"Now, by the rood, my lovely maid,
Your courtesy has err'd," he said;
"No right have I to claim, misplaced,
The welcome of expected guest.
A wanderer, here by fortune tost,
My way, my friends, my courser lost,
I ne'er before, believe me, fair,
Have ever drawn your mountain air,
Till on this lake's romantic strand,
I found a fay in fairy land."

XXIII.

"I well believe," the maid replied,
As her light skiff approach'd the side,
"I well believe, that ne'er before
Your foot has trod Loch-Katrine's shore;
But yet, as far as yesternight,
Old Allan-bane foretold your plight—
A grayhair'd sire, whose eye intent
Was on the vision'd future bent.
He saw your steed, a dappled gray
Lie dead beneath the birchen way;
Painted exact your form and mien,
Your hunting suit of Lincoln green,
That tassled horn so gayly gilt,
That falchion's crooked blade and hilt,
That cap with heron's plumage trim,
And yon two hounds so dark and grim.
He bade that all should ready be
To grace a guest of fair degree;
But light I held his prophecy,
And deem'd it was my father's horn,
Whose echoes o'er the lake were borne."

XXIV.

The stranger smiled:—"Since to your home
A destined errant-knight I come,
Announced by prophet sooth and old,
Doom'd, doubtless, for achievement bold,
I'll lightly front each high emprize,
For one kind glance of those bright eyes.
Permit me, first, the task to guide
Your fairy frigate o'er the tide."
The maid, with smile suppress'd and sly,
The toil unwonted saw him try;
For seldom, sure, if e'er before,
His noble hand had grasp'd an oar:
Yet with main strength his strokes he drew,
And o'er the lake the shallop flew:
With heads erect, and whimpering cry,
The hounds behind their passage ply.
Nor frequent does the bright oar break
The darkening mirror of the lake,
Until the rocky isle they reach,
And moor their shallop on the beach.

XXV.

The stranger view'd the shore around;
'Twas all so close with copse-wood bound,
Nor track nor pathway might declare
That human foot frequented there,
Until the mountain maiden show'd
A clambering unsuspected road,
That winded through the tangled screen,
And open'd on a narrow green,
Where weeping birch and willow round
With their long fibres swept the ground.
Here, for retreat in dangerous hour,
Some chief had framed a rustic bower.

XXVI.

It was a lodge of ample size,
But strange of structure and device;
Of such materials, as around
The workman's hand had readiest found.
Lopp'd of their boughs, their hoar trunks bared,
And by the hatchet rudely squared,
To give the walls their destined height,
The sturdy oak and ash unite;
While moss and clay and leaves combined
To fence each crevice from the wind.
The lighter pine trees, over head,
Their slender length for rafters spread,
And wither'd heath and rushes dry
Supplied a russet canopy.
Due westward, fronting to the green,
A rural portico was seen,
Aloft on native pillars borne,
Of mountain fir with bark unshorn,
Where Ellen's hand had taught to twine
The ivy and Idæan vine,
The clematis, the favour'd flower
Which boasts the name of virgin-bower
And every hardy plant could bear
Loch-Katrine's keen and searching air.
An instant in this porch she stay'd,
And gayly to the stranger said,
"On heaven and on thy lady call,
And enter the enchanted hall!"

XXVII.

"My hope, my heaven, my trust must be,
My gentle guide, in following thee."
He cross'd the threshold—and a clang
Of angry steel that instant rang.
To his bold brow his spirit rush'd,
But soon for vain alarm he blush'd,
When on the floor he saw display'd,
Cause of the din, a naked blade
Dropp'd from the sheath that, careless flung,
Upon a stag's huge antlers swung;
For all around, the walls to grace,
Hung trophies of the fight or chase:
A target there, a bugle here,
A battle-axe, a hunting spear,
And broadswords, bows, and arrows, store,
With the tusk'd trophies of the boar.
Here grins the wolf as when he died,
And there the wildcat's brindled hide
The frontlet of the elk adorns,
Or mantles o'er the bison's horns:
Pennons and flags defaced and stain'd,
That blackening streaks of blood retain'd,
And deer skins, dappled, dun and white,
With otter's fur and seal's unite,
In rude and uncouth tapestry all,
To garnish forth the sylvan hall.

XXVIII.

The wandering stranger round him gazed,
And next the fallen weapon raised;
Few were the arms whose sinewy strength
Sufficed to stretch it forth at length.
And as the brand he poised and sway'd,
"I never knew but one," he said,
"Whose stalwart arm might brook to wield
A blade like this in battle field."
She sigh'd, then smiled, and took the word;
"You see the guardian champion's sword;
As light it trembles in his hand,
As in my grasp a hazel wand;
My sire's tall form might grace the part
Of Ferragus, or Ascapart:
But in the absent giant's hold
Are women now, and menials old."

XXIX.

The mistress of the mansion came,
Mature of age, a graceful dame;
Whose easy step and stately port
Had well become a princely court,
To whom, though more than kindred knew,
Young Ellen gave a mother's due.
Meet welcome to her guest she made,
And every courteous rite was paid,
That hospitality could claim,
Though all unask'd his birth and name.
Such then the reverence to a guest,
That fellest foe might join the feast,
And from his deadliest foeman's door
Unquestion'd turn, the banquet o'er.
At length his rank the stranger names,
"The knight of Snowdoun, James Fitz-James;
Lord of a barren heritage,
Which his brave sires, from age to age,
By their good swords had held with toil;
His sire had fallen in such turmoil,
And he, God wot, was forced to stand
Oft for his right with blade in hand.
This morning with Lord Moray's train
He chased a stalwart stag in vain,
Outstripp'd his comrades, miss'd the deer,
Lost his good steed, and wander'd here."

XXX.

Fain would the knight in turn require
The name and state of Ellen's sire;
Well show'd the elder lady's mien,
That courts and cities she had seen;
Ellen, though more her looks display'd
The simple grace of sylvan maid,
In speech and gesture, form and face,
Show'd she was come of gentle race;
'Twere strange in ruder rank to find
Such looks, such manners, and such mind.
Each hint the knight of Snowdoun gave,
Dame Margaret heard with silence grave;
Or Ellen, innocently gay,
Turn'd all inquiry light away:
"Wierd women we! by dale and down
We dwell, afar from tower and town.
We stem the flood, we ride the blast,
On wandering knights our spells we cast;
While viewless minstrels touch the string,
'Tis thus our charmed rhymes we sing."
She sung, and still a harp unseen
Fill'd up the symphony between.

XXXI.

SONG.

"Soldier rest! thy warfare o'er,
Sleep the sleep that knows not breaking;
Dream of battled fields no more,
Days of danger, nights of waking.
In our isle's enchanted hall,
Hands unseen thy couch are strewing,
Fairy strains of music fall,
Every sense in slumber dewing.
Soldier rest! thy warfare o'er,
Dream of fighting fields no more;
Sleep the sleep that knows not breaking,
Morn of toil, nor night of waking.

"No rude sound shall reach thine ear,
Armour's clang, or war-steed champing,
Trump nor pibroch summon here
Mustering clan, or squadron tramping.
Yet the lark's shrill fife may come,
At the daybreak, from the fallow,
And the bittern sound his drum,
Booming from the sedgy shallow.
Ruder sounds shall none be near,
Guards nor warders challenge here,
Here's no war-steed's neigh and champing,
Shouting clans or squadrons stamping."

XXXII.

She paused—then, blushing, led the lay
To grace the stranger of the day.
Her mellow notes a while prolong
The cadence of the flowing song,
Till to her lips in measured frame
The minstrel verse spontaneous came.

SONG CONTINUED.

"Huntsman, rest! thy chase is done,
While our slumbrous spells assail ye,
Dream not, with the rising sun,
Bugles here shall sound reveillie,
Sleep! the deer is in his den;
Sleep! the hounds are by thee lying;
Sleep! nor dream in yonder glen
How thy gallant steed lay dying.
Huntsman, rest! thy chase is done,
Think not of the rising sun,
For at dawning, to assail ye,
Here no bugles sound reveillie."

XXXIII.

The hall was clear'd—the stranger's bed
Was there of mountain heather spread,
Where oft an hundred guests had lain,
And dream'd their forest sports again.
But vainly did the heath flower shed
Its moorland fragrance round his head;
Not Ellen's spell had lull'd to rest
The fever of his troubled breast.
In broken dreams the image rose
Of varied perils, pains and woes;

His steed now flounders in the brake,
Now sinks his barge upon the lake:
Now leader of a broken host,
His standard falls, his honour's lost.
Then, from my couch may heavenly might
Chase that worst phantom of the night!—
Again return'd the scenes of youth,
Of confident undoubting truth;
Again his soul he interchanged
With friends whose hearts were long estranged.
They come, in dim procession led,
The cold, the faithless, and the dead;
As warm each hand, each brow as gay,
As if they parted yesterday.
And doubts distract him at the view,
O were his senses false or true?
Dream'd he of death, or broken vow,
Or is it all a vision now?

XXXIV.

At length, with Ellen in a grove
He seem'd to walk, and speak of love;
She listen'd with a blush and sigh,
His suit was warm, his hopes were high.
He sought her yielded hand to clasp,
And a cold gauntlet met his grasp;
The phantom's sex was changed and gone,
Upon its head a helmet shone;
Slowly enlarged to giant size,
With darken'd cheek and threatening eyes,
The grisly visage, stern and hoar,
To Ellen still a likeness bore.—
He woke, and, panting with affright,
Recall'd the vision of the night.
The hearth's decaying brands were red,
And deep and dusky lustre shed,
Half showing, half concealing all
The uncouth trophies of the hall.
'Mid those the stranger fix'd his eye
Where that huge falchion hung on high,
And thoughts on thoughts, a countless throng,
Rush'd, chasing countless thoughts along,
Until, the giddy whirl to cure,
He rose, and sought the moonshine pure.

XXXV.

The wild rose, eglantine, and broom,
Wasted around their rich perfume;
The birch trees wept in fragrant balm,
The aspen slept beneath the calm;
The silver light, with quivering glance,
Play'd on the water's still expanse,—
Wild were the heart whose passion's sway
Could rage beneath the sober ray!
He felt its calm, that warrior guest,
While thus he communed with his breast:—
"Why is it, at each turn I trace
Some memory of that exiled race?
Can I not mountain maiden spy,
But she must bear the Douglas eye?
Can I not view a highland brand,
But it must match the Douglas hand?
Can I not frame a fever'd dream,
But still the Douglas is the theme?
I'll dream no more—by manly mind
Not e'en in sleep is will resign'd.
My midnight orisons said o'er,
I'll turn to rest, and dream no more."
His midnight orison be told,
A prayer with every bead of gold,
Consign'd to heaven his cares and woes,
And sunk in undisturb'd repose;
Until the heath-cock shrilly crew,
And morning dawn'd on Ben-venue.

Canto II.

THE ISLAND.

I.

At morn the black-cock trims his jetty wing,
'Tis morning prompts the linnet's blithest lay;
All nature's children feel the matin spring
Of life reviving, with reviving day;
And while yon little bark glides down the bay
Wafting the stranger on his way again,
Morn's genial influence roused a minstrel gray,
And sweetly o'er the lake was heard thy strain,
Mix'd with the sounding harp, O white hair'd Allan-bane!

II.

SONG.

"Not faster yonder rowers' might
Flings from their oars the spray,
Not faster yonder rippling bright,
That tracks the shallop's course in light,
Melts in the lake away,
Than men from memory erase
The benefits of former days;
Then, stranger, go! good speed the while,
Nor think again of the lonely isle.

"High place to thee in royal court,
High place in battle line,
Good hawk and hound for sylvan sport,
Where beauty sees the brave resort,
The honour'd meed be thine!
True be thy sword, thy friend sincere,
Thy lady constant, kind, and dear,
And lost in love's and friendship's smile
Be memory of the lonely isle.

III.

SONG CONTINUED.

"But if beneath yon southern sky
A plaided stranger roam,
Whose drooping crest and stifled sigh,
And sunken cheek and heavy eye,
Pine for his highland home;
Then, warrior, then be thine to show
The care that soothes a wanderer's wo;
Remember then thy hap erewhile,
A stranger in the lonely isle.

"Or, if on life's uncertain main
Mishap shall mar thy sail,
If faithful, wise, and brave in vain,
Wo, want, and exile thou sustain
Beneath the fickle gale;
Waste not a sigh on fortune changed,
On thankless courts, or friends estranged,
But come where kindred worth shall smile,
To greet thee in the lonely isle."

IV.

As died the sounds upon the tide,
The shallop reach'd the mainland side,
And ere his onward way he took,
The stranger cast a lingering look,
Where easily his eye might reach
The harper on the islet beach,
Reclined against a blighted tree,
As wasted, gray, and worn as he.
To minstrel meditation given,
His reverend brow was raised to heaven,
As from the rising sun to claim
A sparkle of inspiring flame.
His hand, reclined upon the wire,
Seem'd watching the awakening fire;
So still he sate, as those who wait
Till judgment speak the doom of fate;
So still, as if no breeze might dare
To lift one lock of hoary hair;
So still, as life itself were fled,
In the last sound his harp had sped.

V.

Upon a rock with lichens wild,
Beside him Ellen sate and smiled.
Smiled she to see the stately drake
Lead forth his fleet upon the lake,
While her vex'd spaniel, from the beach,
Bay'd at the prize beyond his reach!
Yet tell me, then, the maid who knows,
Why deepen'd on her cheek the rose?—
Forgive, forgive, fidelity!
Perchance the maiden smiled to see
Yon parting lingerer wave adieu,
And stop and turn to wave anew;
And, lovely ladies, ere your ire
Condemn the heroine of my lyre,
Show me the fair would scorn to spy,
And prize such conquest of her eye!

VI.

While yet he loiter'd on the spot,
It seem'd as Ellen mark'd him not;
But when he turn'd him to the glade,
One courteous parting sign she made:
And after, oft the knight would say,
That not when prize of festal day
Was dealt him by the brightest fair
Who e'er wore jewel in her hair,
So highly did his bosom swell,
As at that simple, mute farewell.
Now with a trusty mountain guide,
And his dark stag-hounds by his side,
He parts—the maid, unconscious still,
Watch'd him wind slowly round the hill;
But when his stately form was hid,
The guardian in her bosom chid—
"Thy Malcolm! vain and selfish maid!"
'Twas thus upbraiding conscience said,
"Not so had Malcolm idly hung
On the smooth phrase of southern tongue;
Not so had Malcolm strain'd his eye
Another step than thine to spy.—
Wake, Allan-bane," aloud she cried
To the old minstrel by her side,
"Arouse thee from thy moody dream!
I'll give thy harp heroic theme,
And warm thee with a noble name;
Pour forth the glory of the Græme."
Scarce from her lip the word had rush'd,
When deep the conscious maiden blush'd,
For of his clan, in hall and bower,
Young Malcolm Græme was held the flower.

VII.

The minstrel waked his harp—three times
Arose the well-known martial chimes,
And thrice their high heroic pride
In melancholy murmurs died.
——"Vainly thou bid'st, O noble maid,"
Clasping his wither'd hands, he said,
"Vainly thou bid'st me wake the strain,
Though all unwont to bid in vain.
Alas! than mine a mightier hand
Has tuned my harp, my strings has spann'd!
I touch the chords of joy, but low
And mournful answer notes of wo;
And the proud march, which victors tread,
Sinks in the wailing for the dead.
O well for me, if mine alone
That dirge's deep prophetic tone!
If, as my tuneful fathers said,
This harp, which erst saint Modan sway'd,
Can thus its master's fate foretell,
Then welcome be the minstrel's knell!

VIII.

"But ah! dear lady, thus it sigh'd
The eve thy sainted mother died;
And such the sounds which, while I strove
To wake a lay of war or love,
Came marring all the festal mirth,
Appalling me who gave them birth,
And, disobedient to my call,
Wailed loud through Bothwell's banner'd hall,
Ere Douglasses, to ruin driven,
Were exiled from their native heaven.
Oh! if yet worse mishap and wo
My master's house must undergo,
Or aught but weal to Ellen fair,
Brood in these accents of despair,
No future bard, sad harp! shall fling
Triumph or rapture from thy string;
One short, one final strain shall flow
Fraught with unutterable wo,
Then shiver'd shall thy fragments lie,
Thy master cast him down and die."

IX.

Soothing she answer'd him, "Assuage,
Mine honour'd friend, the fears of age;
All melodies to thee are known,
That harp has rung, or pipe has blown,
In lowland vale or highland glen,
From Tweed to Spey—what marvel, then,
At times, unbidden notes should rise,
Confusedly bound in memory's ties,
Entangling, as they rush along,
The war march with the funeral song?—
Small ground is now for boding fear;
Obscure, but safe, we rest us here.

My sire, in native virtue great,
Resigning lordship, lands, and state,
Not then to fortune more resign'd
Than yonder oak might give the wind;
The graceful foliage storms may reave,
The noble stem they cannot grieve.
For me"—she stoop'd, and, looking round,
Pluck'd a blue harebell from the ground—
"For me, whose memory scarce conveys
An image of more splendid days,
This little flower, that loves the lea,
May well my simple emblem be:
It drinks heaven's dew as blithe as rose
That in the king's own garden grows;
And when I place it in my hair,
Allan, a bard is bound to swear
He ne'er saw coronet so fair."
Then playfully the chaplet wild
She wreath'd in her dark locks, and smiled.

X.

Her smile, her speech, with winning sway,
Wiled the old harper's mood away.
With such a look as hermits throw
When angels stoop to soothe their wo,
He gazed, till fond regret and pride
Thrill'd to a tear, then thus replied:
"Loveliest and best! thou little know'st
The rank, the honours thou hast lost!
O might I live to see thee grace,
In Scotland's court, thy birthright place,
To see my favourite's step advance,
The lightest in the courtly dance,
The cause of every gallant's sigh,
And leading star of every eye,
And theme of every minstrel's art,
The lady of the bleeding heart!"*

XI.

"Fair dreams are these," the maiden cried,
(Light was her accent, yet she sigh'd,)
"This mossy rock, my friend, to me
Is worth gay chair and canopy;
Nor would my footstep spring more gay
In courtly dance than blithe strathspey;
Nor half so pleased mine ear incline
To royal minstrel's lay as thine;
And then for suitors proud and high,
To bend before my conquering eye,
Thou flattering bard, thyself wilt say
That grim Sir Roderick owns its sway.
The Saxon scourge, Clan-Alpine's pride,
The terror of Loch-Lomond's side,
Would at my suit, thou know'st, delay
A Lennox foray—for a day."

XII.

The ancient bard his glee repress'd:
"Ill hast thou chosen theme for jest!
For who, through all this western wild,
Named black Sir Roderick e'er, and smiled?
In Holy-Rood a knight he slew;
I saw, when back the dirk he drew,
Courtiers gave place before the stride
Of the undaunted homicide:
And since, though outlaw'd, hath his hand
Full sternly kept his mountain land.
Who else dare give—ah! wo the day,
That I such hated truth should say—
The Douglas, like a stricken deer,
Disown'd by every noble peer,
E'en the rude refuge we have here?
Alas, this wild marauding chief
Alone might hazard our relief;
And, now thy maiden charms expand,
Looks for his guerdon in thy hand;
Full soon may dispensation, sought
To back his suit, from Rome be brought.
Then, though an exile on the hill,
Thy father, as the Douglas, still
Be held in reverence and fear,
But though to Roderick thou'rt so dear,
That thou might'st guide with silken thread,
Slave of thy will, this chieftain dread,
Yet, O loved maid, thy mirth refrain!
Thy hand is on a lion's mane."

XIII.

"Minstrel," the maid replied, and high
Her father's soul glanced from her eye,
"My debts to Roderick's house I know:
All that a mother could bestow,
To Lady Margaret's care I owe,
Since first an orphan in the wild
She sorrow'd o'er her sister's child.
To her brave chieftain son, from ire
Of Scotland's king who shrouds my sire,
A deeper, holier debt is owed;
And, could I pay it with my blood,
Allan! sir Roderick should command
My blood, my life—but not my hand.
Rather will Ellen Douglas dwell
A votaress in Maronnan's cell;
Rather through realms beyond the sea,
Seeking the world's cold charity,
Where ne'er was spoke a Scottish word,
And ne'er the name of Douglas heard,
An outcast pilgrim will she rove,
Than wed the man she cannot love.

XIV.

"Thou shakest, good friend, thy tresses gray—
That pleading look, what can it say
But what I own?—I grant him brave,
But wild as Bracklinn's thundering wave;
And generous—save vindictive mood
Or jealous transport chafe his blood:
I grant him true to friendly band,
As his claymore is to his hand;
But O! that very blade of steel
More mercy for a foe would feel:
I grant him liberal, to fling
Among his clan the wealth they bring,
When back by lake and glen they wind,
And in the lowland leave behind,
Where once some pleasant hamlet stood,
A mass of ashes slaked with blood.
The hand that for my father fought,
I honour, as his daughter ought;
But can I clasp it reeking red,
From peasants slaughter'd in their shed?

*The well-known cognisance of the Douglas family.

No! wildly while his virtues gleam,
They make his passions darker seem,
And flash along his spirit high,
Like lightning o'er the midnight sky.
While yet a child—and children know,
Instinctive taught, the friend and foe—
I shudder'd at his brow of gloom,
His shadowy plaid, and sable plume;
A maiden grown, I ill could bear
His haughty mien and lordly air;
But, if thou join'st a suitor's claim,
In serious mood, to Roderick's name,
I thrill with anguish! or, if e'er
A Douglas knew the word, with fear.
To change such odious theme were best,—
What think'st thou of our stranger guest?"

XV.

"What think I of him? wo the while
That brought such wanderer to our isle!
Thy father's battle brand, of yore
For Tyneman forged by fairy lore,
What time he leagued, no longer foes,
His border spears with Hotspur's bows,
Did, self-unscabbarded, foreshow
The footsteps of a secret foe.
If courtly spy had harbour'd here,
What may we for the Douglas fear?
What for this island, deem'd of old
Clan-Alpine's last and surest hold?
If neither spy nor foe, I pray,
What yet may jealous Roderick say!
Nay, wave not thy disdainful head!
Bethink thee of the discord dread
That kindled when at Beltane game
Thou led'st the dance with Malcolm Graeme;
Still, though thy sire the peace renew'd,
Smoulders in Roderick's breast the feud;
Beware!—But hark, what sounds are these?
My dull ears catch no faltering breeze,
No weeping birch, nor aspen's wake,
Nor breath is dimpling in the lake,
Still is the canna's* hoary beard,—
Yet, by my minstrel faith, I heard—
And hark again! some pipe of war
Sends the bold pibroch from afar."

XVI.

Far up the lengthen'd lake were spied
Four darkening specks upon the tide,
That, slow enlarging on the view,
Four mann'd and masted barges grew,
And, bearing downwards from Glengyle,
Steer'd full upon the lonely isle;
The point of Brianchoil they pass'd,
And to the windward as they cast,
Against the sun they gave to shine
The bold Sir Roderick's banner'd pine.
Nearer and nearer as they bear,
Spears, pikes, and axes flash in air.
Now might you see the tartans brave,
And plaids and plumage dance and wave;
Now see the bonnets sink and rise,
As his tough oar the rower plies;

* Cotton grass

See, flashing at each sturdy stroke,
The wave ascending into smoke;
See the proud pipers on the bow,
And mark the gaudy streamers flow
From their loud chanters* down, and sweep
The furrow'd bosom of the deep,
As, rushing through the lake amain,
They plied the ancient highland strain.

XVII.

Ever, as on they bore, more loud
And louder rung the pibroch proud.
At first the sound, by distance tame,
Mellow'd along the waters came,
And, lingering long by cape and bay,
Wail'd every harsher note away;
Then bursting bolder on the ear,
The clan's shrill gathering they could hear;
Those thrilling sounds, that call the might
Of old Clan-Alpine to the fight.
Thick beat the rapid notes, as when
The mustering hundreds shake the glen,
And hurrying at the signal dread,
The batter'd earth returns their tread
Then prelude light, of livelier tone,
Express'd their merry marching on,
Ere peal of closing battle rose,
With mingled outcry, shrieks, and blows:
And mimic din of stroke and ward,
As broadsword upon target jarr'd;
And groaning pause, e'er yet again,
Condensed, the battle yell'd amain;
The rapid charge, the rallying shout,
Retreat borne headlong into rout,
And bursts of triumph, to declare,
Clan-Alpine's conquest—all were there.
Nor ended thus the strain; but slow
Sunk in a moan prolong'd and low,
And changed the conquering clarion swell,
For wild lament o'er those that fell.

XVIII.

The war-pipes ceased; but lake and hill
Were busy with their echoes still;
And, when they slept, a vocal strain
Bade their hoarse chorus wake again,
While loud a hundred clansmen raise
Their voices in their chieftain's praise.
Each boatman, bending to his oar,
With measured sweep the burthen bore,
In such wild cadence, as the breeze
Makes through December's leafless trees.
The chorus first could Allen know,
"Roderigh Vich Alpine, ho! ieroe?"
And near, and nearer, as they rowed,
Distinct the martial ditty flowed.

XIX.

BOAT SONG.

Hail to the chief who in triumph advances!
Honour'd and bless'd be the ever-green pine.
Long may the tree in his banner that glances
Flourish, the shelter and grace of our line!
Heaven send it happy dew,
Earth lend it sap anew,

* The drone of the bagpipe.

Gayly to bourgeon, and broadly to grow;
While every highland glen
Sends our shout back agen,
"Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho! ieroe!"

Ours is no sapling, chance-sown by the fountain,
Blooming at Beltane, in winter to fade;
When the whirlwind has stripp'd every leaf on the mountain,
The more shall Clan-Alpine exult in her shade.
Moor'd in the rifted rock,
Proof to the tempest's shock,
Firmer he roots him the ruder it blow;
Menteith and Breadalbane, then,
Echo his praise agen,
"Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho! ieroe!"

XX.

Proudly our pibroch has thrill'd in Glen Fruin,
And Bannochar's groans to our slogan replied,
Glen Luss and Ross-dhu, they are smoking in ruin,
And the best of Loch-Lomond lie dead on her side.
Widow and Saxon maid
Long shall lament our aid,
Think of Clan-Alpine with fear and with wo;
Lennox and Leven-glen
Shake when they hear agen,
"Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho! ieroe!"

Row, vassals, row, for the pride of the highlands!
Stretch to your oars for the ever-green pine!
O! that the rose-bud that graces yon islands
Were wreath'd in a garland around him to twine!
O that some seedling gem,
Worthy such noble stem,
Honour'd and bless'd in their shadow might grow!
Loud should Clan-Alpine then
Ring from her deepmost glen,
'Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho! ieroe."

XXI.

With all her joyful female band,
Had lady Margaret sought the strand.
Loose on the breeze their tresses flew,
And high their snowy arms they threw;
As echoing back with shrill acclaim
And chorus wild, the chieftain's name;
While, prompt to please, with mother's art,
The darling passion of his heart,
The dame called Ellen to the strand,
To greet her kinsman ere he land:
"Come, loiterer, come! a Douglas thou,
And shun to wreath a victor's brow!"—
Reluctantly, and slow, the maid
Th' unwelcome summoning obey'd,
And, when a distant bugle rung,
In the mid path aside she sprung:—
"List, Allan-bane! from main land cast,
I hear my father's signal blast.
Be ours," she cried, "the skiff to guide,
And waft him from the mountain side."
Then, like a sunbeam, swift and bright,
She darted to her shallop light,
And, eagerly while Roderick scann'd
For her dear form his mother's band,
The islet far behind her lay,
And she had landed in the bay.

XXII.

Some feelings are to mortals given,
With less of earth in them than heaven;
And if there be a human tear
From passion's dross refined and clear,
A tear so limpid and so meek,
It would not stain an angel's cheek,
'Tis that which pious fathers shed
Upon a duteous daughter's head!
And as the Douglas to his breast
His darling Ellen closely press'd,
Such holy drops her tresses steep'd,
Though 'twas a hero's eye that weep'd.
Nor while on Ellen's faltering tongue
Her filial welcomes crowded hung,
Mark'd she that fear (affection's proof)
Still held a graceful youth aloof:
No! not till Douglas named his name,
Although the youth was Malcolm Græme.

XXIII.

Allan, with wistful look the while,
Mark'd Roderick landing on the isle
His master piteously he eyed,
Then gazed upon the chieftain's pride,
Then dash'd, with hasty hand, away
From his dimm'd eye the gathering spray;
And Douglas, as his hand he laid
On Malcolm's shoulder, kindly said,
"Canst thou, young friend, no meaning spy
In my poor follower's glistening eye?
I'll tell thee:—he recalls the day,
When in my praise he led the lay
O'er the arch'd gate of Bothwell proud,
While many a minstrel answer'd loud.
When Percy's Norman pennon, won
In bloody field, before me shone,
And twice ten knights, the least a name
As mighty as yon chief may claim,
Gracing my pomp, behind me came.
Yet trust me, Malcolm, not so proud
Was I of all that marshall'd crowd,
Though the waned crescent own'd my might
And in my train troop'd lord and knight,
Though Blantyre hymn'd her holiest lays,
And Bothwell's harps flung back my praise,
As when this old man's silent tear,
And this poor maid's affection dear,
A welcome give more kind and true
Than aught my better fortunes knew.
Forgive, my friend, a father's boast;
O! it outbeggars all I lost!"

XXIV.

Delightful praise!—like summer rose
That brighter in the dewdrop glows,
The bashful maiden's cheek appear'd,
For Douglas spoke, and Malcolm heard.
The flush of shamefaced joy to hide,
The hounds, the hawk, her cares divide:
The loved caresses of the maid
The dogs with crouch and whimper paid;
And, at her whistle, on her hand
The falcon took his favourite stand,

Closed his dark wing, relax'd his eye,
Nor, though unhooded, sought to fly.
And, trust, while in such guise she stood
Like fabled goddess of the wood,
That if a father's partial thought
O'erweigh'd her worth and beauty aught,
Well might the lover's judgment fail
To balance with a juster scale;
For with each secret glance he stole,
The fond enthusiast sent his soul.

XXV.

Of stature tall, and slender frame,
But firmly knit, was Malcolm Græme.
The belted plaid and tartan hose
Did ne'er more graceful limbs disclose;
His flaxen hair, of sunny hue,
Curl'd closely round his bonnet blue.
Train'd to the chase, his eagle eye
The ptarmigan in snow could spy:
Each pass, by mountain, lake, and heath,
He knew, through Lennox and Menteith;
Vain was the bound of dark brown doe,
When Malcolm bent his sounding bow,
And scarce that doe, though wing'd with fear,
Outstripp'd in speed the mountaineer:
Right up Ben-Lomond could he press,
And not a sob his toil confess.
His form accorded with a mind
Lively and ardent, frank and kind;
A blither heart, till Ellen came,
Did never love nor sorrow tame;
It danced as lightsome in his breast,
As play'd the feather on his crest.
Yet friends who nearest knew the youth,
His scorn of wrong, his zeal for truth,
And bards, who saw his features bold,
When kindled by the tales of old,
Said, were that youth to manhood grown,
Not long should Roderick Dhu's renown
Be foremost voiced by mountain fame,
But quail to that of Malcolm Græme.

XXVI.

Now back they wend their watery way,
And, "O my sire!" did Ellen say,
"Why urge thy chase so far astray?
And why so late return'd? And why"—
The rest was in her speaking eye.
"My child, the chase I follow far,
'Tis mimicry of noble war;
And with that gallant pastime reft
Were all of Douglas I have left.
I met young Malcolm as I stray'd
Far eastward, in Glenfinlas' shade,
Nor stray'd I safe; for, all around,
Hunters and horsemen scour'd the ground.
This youth, though still a royal ward,
Risk'd life and land to be my guard,
And through the passes of the wood
Guided my steps, not unpursued;
And Roderick shall his welcome make,
Despite old spleen, for Douglas' sake.
Then must he seek Strath-Endrick glen,
Nor peril aught for me agen."—

XXVII.

Sir Roderick, who to meet them came,
Redden'd at sight of Malcolm Græme.
Yet, not in action, word, or eye,
Fail'd aught in hospitality.
In talk and sport they whiled away
The morning of that summer day;
But at high noon a courier light
Held secret parley with the knight;
Whose moody aspect soon declared,
That evil were the news he heard.
Deep thought seem'd toiling in his head;
Yet was the evening banquet made,
E'er he assembled round the flame,
His mother, Douglas, and the Græme,
And Ellen, too; then cast around
His eyes, then fix'd them on the ground,
As studying phrase that might avail
Best to convey unpleasant tale.
Long with his dagger's hilt he play'd,
Then raised his haughty brow, and said:

XXVIII.

"Short be my speech;—nor time affords,
Nor my plain temper, glozing words.
Kinsman and father,—if such name
Douglas vouchsafe to Roderick's claim;
Mine honour'd mother;—Ellen—why,
My cousin, turn away thine eye?
And Græme; in whom I hope to know
Full soon a noble friend or foe,
When age shall give thee thy command,
And leading in thy native land;—
List all!—The king's vindictive pride
Boasts to have tamed the border-side,
Where chiefs, with hound and hawk who came
To share their monarch's sylvan game,
Themselves in bloody toils were snared,
And when the banquet they prepared,
And wide their loyal portals flung,
O'er their own gateway struggling hung.
Loud cries their blood from Meggat's mead,
From Yarrow braes, and banks of Tweed,
Where the lone streams of Ettrick glide,
And from the silver Teviot's side;
The dales where martial clans did ride
Are now one sheepwalk waste and wide.
This tyrant of the Scottish throne,
So faithless and so ruthless known,
Now hither comes; his end the same,
The same pretext of sylvan game.
What grace for highland chiefs judge ye,
By fate of border chivalry.
Yet more; amid Glenfinlas' green,
Douglas, thy stately form was seen.
This by espial sure I know;
Your counsel in the streight I show."—

XXIX.

Ellen and Margaret fearfully
Sought comfort in each other's eye,
Then turn'd their ghastly look, each one,
This to her sire, that to her son.
The hasty colour went and came
In the bold cheek of Malcolm Græme:

But from his glance it well appear'd,
'Twas but for Ellen that he fear'd;
While sorrowful, but undismay'd,
The Douglas thus his counsel said:
"Brave Roderick, though the tempest roar,
It may but thunder and pass o'er;
Nor will I here remain an hour,
To draw the lightning on thy bower;
For, well thou know'st at this gray head
The royal bolt were fiercest sped.
For thee, who, at thy king's command,
Canst aid him with a gallant band,
Submission, homage, humbled pride,
Shall turn the monarch's wrath aside.
Poor remnants of the bleeding heart
Ellen and I will seek, apart,
The refuge of some forest cell,
There, like the hunted quarry, dwell,
Till on the mountain and the moor,
The stern pursuit be past and o'er."—

XXX.

"No, by mine honour," Roderick said,
"So help me, heaven, and my good blade!
No, never! blasted be yon pine,
My fathers' ancient crest and mine,
If from its shade in danger part
The lineage of the bleeding heart!
Hear my blunt speech, grant me this maid
To wife, thy counsel to mine aid;
To Douglas, leagued with Roderick Dhu,
Will friends and allies flock enow;
Like cause of doubt, distrust, and grief,
Will bind to us each western chief.
When the loud pipes my bridal tell,
The links of Forth shall hear the knell,
The guards shall start in Stirling's porch;
And, when I light the nuptial torch,
A thousand villages in flames
Shall scare the slumbers of King James!
—Nay, Ellen, blench not thus away,
And, mother, cease these signs, I pray
I meant not all my heart might say.
Small need of inroad, or of fight,
When the sage Douglas may unite
Each mountain clan in friendly band,
To guard the passes of their land,
Till the foil'd king, from pathless glen,
Shall bootless turn him home agen."

XXXI.

There are who have, at midnight hour,
In slumber scaled a dizzy tower,
And, on the verge that beetled o'er
The ocean tide's incessant roar,
Dream'd calmly out their dangerous dream.
Till waken'd by the morning beam,
When, dazzled by the eastern glow,
Such startler cast his glance below,
And saw unmeasured depth around,
And heard unintermitted sound,
And thought the battled fence so frail,
It waved like cobweb in the gale;
Amid his senses' giddy wheel,
Did he not desperate impulse feel
Headlong to plunge himself below,
And meet the worst his fears foreshow?—
Thus, Ellen, dizzy and astound,
As sudden ruin yawn'd around,
By crossing terrors wildly toss'd,
Still for the Douglas fearing most,
Could scarce the desperate thought withstand,
To buy his safety with her hand.

XXXII.

Such purpose dread could Malcolm spy
In Ellen's quivering lip and eye,
And eager rose to speak—but ere
His tongue could hurry forth his fear,
Had Douglas mark'd the hectic strife,
Where death seem'd combating with life;
For to her cheek, in feverish flood,
One instant rush'd the throbbing blood,
Then ebbing back, with sudden sway,
Left its domain as wan as clay
"Roderick, enough! enough!" he cried
"My daughter cannot be thy bride;
Not that the blush to wooer dear,
Nor paleness that of maiden fear.
It may not be—forgive her, chief,
Nor hazard aught for our relief.
Against his sovereign Douglas ne'er
Will level a rebellious spear.
'Twas I that taught his youthful hand
To rein a steed and wield a brand;
I see him yet, the princely boy!
Not Ellen more my pride and joy:
I love him still, despite my wrongs
By hasty wrath and slanderous tongues.
O seek the grace you well may find,
Without a cause to mine combined."

XXXIII.

Twice through the hall the chieftain strode;
The waving of his tartans broad,
And darken'd brow, where wounded pride
With ire and disappointment vied,
Seem'd, by the torch's gloomy light,
Like the ill demon of the night,
Stooping his pinions' shadowy sway
Upon the 'nighted pilgrim's way:
But, unrequited love! thy dart
Plunged deepest its envenom'd smart,
And Roderick, with thine anguish stung,
At length the hand of Douglas wrung,
While eyes, that mock'd at tears before,
With bitter drops were running o'er.
The death pangs of long cherish'd hope
Scarce in that ample breast had scope,
But, struggling with his spirit proud,
Convulsive heaved its checker'd shroud,
While every sob—so mute were all—
Was heard distinctly through the hall.
The son's despair, the mother's look,
Ill might the gentle Ellen brook;
She rose, and to her side there came,
To aid her parting steps, the Græme.

XXXIV

Then Roderick from the Douglas broke—
As flashes flame through sable smoke,

Kindling its wreaths, long, dark and low,
To one broad blaze of ruddy glow,
So the deep anguish of despair
Burst, in fierce jealousy, to air.—
With stalwart grasp his hand he laid
On Malcolm's breast and belted plaid:
"Back, beardless boy!" he sternly said,
"Back, minion! hold'st thou thus at naught
The lesson I so lately taught?
This roof, the Douglas, and that maid,
Thank thou for punishment delay'd."
Eager as greyhound on his game,
Fiercely with Roderick grappled Græme.
"Perish my name, if aught afford
Its chieftain safety, save his sword!"
Thus as they strove, their desperate hand
Griped to the dagger or the brand,
And death had been—but Douglas rose,
And thrust between the struggling foes
His giant strength:—"Chieftains, forego!
I hold the first who strikes, my foe.—
Madmen, forbear your frantic jar!
What! is the Douglas fallen so far,
His daughter's hand is deem'd the spoil
Of such dishonourable broil!"
Sullen and slowly they unclasp,
As struck with shame, their desperate grasp,
And each upon his rival glared,
With foot advanced, and blade half bared.

XXXV.

Ere yet the brands aloft were flung,
Margaret on Roderick's mantle hung,
And Malcolm heard his Ellen scream,
As falter'd through terrific dream.
Then Roderick plunged in sheath his sword,
And veil'd his wrath in scornful word:
"Rest safe till morning; pity 'twere
Such cheek should feel the midnight air!
Then mayest thou to James Stuart tell
Roderick will keep the lake and fell,
Nor lackey, with his freeborn clan,
The pageant pomp of earthly man.
More would he of Clan-Alpine know,
Thou canst our strength and passes show —
Malise, what ho!"—his henchman came;
"Give our safe-conduct to the Græme."
Young Malcolm answer'd, calm and bold,
"Fear nothing for thy favourite hold:
The spot an angel deign'd to grace
Is bless'd, though robbers haunt the place.
Thy churlish courtesy for those
Reserve, who fear to be thy foes.
As safe to me the mountain way
At midnight, as in blaze of day,
Though with his boldest at his back,
E'en Roderick Dhu beset the track.—
Brave Douglas,—lovely Ellen, nay,
Naught here of parting will I say.
Earth does not hold a lonesome glen,
So secret, but we meet agen.—
Chieftain! we too shall find an hour."
He said, and left the sylvan bower.

XXXVI.

Old Allan follow'd to the strand,
Such was the Douglas's command,)
And anxious told, how, on the morn,
The stern Sir Roderick deep had sworn
The fiery cross should circle o'er
Dale, glen, and valley, down, and moor.
Much were the peril to the Græme,
From those who to the signal came:
Far up the lake 'twere safest land,
Himself would row him to the strand.
He gave his counsel to the wind,
While Malcolm did, unheeding, bind
Round dirk, and pouch, and broadsword roll'd,
His ample plaid in tighten'd fold,
And stripp'd his limbs to such array,
As best might suit the watery way.

XXXVII.

Then spoke abrupt: "Farewell to thee
Pattern of old fidelity!"
The minstrel's hand he kindly press'd,
"O! could I point a place of rest!
My sovereign holds in ward my land,
My uncle leads my vassal band;
To tame his foes, his friends to aid,
Poor Malcolm has but heart and blade.
Yet, if there be one faithful Græme
Who loves the chieftain of his name,
Not long shall honour'd Douglas dwell,
Like hunted stag, in mountain cell;
Nor, ere yon pride-swollen robber dare,
I may not give the rest to air!—
Tell Roderick Dhu I owed him naught,
Not the poor service of a boat,
To waft me to yon mountain side."—
Then plunged he in the flashing tide.
Bold o'er the flood his head he bore,
And stoutly steer'd him from the shore;
And Allan strain'd his anxious eye
Far mid the lake, his form to spy
Darkening across each puny wave,
To which the moon her silver gave.
Fast as the cormorant could skim,
The swimmer plied each active limb:
Then, landing in the moonlight dell,
Loud shouted of his weal to tell.
The minstrel heard the far halloo,
And joyful from the shore withdrew.

Canto III.

THE GATHERING.

I.

Time rolls his ceaseless course. The race of yore
Who danced our infancy upon their knee,
And told our marvelling boyhood legends store,
Of their strange ventures happ'd by land or sea
How are they blotted from the things that be!
How few, all weak and wither'd of their force,
Wait, on the verge of dark eternity,
Like stranded wrecks, the tide returning hoarse,
To sweep them from our sight! Time rolls his ceaseless course.

Yet live there still who can remember well,
How, when a mountain chief his bugle blew,
Both field and forest, dingle, cliff, and dell,
And solitary heath, the signal knew;

And fast the faithful clan around him drew,
What time the warning note was keenly wound,
What time aloft their kindred banner flew,
While clamorous war-pipes yell'd the gathering sound,
And while the fiery cross glanced, like a meteor, round.

II.

The summer dawn's reflected hue
To purple changed Loch-Katrine blue;
Mildly and soft the western breeze
Just kiss'd the lake, just stirr'd the trees,
And the pleased lake, like maiden coy,
Trembled, but dimpled not for joy;
The mountain shadows on her breast
Were neither broken nor at rest;
In bright uncertainty they lie,
Like future joys to fancy's eye.
The water lily to the light
Her chalice rear'd of silver bright;
The doe awoke, and to the lawn,
Begemm'd with dewdrops, led her fawn;
The gray mist left the mountain side,
The torrent show'd its glistening pride;
Invisible in flecked sky,
The lark sent down her revelry;
The blackbird and the speckled thrush
Good-morrow gave from brake and bush;
In answer coo'd the cushat dove
Her notes of peace, and rest, and love.

III.

No thought of peace, no thought of rest,
Assuaged the storm in Roderick's breast.
With sheathed broadsword in his hand,
Abrupt he paced the islet strand,
And eyed the rising sun, and laid
His hand on his impatient blade.
Beneath a rock, his vassal's care
Was prompt the ritual to prepare,
With deep and deathful meaning fraught;
For such antiquity had taught
Was preface meet, ere yet abroad
The cross of fire should take its road.
The shrinking band stood off aghast
At the impatient glance he cast;—
Such glance the mountain eagle threw,
As, from the cliffs of Ben-venue,
She spread her dark sails on the wind,
And, high in middle heaven reclined,
With her broad shadow on the lake,
Silenced the warblers of the brake.

IV.

A heap of wither'd boughs was piled,
Of juniper and rowan wild,
Mingled with shivers from the oak,
Rent by the lightning's recent stroke.
Brian, the hermit, by it stood,
Barefooted, in his frock and hood.
His grisled beard and matted hair
Obscured a visage of despair;
His naked arms and legs, seam'd o'er,
The scars of frantic penance bore.
That monk, of savage form and face,
The impending danger of his race
Had drawn from deepest solitude,
Far in Benharrow's bosom rude.
Not his the mein of Christian priest,
But Druid's, from the grave released,
Whose harden'd heart and eye might brook
On human sacrifice to look;
And much, 'twas said, of heathen lore
Mix'd in the charms he mutter'd o'er.
The hallow'd creed gave only worse
And deadlier emphasis of curse;
No peasant sought that hermit's prayer,
His cave the pilgrim shunn'd with care;
The eager huntsman knew his bound,
And in mid chase call'd off his hound;
Or if, in lonely glen or strath,
The desert-dweller met his path,
He pray'd, and sign'd the cross between,
While terror took devotion's mien.

V.

Of Brian's birth strange tales were told;
His mother watch'd a midnight fold,
Built deep within a dreary glen,
Where scatter'd lay the bones of men,
In some forgotten battle slain,
And bleach'd by drifting wind and rain.
It might have tamed a warrior's heart,
To view such mockery of his art!
The knot-grass fetter'd there the hand,
Which once could burst an iron band;
Beneath the broad and ample bone,
That buckler'd heart to fear unknown,
A feeble and a timorous guest,
The fieldfare framed her lowly nest;
There the slow blind-worm left his slime
On the fleet limbs that mock'd at time;
And there, too, lay the leader's skull,
Still wreath'd with chaplet, flush'd and full,
For heathbell, with her purple bloom,
Supplied the bonnet and the plume.
All night, in this sad glen, the maid
Sate, shrouded in her mantle's shade:
She said no shepherd sought her side,
No hunter's hand her snood untied,
Yet ne'er again to braid her hair
The virgin snood did Alice wear;
Gone was her maiden glee and sport,
Her maiden girdle all too short,
Nor sought she, from that fatal night,
Or holy church, or blessed rite,
But lock'd her secret in her breast,
And died in travail, unconfess'd.

VI.

Alone, among his young compeers,
Was Brian from his infant years;
A moody and heart-broken boy,
Estranged from sympathy and joy,
Bearing each taunt which careless tongue
On his mysterious lineage flung.
Whole nights he spent by moonlight pale,
To wood and stream his hap to wail,
Till, frantic, he as truth received
What of his birth the crowd believed,
And sought, in mist and meteor fire,
To meet and know his phantom sire!

In vain, to soothe his wayward fate,
The cloister oped her pitying gate;
In vain, the learning of the age
Unclasp'd the sable-letter'd page;
E'en in its treasures he could find
Food for the fever of his mind.
Eager he read whatever tells
Of magic, cabala, and spells,
And every dark pursuit allied
To curious and presumptuous pride;
Till, with fired brain and nerves o'erstrung,
And heart with mystic horrors wrung,
Desperate he sought Benharrow's den,
And hid him from the haunts of men.

VII.

The desert gave him visions wild,
Such as might suit the spectre's child.
Where with black cliffs the torrents toil,
He watch'd the wheeling eddies boil,
Till, from their foam, his dazzled eyes
Beheld the river demon rise;
The mountain mist took form and limb,
Of noontide hag, or goblin grim;
The midnight wind came wild and dread,
Swell'd with the voices of the dead;
Far on the future battle-heath
His eye beheld the ranks of death:
Thus the lone seer, from mankind hurl'd,
Shaped forth a disembodied world.
One lingering sympathy of mind
Still bound him to the mortal kind;
The only parent he could claim
Of ancient Alpine's lineage came.
Late had he heard in prophet's dream,
The fatal Ben-Shie's boding scream;
Sounds, too, had come in midnight blast,
Of charging steeds, careering fast
Along Benharrow's shingly side,
Where mortal horseman ne'er might ride:
The thunderbolt had split the pine,—
All augur'd ill to Alpine's line.
He girt his loins, and came to show
The signals of impending wo,
And now stood prompt to bless or ban,
As bade the chieftain of his clan.

VIII.

'Twas all prepared;—and from the rock,
A goat, the patriarch of the flock,
Before the kindling pile was laid,
And pierced by Roderick's ready blade.
Patient the sickening victim eyed
The life blood ebb in crimson tide
Down his clogg'd beard and shaggy limb,
Till darkness glazed his eyeballs dim.
The grisly priest, with murmuring prayer,
A slender crosslet form'd with care,
A cubit's length in measure due;
The shafts and limbs were rods of yew,
Whose parents in Inch-Cailliach wave
Their shadows o'er Clan-Alpine's grave,
And, answering Lomond's breezes deep,
Soothe many a chieftain's endless sleep.
The cross, thus form'd, he held on high,
With wasted hand, and haggard eye,
And strange and mingled feelings woke,
While his anathema he spoke:

IX.

"Wo to the clansman, who shall view
This symbol of sepulchral yew,
Forgetful that its branches grew
Where weep the heavens their holiest dew
On Alpine's dwelling low!
Deserter of his chieftain's trust,
He ne'er shall mingle with their dust,
But, from his sires and kindred thrust,
Each clansman's execration just
Shall doom him wrath and wo."
He paused;—the word the vassals took,
With forward step and fiery look,
On high their naked brands they shook,
Their clattering targets wildly strook;
And first, in murmur low,
Then, like the billow in his course,
That far to seaward finds his source,
And flings to shore his muster'd force,
Burst, with loud roar, their answer hoarse,
"Wo to the traitor, wo!"
Ben-an's gray scalp the accents knew,
The joyous wolf from covert drew,
The exulting eagle scream'd afar,—
They knew the voice of Alpine's war.

X.

The shout was hush'd on lake and fell,
The monk resumed his mutter'd spell.
Dismal and low its accents came,
The while he scathed the cross with flame;
And the few words that reach'd the air,
Although the holiest name was there,
Had more of blasphemy than prayer.
But when he shook above the crowd
Its kindled points, he spoke aloud:—
"Wo to the wretch, who fails to rear
At this dread sign the ready spear!
For, as the flames this symbol sear
His home, the refuge of his fear,
A kindred fate shall know;
Far o'er its roof the volumed flame
Clan-Alpine's vengeance shall proclaim,
While maids and matrons on his name
Shall call down wretchedness and shame,
And infamy and wo."
Then rose the cry of females, shrill
As goss-hawk's whistle on the hill,
Denouncing misery and ill,
Mingled with childhood's babbling trill
Of curses stammer'd slow,
Answering, with imprecation dread,
"Sunk be his home in embers red!
And cursed be the meanest shed
That e'er shall hide the houseless head,
We doom to want and wo!"
A sharp and shrieking echo gave,
Coir-Uriskin, thy goblin cave!
And the gray pass where birches wave,
On Beala-nam-bo.

XI.

Then deeper paused the priest anew,
And hard his labouring breath he drew,

While, with set teeth and clenched hand,
And eyes that glow'd like fiery brand,
He meditated curse more dread,
And deadlier, on the clansman's head,
Who, summon'd to his chieftain's aid,
The signal saw and disobey'd.
The crosslet's points of sparkling wood
He quench'd among the bubbling blood,
And, as again the sign he rear'd,
Hollow and hoarse his voice was heard:
"When flits this cross from man to man,
Vich-Alpine's summons to his clan,
Burst be the ear that fails to heed!
Palsied the foot that shuns to speed!
May ravens tear the careless eyes,
Wolves make the coward heart their prize!
As sinks that blood stream in the earth,
So may his heart's blood drench his hearth!
As dies in hissing gore the spark,
Quench thou his light, destruction dark!
And be the grace to him denied,
Bought by this sign to all beside!"—
He ceased: no echo gave agen
The murmur of the deep amen.

XII.

Then Roderick, with impatient look,
From Brian's hand the symbol took:
"Speed, Malise, speed!" he said, and gave
The crosslet to his henchman brave.
"The muster-place be Lanric mead—
Instant the time—speed, Malise, speed!"
Like heath bird, when the hawks pursue,
A barge across Loch-Katrine flew:
High stood the henchman on the prow;
So rapidly the bargemen row,
The bubbles, where they launch'd the boat,
Were all unbroken and afloat,
Dancing in foam and ripple still,
When it had near'd the mainland hill;
And from the silver beach's side
Still was the prow three fathom wide,
When lightly bounded to the land
The messenger of blood and brand.

XIII.

Speed, Malise, speed! the dun deer's hide
On fleeter foot was never tied.
Speed, Malise, speed! such cause of haste
Thine active sinews never braced.
Bend 'gainst the steepy hill thy breast,
Burst down like torrent from its crest;
With short and springing footstep pass
The trembling bog and false morass;
Across the brook like roebuck bound,
And thread the brake like questing hound;
The crag is high, the scaur is deep,
Yet shrink not from the desperate leap;
Parch'd are thy burning lips and brow,
Yet by the fountain pause not now;
Herald of battle, fate, and fear,
Stretch onward in thy fleet career!
The wounded hind thou track'st not now
Pursuest not maid through greenwood bough,
Nor pliest thou now thy flying pace,
With rivals in the mountain race;
But danger, death, and warrior deed,
Are in thy course.—Speed, Malise, speed!

XIV.

Fast as the fatal symbol flies,
In arms the huts and hamlets rise;
From winding glen, from upland brown
They pour'd each hardy tenant down.
Nor slack'd the messenger his pace;
He show'd the sign, he named the place,
And, pressing forward like the wind,
Left clamour and surprise behind.
The fisherman forsook the strand,
The swarthy smith took dirk and brand;
With changed cheer, the mower blithe
Left in the half-cut swathe his sithe;
The herds without a keeper stray'd,
The plough was in mid furrow stay'd,
The falc'ner toss'd his hawk away,
The hunter left the stag at bay;
Prompt at the signal of alarms,
Each son of Alpine rush'd to arms;
So swept the tumult and affray
Along the margin of Achray.
Alas! thou lovely lake! that e'er
Thy banks should echo sounds of fear!
The rocks, the bosky thickets, sleep
So stilly on thy bosom deep,
The lark's blithe carol, from the cloud,
Seems for the scene too gayly loud.

XV.

Speed, Malise, speed! the lake is past,
Duncraggan's huts appear at last,
And peep, like moss-grown rocks, half seen,
Half hidden in the copse so green;
There mayst thou rest, thy labour done,
Their lord shall speed the signal on.—
As stoops the hawk upon his prey,
The henchman shot him down the way.
What woful accents load the gale?
The funeral yell, the female wail!—
A gallant hunter's sport is o'er,
A valiant warrior fights no more.
Who, in the battle or the chase,
At Roderick's side shall fill his place?
Within the hall, where torches' ray
Supplied th' excluded beams of day,
Lies Duncan on his lowly bier,
And o'er him streams his widow's tear,
His stripling son stands mournful by,
His youngest weeps, but knows not why;
The village maids and matrons round
The dismal coronach* resound.

XVI.

CORONACH.

He is gone on the mountain,
He is lost to the forest,
Like a summer-dried fountain,
When our need was the sorest.
The font, reappearing,
From the raindrops shall borrow,
But to us comes no cheering,
To Duncan no morrow!

* Funeral song.

The hand of the reaper
Takes the ears that are hoary,
But the voice of the weeper
Wails manhood in glory;
The autumn winds rushing
Waft the leaves that are searest,
But our flower was in flushing,
When blighting was nearest.

Fleet foot on the correi,*
Sage counsel in cumber,
Red hand in the foray,
How sound is thy slumber!
Like the dew on the mountain,
Like the foam on the river,
Like the bubble on the fountain,
Thou art gone, and for ever!

XVII.

See Stumah,† who, the bier beside,
His master's corpse with wonder eyed,
Poor Stumah! whom his least halloo
Could send like lightning o'er the dew,
Bristles his crest, and points his ears,
As if some stranger step he hears.
'Tis not a mourner's muffled tread,
Who comes to sorrow o'er the dead.
But headlong haste, or deadly fear
Urge the precipitate career.
All stand aghast:—unheeding all,
The henchman bursts into the hall:
Before the dead man's bier he stood,
Held forth the cross besmear'd with blood;
"The muster place is Lanric mead;
Speed forth the signal! clansmen, speed!"

XVIII.

Angus, the heir of Duncan's line,
Sprung forth and seized the fatal sign.
In haste the stripling to his side
His father's dirk and broadsword tied;
But when he saw his mother's eye
Watch him in speechless agony,
Back to her open arms he flew,
Press'd on her lips a fond adieu—
"Alas!" she sobb'd—"and yet be gone,
And speed thee forth like Duncan's son!"
One look he cast upon the bier,
Dash'd from his eye the gathering tear,
Breathed deep, to clear his labouring breast,
And toss'd aloft his bonnet crest,
Then, like the high-bred colt, when, freed,
First he essays his fire and speed,
He vanish'd, and o'er moor and moss
Sped forward with the fiery cross.
Suspended was the widow's tear,
While yet his footsteps she could hear:
And when she mark'd the henchman's eye
Wet with unwonted sympathy,
"Kinsman," she said, "his race is run,
That should have sped thine errand on;
The oak has fallen—the sapling bough
Is all Duncraggan's shelter now.

Yet trust I well, his duty done,
The orphan's God will guard my son.
And you, in many a danger true,
At Duncan's best your blades that drew,
To arms, and guard that orphan's head!
Let babes and women wail the dead."
Then weapon-clang, and martial call,
Resounded through the funeral hall,
While from the walls th' attendant band
Snatch'd sword and targe, with hurried hand
And short and flitting energy
Glanced from the mourner's sunken eye,
As if the sounds, to warrior dear,
Might rouse her Duncan from his bier.
But faded soon that borrow'd force;
Grief claim'd his right, and tears their course.

XIX.

Benledi saw the cross of fire,
It glanced like lightning up Strath-Ire.
O'er dale and hill the summons flew,
Nor rest nor pause young Angus knew;
The tear that gather'd in his eye,
He left the mountain breeze to dry;
Until, where Teith's young waters roll,
Betwixt him and a wooded knoll,
That graced the sable strath with green,
The chapel of Saint Bride was seen.
Swoln was the stream, remote the bridge,
But Angus paused not on the edge;
Though the dark waves danced dizzily,
Though reel'd his sympathetic eye,
He dash'd amid the torrent's roar;
His right hand high the crosslet bore,
His left the pole-axe grasp'd, to guide
And stay his footing in the tide.
He stumbled twice—the foam splash'd high,
With hoarser swell the stream raced by;
And had he fallen—for ever there,
Farewell Duncraggan's orphan heir!
But still, as if in parting life,
Firmer he grasp'd the cross of strife,
Until th' opposing bank he gain'd,
And up the chapel pathway strain'd.

XX.

A blithesome rout, that morning tide,
Had sought the chapel of Saint Bride.
Her troth Tombea's Mary gave
To Norman, heir of Armandave,
And, issuing from the Gothic arch,
The bridal now resumed their march.
In rude, but glad procession, came
Bonnetted sire and coif-clad dame;
And plaided youth, with jest and jeer,
Which snooded maiden would not hear;
And children, that, unwitting why,
Lent the gay shout their shrilly cry;
And minstrels, that in measures vied
Before the young and bonny bride,
Whose downcast eye and cheek disclose
The tear and blush of morning rose.
With virgin step, and bashful hand,
She held the kerchief's snowy band;
The gallant bridegroom, by her side,
Beheld his prize with victor's pride,

* Or *corri*—The hollow side of the hill, where game usually lies.

† *Faithful*—The name of a dog.

And the glad mother in her ear
Was closely whispering word of cheer.

XXI.

Who meets them at the churchyard gate?—
The messenger of fear and fate!
Haste in his hurried accent lies,
And grief is swimming in his eyes.
All dripping from the recent flood,
Panting and travel-soil'd he stood,
The fatal sign of fire and sword
Held forth, and spoke th' appointed word;
"The muster place is Lanric mead;
Speed forth the signal! Norman, speed!"—
And must he change so soon the hand
Just link'd to his by holy band,
For the fell cross of blood and brand?
And must the day, so blithe that rose,
And promised rapture in the close,
Before its setting hour, divide
The bridegroom from the plighted bride?
O fatal doom!—it must! it must!
Clan-Alpine's cause, her chieftain's trust,
Her summons dread, brooks no delay;
Stretch to the race—away! away!

XXII.

Yet slow he laid his plaid aside,
And, lingering, eyed his lovely bride,
Until he saw the starting tear
Speak wo he might not stop to cheer;
Then, trusting not a second look,
In haste he sped him up the brook,
Nor backward glanced till on the heath,
Where Lubnaig's lake supplies the Teith.—
What in the racer's bosom stirr'd?—
The sicken'd pang of hope deferr'd,
And memory, with a torturing train
Of all his morning visions vain.
Mingled with love's impatience, came
The manly thirst for martial fame:
The stormy joy of mountaineers,
Ere yet they rush upon the spears;
And zeal for clan and chieftain burning,
And hope, from well-fought field returning,
With war's red honours on his crest,
To clasp his Mary to his breast.
Stung by his thoughts, o'er bank and brae,
Like fire from flint he glanced away,
While high resolve, and feeling strong,
Burst into voluntary song.

XXIII.

SONG.

The heath this night must be my bed,
The bracken* curtain for my head,
My lullaby the warder's tread,
Far, far from love and thee, Mary!
To-morrow eve, more stilly laid,
My couch may be my bloody plaid,
My vesper song, thy wail, sweet maid!
It will not waken me, Mary!

I may not, dare not, fancy now
The grief that clouds thy lovely brow,
I dare not think upon thy vow,
And all it promised me, Mary!
No fond regret must Norman know;
When bursts Clan-Alpine on the foe,
His heart must be like bended bow,
His foot like arrow free, Mary!

A time will come with feeling fraught;
For, if I fall in battle fought,
Thy hapless lover's dying thought
Shall be a thought on thee, Mary!
And if return'd from conquer'd foes,
How blithely will the evening close,
How sweet the linnet sing repose,
To my young bride and me, Mary!

XXIV.

Not faster o'er thy heathery braes,
Balquidder, speeds the midnight blaze,
Rushing, in conflagration strong,
Thy deep ravines and dells along,
Wrapping thy cliffs in purple glow,
And reddening the dark lakes below;
Nor faster speeds it, nor so far,
As o'er thy heaths the voice of war.
The signal roused to martial coil
The sullen margin of Loch-Voil,
Waked still Loch-Doine, and to the source
Alarm'd, Balvaig, thy swampy course;
Thence, southward turn'd its rapid road
Adown Strath-Gartney's valley broad,
Till rose in arms each man might claim
A portion in Clan-Alpine's name;
From the gray sire, whose trembling hand
Could hardly buckle on his brand,
To the raw boy, whose shaft and bow
Were yet scarce terror to the crow.
Each valley, each sequester'd glen,
Muster'd its little horde of men,
That met as torrents from the height
In highland dales their streams unite,
Still gathering as they pour along,
A voice more loud, a tide more strong,
Till at the rendezvous they stood
By hundreds, prompt for blows and blood;
Each train'd to arms since life began,
Owning no tie but to his clan,
No oath, but by his chieftain's hand,
No law, but Roderick Dhu's command.

XXV.

That summer morn had Roderick Dhu
Survey'd the skirts of Ben-venue,
And sent his scouts o'er hill and heath,
To view the frontiers of Menteith.
All backward came with news of truce;
Still lay each martial Grœme and Bruce,
In Rednock courts no horsemen wait,
No banner waved on Cardross gate,
On Duchray's towers no beacon shone,
Nor scared the herons from Loch-Con;
All seem'd at peace.—Now, wot ye why
The chieftain, with such anxious eye,
Ere to the muster he repair,
This western frontier scann'd with care?—

* *Bracken*—Fern.

In Ben-venue's most darksome cleft
A fair, though cruel, pledge was left;
For Douglas, to his promise true,
That morning from the isle withdrew,
And in a deep sequester'd dell
Had sought a low and lonely cell.
By many a bard, in Celtic tongue,
Has Coir-nan-Uriskin been sung;
A softer name the Saxons gave,
And call'd the grot the Goblin-cave.

XXVI.

It was as wild and strange retreat
As e'er was trod by outlaw's feet.
The dell, upon the mountain's crest,
Yawn'd like a gash on warrior's breast;
Its trench had stay'd full many a rock,
Hurl'd by primeval earthquake shock
From Ben-venue's gray summit wild;
And here, in random ruin piled,
They frown'd incumbent o'er the spot,
And form'd the rugged sylvan grot.
The oak and birch, with mingled shade
At noontide there a twilight made,
Unless when short and sudden shone
Some straggling beam on cliff or stone,
With such a glimpse as prophet's eye
Gains on thy depth, futurity.
No murmur waked the solemn still,
Save tinkling of a fountain rill;
But when the wind chafed with the lake,
A sullen sound would upward break,
With dashing hollow voice, that spoke
Th' incessant war of wave and rock.
Suspended cliffs, with hideous sway,
Seemed nodding o'er the cavern gray.
From such a den the wolf had sprung,
In such the wild cat leaves her young:
Yet Douglas and his daughter fair,
Sought, for a space, their safety there.
Gray superstition's whisper dread
Debarr'd the spot to vulgar tread:
For there, she said, did fays resort,
And satyrs* hold their sylvan court,
By moonlight tread their mystic maze,
And blast the rash beholder's gaze.

XXVII.

Now eve with western shadows long,
Floated on Katrine bright and strong,
When Roderick, with a chosen few,
Repass'd the heights of Ben-venue.
Above the goblin-cave they go,
Through the wild pass of Beal-nam-bo;
The prompt retainers speed before,
To launch the shallop from the shore,
For 'cross Loch-Katrine lies his way,
To view the passes of Achray,
And place his clansmen in array.
Yet lags the chief in musing mind,
Unwonted sight, his men behind.
A single page, to bear his sword,
Alone attended on his lord;
The rest their way through thickets break,
And soon await him by the lake.

* The *Urisk*, or highland satyr.

It was a fair and gallant sight,
To view them from the neighbouring height,
By the low levell'd sunbeam's light;
For strength and stature, from the clan
Each warrior was a chosen man,
As e'en afar might well be seen,
By their proud step and martial mien.
Their feathers dance, their tartans float,
Their targets gleam, as by the boat
A wild and warlike group they stand,
That well became such mountain strand

XXVIII.

Their chief, with step reluctant, still
Was lingering on the craggy hill,
Hard by where turn'd apart the road
To Douglas's obscure abode.
It was but with that dawning morn
That Roderick Dhu had proudly sworn
To drown his love in war's wild roar,
Nor think of Ellen Douglas more;
But he who stems a stream with sand,
And fetters flame with flaxen band,
Has yet a harder task to prove—
By firm resolve to conquer love!
Eve finds the chief, like restless ghost,
Still hovering near his treasure lost;
For though his haughty heart deny
A parting meeting to his eye,
Still fondly strains his anxious ear
The accents of her voice to hear,
And inly did he curse the breeze
That waked to sound the rustling trees.
But hark! what mingles in the strain?
It is the harp of Allan-bane,
That wakes its measure slow and high,
Attuned to sacred minstrelsy.
What melting voice attends the strings?
'Tis Ellen, or an angel, sings.

XXIX.

HYMN TO THE VIRGIN.

Ave Maria! maiden mild!
Listen to a maiden's prayer;
Thou canst hear though from the wild,
Thou canst save amid despair.
Safe may we sleep beneath thy care,
Though banish'd, outcast, and reviled—
Maiden! hear a maiden's prayer;
Mother, hear a suppliant child!
Ave Maria!

Ave Maria! undefiled!
The flinty couch we now must share
Shall seem with down of eider piled,
If thy protection hover there.
The murky cavern's heavy air
Shall breathe of balm if thou hast smiled;
Then, maiden, hear a maiden's prayer,
Mother, list a suppliant child!
Ave Maria!

Ave Maria! Stainless styled!
Foul demons of the earth and air,
From this their wonted haunt exiled,
Shall flee before thy presence fair.
We bow us to thy lot of care,
Beneath thy guidance reconciled;

Hear for a maid a maiden's prayer,
And for a father hear a child!
Ave Maria!

XXX.

Died on the harp the closing hymn—
Unmoved in attitude and limb,
As listening still, Clan-Alpine's lord
Stood leaning on his heavy sword,
Until the page, with humble sign,
Twice pointed to the sun's decline.
Then, while his plaid he round him cast,
"It is the last time—'tis the last,"—
He mutter'd thrice,—"the last time e'er
That angel voice shall Roderick hear!"
It was a goading thought—his stride
Hied hastier down the mountain side;
Sullen he flung him in the boat,
And instant 'cross the lake it shot.
They landed in that silvery bay,
And eastward held their hasty way.
Till, with the latest beams of light,
The band arrived on Lanric height,
Where muster'd, in the vale below,
Clan-Alpine's men in martial show.

XXXI.

A various scene the clansmen made,
Some sate, some stood, some slowly stray'd
But most, with mantles folded round,
Were couch'd to rest upon the ground,
Scarce to be known by curious eye,
From the deep heather where they lie,
So well was match'd the tartan screen
With heathbell dark and brackens green;
Unless where, here and there, a blade,
Or lance's point, a glimmer made,
Like glowworm twinkling through the shade.
But when, advancing through the gloom,
They saw the chieftain's eagle plume,
Their shout of welcome, shrill and wide,
Shook the steep mountain's steady side.
Thrice it arose, and lake and fell
Three times return'd the martial yell;
It died upon Bochastle's plain,
And silence claim'd her evening reign.

Canto IV.

THE PROPHECY.

I.

"The rose is fairest when 'tis budding new,
And hope is brightest when it dawns from fears;
The rose is sweetest wash'd with morning dew,
And love is loveliest when embalm'd in tears.
O wilding rose, whom fancy thus endears,
I bid your blossoms in my bonnet wave,
Emblem of hope and love through future years!"
Thus spoke young Norman, heir of Armandave,
What time the sun arose on Vennachar's broad wave.

II.

Such fond conceit, half said, half sung,
Love prompted to the bridegroom's tongue.
All while he stripp'd the wild-rose spray,
His axe and bow beside him lay,
For on a pass 'twixt lake and wood,
A wakeful sentinel he stood.
Hark!—on the rock a footstep rung,
And instant to his arms he sprung.
"Stand, or thou diest!—What, Malise!—soon
Art thou return'd from braes of Doune.
By thy keen step and glance I know
Thou bring'st us tidings of the foe."—
(For while the fiery cross hied on,
On distant scout had Malise gone.)
"Where sleeps the chief?" the henchman said
"Apart, in yonder misty glade;
To his lone couch I'll be your guide."—
Then call'd a slumberer by his side,
And stirr'd him with his slacken'd bow—
"Up, up, Glentarkin! rouse thee, ho!
We seek the chieftain; on the track
Keep eagle watch till I come back."

III.

Together up the pass they sped:
"What of the foeman?" Norman said.—
"Varying reports from near and far:
This certain—that a band of war
Has for two days been ready boune,
At prompt command, to march from Doune;
King James, the while, with princely powers,
Holds revelry in Stirling towers.
Soon will this dark and gathering cloud
Speak on our glens in thunder loud.
Inured to bide such bitter bout,
The warrior's plaid may bear it out:
But, Norman, how wilt thou provide
A shelter for thy bonny bride?"—
"What! know ye not that Roderick's care
To the lone isle hath caused repair
Each maid and matron of the clan,
And every child and aged man
Unfit for arms; and given his charge,
Nor skiff nor shallop, boat nor barge,
Upon these lakes shall float at large,
But all beside the islet moor,
That such dear pledge may rest secure?"

IV.

"'Tis well advised—the chieftain's plan
Bespeaks the father of his clan.
But wherefore sleeps Sir Roderick Dhu
Apart from all his followers true?"
"It is because last evening tide
Brian an augury hath tried,
Of that dread kind which must not be
Unless in dread extremity.
The taghairm call'd; by which, afar,
Our sires foresaw th' events of war.
Duncraggan's milk-white bull they slew.

MALISE.

"Ah! well the gallant brute I knew!
The choicest of the prey we had,
When swept our merry men Gallangad.
His hide was snow, his horns were dark,
His red eye glow'd like fiery spark;

So fierce, so tameless, and so fleet,
Sore did he cumber our retreat,
And kept our stoutest kernes in awe,
E'en at the pass of Beal 'maha.
But steep and flinty was the road,
And sharp the hurrying pikeman's goad,
And when we came to Dennan's row
A child might scatheless stroke his brow."

V.

NORMAN.

"That bull was slain: his reeking hide
They stretch'd the cataract beside,
Whose waters their wild tumult toss
Adown the black and craggy boss
Of that huge cliff, whose ample verge
Tradition calls the Hero's Targe.
Couch'd on a shelve beneath its brink,
Close where the thundering torrents sink,
Rocking beneath their headlong sway,
And drizzled by the ceaseless spray,
Midst groan of rock, and roar of stream,
The wizard waits prophetic dream.
Nor distant rests the chief;—but, hush!
See, gliding slow through mist and bush,
The hermit gains yon rock, and stands
To gaze upon our slumbering bands.
Seems he not, Malise, like a ghost,
That hovers o'er a slaughter'd host?
Or raven on the blasted oak,
That, watching while the deer is broke,*
His morsel claims with sullen croak?"
—"Peace! peace! to other than to me,
Thy words were evil augury;
But still I hold Sir Roderick's blade
Clan-Alpine's omen and her aid,
Not aught that, gleam'd from heaven or hell,
Yon fiend-begotten monk can tell.
The chieftain joins him, see—and now,
Together they descend the brow."—

VI.

And, as they came, with Alpine's lord
The hermit monk held solemn word:
"Roderick! it is a fearful strife,
For man endow'd with mortal life,
Whose shroud of sentient clay can still
Feel feverish pang and fainting chill,
Whose eye can stare in stony trance,
Whose hair can rouse like warrior's lance,—
'Tis hard for such to view, unfurl'd,
The curtain of the future world.
Yet, witness every quaking limb,
My sunken pulse, mine eyeballs dim,
My soul with harrowing anguish torn,
This for my chieftain have I borne!—
The shapes that sought my fearful couch,
A human tongue may ne'er avouch;
No mortal man—save he, who, bred
Between the living and the dead,
Is gifted beyond nature's law,—
Had e'er survived to say he saw.
At length the fateful answer came,
In characters of living flame!
Not spoke in word, nor blazed in scroll,
But borne and branded on my soul;—
Which spills the foremost foeman's life
That party conquers in the strife."

* Quartered.

VII.

"Thanks, Brian, for thy zeal and care!
Good is thine augury, and fair.
Clan-Alpine ne'er in battle stood,
But first our broadswords tasted blood.
A surer victim still I know,
Self-offer'd to th' auspicious blow:
A spy has sought my land this morn,
No eve shall witness his return!
My followers guard each pass's mouth,
To east, to westward, and to south;
Red Murdoch, bribed to be his guide,
Has charge to lead his steps aside,
Till, in deep path or dingle brown,
He light on those shall bring him down.
But see who comes his news to show!
Malise! what tidings of the foe?"

VIII.

"At Doune, o'er many a spear and glaive
Two barons proud their banners wave,
I saw the Moray's silver star,
And mark'd the sable pale of Mar."—
"By Alpine's soul, high tidings those!
I love to hear of worthy foes.
When move they on?"—"To-morrow's noon
Will see them here for battle boune."
"Then shall it see a meeting stern!
But, for the place—say, couldst thou learn
Naught of the friendly clans of Earn?
Strengthen'd by them, we well might bide
The battle on Benledi's side.—
Thou couldst not?—well! Clan-Alpine's men
Shall man the Trosach's shaggy glen;
Within Loch-Katrine's gorge we'll fight,
All in our maids' and matrons' sight,
Each for his hearth and household fire,
Father for child, and son for sire,
Lover for maid beloved!—but why—
Is it the breeze affects mine eye?
Or dost thou come, ill-omen'd tear,
A messenger of doubt and fear?
No! sooner may the Saxon lance
Unfix Benledi from his stance,
Than doubt or terror can pierce through
Th' unyielding heart of Roderick Dhu!
'Tis stubborn as his trusty targe.—
Each to his post!—all know their charge."—
The pibroch sounds, the bands advance,
The broadswords gleam, the banners dance,
Obedient to the chieftain's glance.
I turn me from the martial roar,
And seek Coir-Uriskin once more.

IX.

Where is the Douglas?—he is gone;
And Ellen sits on the gray stone
Fast by the cave, and makes her moan;
While vainly Allan's words of cheer
Are pour'd on her unheeding ear.

"He will return—dear lady, trust!
With joy return;—he will—he must.
Well was it time to seek, afar,
Some refuge from impending war,
When e'en Clan-Alpine's rugged swarm
Are cow'd by the approaching storm.
I saw their boats, with many a light,
Floating the livelong yesternight,
Shifting like flashes darted forth
By the red streamers of the north;
I mark'd at morn how close they ride,
Thick moor'd by the lone islet's side.
Like wild ducks couching in the fen,
When stoops the hawk upon the glen.
Since this rude race dare not abide
The peril on the mainland side,
Shall not thy noble father's care
Some safe retreat for thee prepare?"—

X.

ELLEN.

"No, Allan, no! pretext so kind
My wakeful terrors could not blind.
When in such tender tone, yet grave,
Douglas a parting blessing gave,
The tear that glisten'd in his eye
Drown'd not his purpose fix'd and high.
My soul, though feminine and weak,
Can image his, e'en as the lake,
Itself disturb'd by slightest stroke,
Reflects th' invulnerable rock.
He hears report of battle rife,
He deems himself the cause of strife.
I saw him redden when the theme
Turn'd, Allan, on thine idle dream,
Of Malcolm Græme in fetters bound,
Which I, thou saidst, about him wound.
Think'st thou he trow'd thine omen aught?
O no! 'twas apprehensive thought
For the kind youth,—for Roderick too—
(Let me be just) that friend so true;
In danger both, and in our cause
Minstrel, the Douglas dare not pause.
Why else that solemn warning given,
'If not on earth, we meet in heaven?'
Why else, to Cambus-Kenneth's fane,
If eve return him not again,
Am I to hie and make me known?
Alas! he goes to Scotland's throne,
Buys his friends' safety with his own;—
He goes to do—what I had done,
Had Douglas' daughter been his son!"

XI.

ALLAN.

"Nay, lovely Ellen!—dearest, nay!
If aught should his return delay,
He only named yon holy fane
As fitting place to meet again.
Be sure he's safe; and for the Græme,
Heaven's blessing on his gallant name!
My vision'd sight may yet prove true,
Nor bode of ill to him or you.
When did my gifted dream beguile?
Think of the stranger at the isle,
And think upon the harpings slow,
That presaged this approaching wo!
Sooth was my prophecy of fear;
Believe it when it augurs cheer.
Would we had left this dismal spot!
Ill luck still haunts a fairy grot.
Of such, a wondrous tale I know—
Dear lady, change that look of wo!
My harp was wont thy grief to cheer."

ELLEN.

"Well, be it as thou wilt; I hear,
But cannot stop the bursting tear."
The minstrel tried his simple art,
But distant far was Ellen's heart.

XII.

BALLAD.

ALICE BRAND.

Merry it is in the good green wood,
When the mavis* and merle† are singing,
When the deer sweeps by, and the hounds are in cry,
And the hunter's horn is ringing.

"O Alice Brand, my native land
Is lost for love of you;
And we must hold by wood and wold,
As outlaws wont to do.

"O Alice, 'twas all for thy locks so bright,
And 'twas all for thine eyes so blue,
That on the night of our luckless flight,
Thy brother bold I slew.

"Now must I teach to hew the beach,
The hand that held the glaive,
For leaves to spread our lowly bed,
And stakes to fence our cave.

"And, for vest of pall, thy fingers small,
That wont on harp to stray,
A cloak must shear from the slaughter'd deer,
To keep the cold away."

"O Richard! if my brother died,
'Twas but a fatal chance;
For darkling was the battle tried,
And fortune sped the lance.

"If pall and vair no more I wear,
Nor thou the crimson sheen,
As warm, we'll say, is the russet gray,
As gay the forest green.

"And, Richard, if our lot be hard,
And lost thy native land,
Still Alice has her own Richard,
And he his Alice Brand."—

XIII.

BALLAD CONTINUED.

'Tis merry, 'tis merry in good green wood,
So blithe Lady Alice is singing;
On the beech's pride, and oak's brown side,
Lord Richard's axe is ringing.

* Thrush. † Blackbird.

Up spoke the moody elfin king,
Who won'd within the hill,—
Like wind in the porch of a ruin'd church,
His voice was ghostly shrill.

"Why sounds yon stroke on beach and oak,
Our moonlight circle's screen?
Or who comes here to chase the deer,
Beloved of our elfin queen?
Or who may dare on wold to wear
The fairies' fatal green?

"Up, Urgan, up! to yon mortal hie,
For thou wert christen'd man;
For cross or sign thou wilt not fly,
For mutter'd word or ban.

"Lay on him the curse of the wither'd heart,
The curse of the sleepless eye;
Till he wish and pray that his life would part,
Nor yet find leave to die."

XIV.

BALLAD CONTINUED.

'Tis merry, 'tis merry in good green wood,
Though the birds have still'd their singing;
The evening blaze doth Alice raise,
And Richard is fagots bringing.

Up Urgan starts, that hideous dwarf,
Before Lord Richard stands,
And, as he cross'd and bless'd himself,
"I fear not sign," quoth the grisly elf,
"That is made with bloody hands."—

But out then spoke she, Alice Brand,
That woman void of fear,—
"And if there's blood upon his hand,
'Tis but the blood of deer."—

"Now loud thou liest, thou bold of mood!
It cleaves unto his hand,
The stain of thine own kindly blood,
The blood of Ethert Brand."

Then forward stepp'd she, Alice Brand,
And made the holy sign,—
"And if there's blood on Richard's hand,
A spotless hand is mine.

"And I conjure thee, demon elf,
By him who demons fear,
To show us whence thou art thyself,
And what thine errand here?"—

XV.

BALLAD CONTINUED.

"'Tis merry, 'tis merry in fairy land,
When fairy birds are singing,
When the court doth ride by their monarch's side,
With bit and bridle ringing:

"And gayly shines the fairy land
But all is glistening show,
Like the idle gleam that December's beam
Can dart on ice and snow.

"And fading like that varied gleam,
Is our inconstant shape,
Who now like knight and lady seem,
And now like dwarf and ape.

"It was between the night and day,
When the fairy king has power,
That I sunk down in a sinful fray,
And, 'twixt life and death, was snatch'd away
To the joyless elfin bower.

"But wist I of a woman bold,
Who thrice my brow durst sign,
I might regain my mortal mould,
As fair a form as thine."—

She cross'd him once, she cross'd him twice—
That lady was so brave;
The fouler grew his goblin hue,
The darker grew the cave.

She cross'd him thrice, that lady bold;
He rose beneath her hand
The fairest knight on Scottish mould,
Her brother, Ethert Brand!

Merry it is in good green wood,
When the mavis and merle are singing;
But merrier were they in Dunfermline gray
When all the bells were ringing.

XVI.

Just as the minstrel sounds were stay'd,
A stranger climb'd the steepy glade;
His martial step, his stately mien,
His hunting suit of Lincoln green,
His eagle glance, remembrance claims—
'Tis Snowdoun's knight, 'tis James Fitz-James.
Ellen beheld as in a dream,
Then, starting, scarce suppress'd a scream:
"O stranger! in such hour of fear,
What evil hap has brought thee here?"
"An evil hap! how can it be,
That bids me look again on thee?
By promise bound, my former guide
Met me betimes this morning tide,
And marshall'd, over bank and bourne,
The happy path of my return."—
"The happy path!—what! said he naught
Of war, of battle to be fought,
Of guarded pass?"—"No, by my faith!
Nor saw I aught could augur scathe."
"O! haste thee, Allan, to the kern,—
Yonder his tartans I discern;
Learn thou his purpose, and conjure
That he will guide the stranger sure!—
What prompted thee, unhappy man?
The meanest serf in Roderick's clan
Had not been bribed by love or fear,
Unknown to him, to guide thee here."—

XVII.

"Sweet Ellen, dear my life must be,
Since it is worthy care from thee;
Yet life I hold but idle breath,
When love or honour's weigh'd with death.
Then let me profit by my chance,
And speak my purpose bold at once.
I come to bear thee from a wild,
Where ne'er before such blossom smiled;
By this soft hand to lead thee far
From frantic scenes of feud and war.
Near Bochastle my horses wait,
They bear us soon to Stirling gate:

I'll place thee in a lovely bower,
I'll guard thee like a tender flower——"
"O, hush, sir knight! 'twere female art
To say I do not read thy heart;
Too much, before, my selfish ear
Was idly soothed my praise to hear.
That fatal bait hath lured thee back,
In deathful hour, o'er dangerous track!
And how, O how, can I atone
The wreck my vanity brought on;—
One way remains—I'll tell him all—
Yes! struggling bosom, forth it shall!
Thou, whose light folly bears the blame,
Buy thine own pardon with thy shame!
But first—my father is a man
Outlaw'd and exiled, under ban;
The price of blood is on his head,
With me 'twere infamy to wed.—
Still wouldst thou speak?—then hear the truth:
Fitz-James, there is a noble youth—
If yet he is!—exposed for me
And mine to dread extremity—
Thou hast the secret of my heart;
Forgive, be generous, and depart."

XVIII.

Fitz-James knew every wily train
A lady's fickle heart to gain,
But here he knew and felt them vain.
There shot no glance from Ellen's eye,
To give her steadfast speech the lie;
In maiden confidence she stood,
Though mantled in her cheek the blood,
And told her love with such a sigh
Of deep and hopeless agony,
As death had seal'd her Malcolm's doom,
And she sat sorrowing on his tomb.
Hope vanish'd from Fitz-James's eye,
But not with hope fled sympathy.
He proffer'd to attend her side,
As brother would a sister guide.—
"O! little know'st thou Roderick's heart!
Safer for both we go apart.
O haste thee, and from Allan learn,
If thou may'st trust yon wily kern."—
With hand upon his forehead laid,
The conflict of his mind to shade,
A parting step or two he made;
Then, as some thought had cross'd his brain
He paused, and turn'd, and came again.

XIX.

"Hear, lady, yet, a parting word!—
It chanced in fight that my poor sword
Preserved the life of Scotland's lord.
This ring the grateful monarch gave,
And bade, when I had boon to crave,
To bring it back, and boldly claim
The recompense that I would name.
Ellen, I am no courtly lord
But one who lives by lance and sword,
Whose castle is his helm and shield,
His lordship the embattled field.
What from a prince can I demand,
Who neither reck of state nor land?
Ellen, thy hand—the ring is thine;
Each guard and usher knows the sign.
Seek thou the king without delay;
This signet shall secure thy way;
And claim thy suit, whate'er it be,
As ransom of his pledge to me."—
He placed the golden circlet on,
Paused—kiss'd her hand—and then was gone.
The aged minstrel stood aghast,
So hastily Fitz-James shot past.
He join'd his guide, and wending down
The ridges of the mountain brown,
Across the stream they took their way,
That joins Loch-Katrine to Achray.

XX.

All in the Trosach's glen was still
Noontide was sleeping on the hill:
Sudden his guide whoop'd loud and high—
"Murdoch! was that a signal cry?"
He stammer'd forth,—"I shout to scare
Yon raven from his dainty fare."
He look'd—he knew the raven's prey,
His own brave steed:—"Ah! gallant gray!
For thee—for me, perchance—'twere well
We ne'er had left the Trosach's dell.
Murdoch, move first—but silently;
Whistle or whoop, and thou shalt die."
Jealous and sullen on they fared,
Each silent, each upon his guard.

XXI.

Now wound the path its dizzy ledge
Around a precipice's edge.
When lo! a wasted female form,
Blighted by wrath of sun and storm,
In tatter'd weeds and wild array,
Stood on a cliff beside the way,
And glancing round her restless eye,
Upon the wood, the rock, the sky,
Seem'd naught to mark, yet all to spy.
Her brow was wreath'd with gaudy broom;
With gesture wild she waved a plume
Of feathers, which the eagles fling
To crag and cliff from dusky wing;
Such spoils her desperate step had sought,
Where scarce was footing for the goat.
The tartan plaid she first descried,
And shriek'd till all the rocks replied;
As loud she laugh'd when near they drew,
For then the lowland garb she knew;
And then her hands she wildly wrung,
And then she wept, and then she sung.—
She sung:—the voice, in better time,
Perchance to harp or lute might chime;
And now, though strain'd and roughen'd, still
Rung wildly sweet to dale and hill.

XXII.

SONG.

"They bid me sleep, they bid me pray,
They say my brain is warp'd and wrung—
I cannot sleep on highland brae,
I cannot pray in highland tongue.
But were I now where Allan glides,
Or heard my native Devan's tides,

So sweetly would I rest, and pray
That heaven would close my wintry day!

"Twas thus my hair they bade me braid,
They bade me to the church repair;
It was my bridal morn, they said,
And my truelove would meet me there.
But wo betide the cruel guile,
That drown'd in blood the morning smile!
And wo betide the fairy dream!
I only waked to sob and scream."

XXIII.

"Who is this maid? what means her lay?
She hovers o'er the hollow way,
And flutters wide her mantle gray,
As the lone heron spreads his wing,
By twilight, o'er a haunted spring."
"Tis Blanche of Devan," Murdoch said,
"A crazed and captive lowland maid,
Ta'en on the morn she was a bride,
When Roderick foray'd Devan side:
The gay bridegroom resistance made,
And felt our chief's unconquer'd blade.
I marvel she is now at large,
But oft she 'scapes from Maudlin's charge.
Hence, brain-sick fool!"—He raised his bow:
"Now, if thou strik'st her but one blow,
I'll pitch thee from the cliff as far
As ever peasant pitch'd a bar."
"Thanks, champion, thanks!" the maniac cried,
And press'd her to Fitz-James's side.
"See the gray pennons I prepare,
To seek my truelove through the air!
I will not lend that savage groom,
To break his fall, one downy plume!
No!—deep among disjointed stones
The wolves shall batten on his bones,
And then shall his detested plaid,
By bush and brier in mid air stay'd,
Wave forth a banner fair and free,
Meet signal for their revelry."

XXIV.

"Hush thee, poor maiden, and be still!"
"O! thou look'st kindly, and I will.
Mine eye has dried and wasted been,
But still it loves the Lincoln green;
And though mine ear is all unstrung,
Still, still it loves the lowland tongue.

"For O, my sweet William was forester true,
He stole poor Blanche's heart away!
His coat it was all of the greenwood hue,
And so blithely he trill'd the lowland lay!

"It was not that I meant to tell—
But thou art wise, and guessest well."
Then, in a low and broken tone,
And hurried note, the song went on.
Still on the clansman, fearfully
She fix'd her apprehensive eye;
Then turn'd it on the knight, and then
Her look glanced wildly o'er the glen.

XXV

"The toils are pitch'd, and the stakes are set,
Ever sing merrily, merrily;
The bows they bend, and the knives they whet
Hunters live so cheerily.

"It was a stag, a stag of ten,*
Bearing his branches sturdily;
He came stately down the glen,
Ever sing hardily, hardily.

"It was there he met with a wounded doe,
She was bleeding deathfully;
She warn'd him of the toils below,
O, so faithfully, faithfully!

"He had an eye and he could heed,
Ever sing warily, warily;
He had a foot and he could speed—
Hunters watch so narrowly."

XXVI.

Fitz-James's mind was passion-toss'd
When Ellen's hints and fears were lost;
But Murdoch's shout suspicion wrought,
And Blanche's song conviction brought.—
Not like a stag that spies the snare,
But lion of the hunt aware,
He waved at once his blade on high,
"Disclose thy treachery, or die!"—
Forth at full speed the clansman flew,
But in his race his bow he drew:
The shaft just grazed Fitz-James's crest,
And thrill'd in Blanche's faded breast.—
Murdoch of Alpine, prove thy speed,
For ne'er had Alpine's son such need!
With heart of fire and foot of wind,
The fierce avenger is behind!
Fate judges of the rapid strife—
The forfeit death—the prize is life!
Thy kindred ambush lies before,
Close couch'd upon the heathery moor;
Them couldst thou reach!—it may not be—
Thine ambush'd kin thou ne'er shalt see,
The fiery Saxon gains on thee!
—Resistless speeds the deadly thrust,
As lightning strikes the pine to dust;
With foot and hand Fitz-James must strain,
Ere he can win his blade again.
Bent o'er the fallen, with falcon eye,
He grimly smiled to see him die;
Then slower wended back his way,
Where the poor maiden bleeding lay.

XXVII.

She sate beneath the birchen tree,
Her elbow resting on her knee;
She had withdrawn the fatal shaft,
And gazed on it and feebly laughed;
Her wreath of broom and feathers gray,
Daggled with blood, beside her lay.
The knight to stanch the life-stream tried:—
"Stranger, it is in vain!" she cried,
"This hour of death has given me more
Of reason's power than years before;
For, as these ebbing veins decay,
My frenzied visions fade away.

* Having ten branches on his antlers.

A helpless injured wretch I die,
And something tells me in thine eye,
That thou wert my avenger born.
Seest thou this tress?"—O! still I've worn
This little tress of yellow hair,
Through danger, frenzy, and despair!
It once was bright and clear as thine,
But blood and tears have dimm'd its shine.
I will not tell thee when 'twas shred,
Nor from what guiltless victim's head—
My brain would turn!—but it shall wave
Like plumage on thy helmet brave,
Till sun and wind shall bleach the stain,
And thou wilt bring it me again.—
I waver still. O God! more bright
Let reason beam her parting light!
O! by thy knighthood's honour'd sign,
And for thy life preserved by mine,
When thou shalt see a darksome man,
Who boasts him chief of Alpine's clan,
With tartans broad and shadowy plume,
And hand of blood, and brow of gloom
Be thy heart bold, thy weapon strong,
And wreak poor Blanche of Devan's wrong!
They watch for thee by pass and fell—
Avoid the path—O God!—farewell!"

XXVIII.

A kindly heart had brave Fitz-James;
Fast pour'd his eye at pity's claims,
And now, with mingled grief and ire,
He saw the murder'd maid expire.
"God, in my need, be my relief,
As I wreak this on yonder chief!"
A lock from Blanche's tresses fair
He blended with her bridegroom's hair;
The mingled braid in blood he died,
And placed it on his bonnet side;
"By him whose word is truth! I swear
No other favour will I wear,
Till this sad token I imbrue
In the best blood of Roderick Dhu!
—But hark! what means yon faint halloo?
The chase is up—but they shall know,
The stag at bay's a dangerous foe."
Barr'd from the known but guarded way,
Through copse and cliffs Fitz-James must stray,
And oft must change his desperate track,
By stream and precipice turn'd back.
Heartless, fatigued, and faint, at length,
From lack of food and loss of strength,
He couch'd him in a thicket hoar,
And thought his toils and perils o'er:
"Of all my rash adventures past,
This frantic feat must prove the last!
Who e'er so mad but might have guess'd,
That all this highland hornet's nest
Would muster up in swarms so soon
As e'er they heard of bands at Doune?
Like bloodhounds now they search me out.—
Hark to the whistle and the shout!
If farther through the wilds I go,
I only fall upon the foe;
I'll couch me here till evening gray,
Then darkling try my dangerous way."—

XXIX.

The shades of eve come slowly down,
The woods are wrapp'd in deeper brown,
The owl awakens from her dell,
The fox is heard upon the fell;
Enough remains of glimmering light,
To guide the wanderer's steps aright,
Yet not enough from far to show
His figure to the watchful foe.
With cautious step and ear awake,
He climbs the crag, and threads the brake;
And not the summer solstice there,
Temper'd the midnight mountain air,
But every breeze that swept the wold,
Benumb'd his drenched limbs with cold.
In dread, in danger, and alone,
Famish'd and chill'd, through ways unknown,
Tangled and steep, he journey'd on;
Till, as a rock's huge point he turn'd,
A watch-fire close beside him burn'd.

XXX.

Beside its embers red and clear,
Bask'd in his plaid, a mountaineer;
And up he sprung with sword in hand—
"Thy name and purpose! Saxon, stand!"
"A-stranger."—"What dost thou require?"
"Rest and a guide, and food and fire.
My life's beset, my path is lost,
The gale has chill'd my limbs with frost."
"Art thou a friend to Roderick?"—"No."—
"Thou dar'st not call thyself a foe?"
"I dare! to him and all the band
He brings to aid his murderous hand."
"Bold words!—but, though the beast of game
The privilege of chase may claim,
Though space and law the stag we lend,
Ere hound we slip, or bow we bend,
Who ever reck'd where, how, or when,
The prowling fox was trapp'd and slain?
Thus treacherous scouts;—yet sure they lie,
Who say thou cam'st a secret spy!"—
"They do, by heaven!—Come Roderick Dhu,
And of his clan the boldest two,
And let me but till morning rest,
I write the falsehood on their crest."—
"If by the blaze I mark aright,
Thou bear'st the belt and spur of knight."
"Then by these tokens may'st thou know
Each proud oppressor's mortal foe."
"Enough, enough; sit down and share
A soldier's couch, a soldier's fare."—

XXXI.

He gave him of his highland cheer,
The harden'd flesh of mountain deer;
Dry fuel on the fire he laid,
And bade the Saxon share his plaid.
He tended him like welcome guest,
Then thus his further speech address'd.
"Stranger, I am to Roderick Dhu
A clansman born, a kinsman true;
Each word against his honour spoke
Demands of me avenging stroke;

Yet more—upon thy fate, 'tis said,
A mighty augury is laid.
It rests with me to wind my horn—
Thou art with numbers overborne;
It rests with me, here, brand to brand,
Worn as thou art, to bid thee stand:
But, not for clan, nor kindred's cause,
Will I depart from honour's laws;
T' assail a wearied man were shame,
And stranger is a holy name;
Guidance and rest, and food and fire,
In vain he never must require.
Then rest thee here till dawn of day;
Myself will guide thee on the way,
O'er stock and stone, through watch and ward,
Till past Clan-Alpine's outmost guard,
As far as Coilantogle's ford;
From thence thy warrant is thy sword."
I take thy courtesy, by heaven,
As freely as 'tis nobly given!"—
"Well, rest thee; for the bittern's cry
Sings us the lake's wild lullaby."—
With that he shook the gather'd heath,
And spread his plaid upon the wreath;
And the brave foemen, side by side,
Lay peaceful down like brothers tried,
And slept until the dawning beam
Purpled the mountain and the stream.

Canto V.

THE COMBAT.

I.

Fair as the earliest beam of eastern light,
When first by the bewilder'd pilgrim spied,
It smiles upon the dreary brow of night,
And silvers o'er the torrent's foaming tide,
And lights the fearful path on mountain side;
Fair as that beam, although the fairest far,
Giving to horror grace, to danger pride,
Shine martial faith, and courtesy's bright star,
Through all the wreckful storms that cloud the brow of war.

II.

That early beam, so fair and sheen,
Was twinkling through the hazel screen,
When, rousing at its glimmer red,
The warriors left their lowly bed,
Look'd out upon the dappled sky,
Mutter'd their soldier matins by,
And then awaked their fire, to steal,
As short and rude, their soldier meal.
That o'er, the Gael* around him threw
His graceful plaid of varied hue,
And, true to promise, led the way,
By thicket green and mountain gray.
A wildering path!—They winded now
Along the precipice's brow,
Commanding the rich scenes beneath,
The windings of the Forth and Teith,
And all the vales between that lie,
Till Stirling's turrets melt in sky;
Then, sunk in copse, their farthest glance
Gain'd not the length of horseman's lance
'Twas oft so steep, the foot was fain
Assistance from the hand to gain;
So tangled oft, that, bursting through,
Each hawthorn shed her showers of dew,
That diamond dew, so pure and clear,
It rivals all but beauty's tear!

III.

At length they came where, stern and steep,
The hill sinks down upon the deep.
Here Vennachar in silver flows,
There, ridge on ridge, Benledi rose;
Ever the hollow path twined on,
Beneath steep bank and threatening stone;
An hundred men might hold the post
With hardihood against a host.
The rugged mountain's scanty cloak
Was dwarfish shrubs of birch and oak,
With shingles bare, and cliffs between,
And patches bright of bracken green,
And heather black, that waved so high,
It hid the copse in rivalry.
But where the lake slept deep and still,
Dank osiers fringed the swamp and hill;
And oft both path and hill were torn,
Where wintry torrents down had borne,
And heap'd upon the cumber'd land
Its wreck of gravel, rocks, and sand.
So toilsome was the road to trace,
The guide, abating of his pace,
Led slowly through the pass's jaws,
And ask'd Fitz-James, by what strange cause
He sought these wilds, travers'd by few
Without a pass from Roderick Dhu.

IV.

"Brave Gael, my pass, in danger tried,
Hangs in my belt, and by my side;
Yet, sooth to tell," the Saxon said,
"I dream'd not now to claim its aid.
When here, but three days since, I came,
Bewilder'd in pursuit of game,
All seem'd as peaceful and as still,
As the mist slumbering on yon hill;
Thy dangerous chief was then afar,
Nor soon expected back from war.
Thus said, at least, my mountain guide,
Though deep, perchance, the villain lied."
"Yet why a second venture try?"—
"A warrior thou, and ask me why!
Moves our free course by such fix'd cause,
As gives the poor mechanic laws?
Enough, I sought to drive away
The lazy hours of peaceful day;
Slight cause will then suffice to guide
A knight's free footsteps far and wide,—
A falcon flown, a greyhound stray'd,
The merry glance of mountain maid;
Or, if a path be dangerous known,
The danger's self is lure alone."—

V.

"Thy secret keep, I urge thee not;—
Yet, ere again ye sought this spot,

* The Scottish highlander calls himself *Gael*, or Gaul, and terms the lowlanders *Sassenach*, or Saxons.

Say, heard ye naught of lowland war
Against Clan-Alpine raised by Mar?"
"No, by my word; of bands prepared
To guard king James's sports I heard;
Nor doubt I aught, but, when they hear
This muster of the mountaineer,
Their pennons will abroad be flung,
Which else in Doune had peaceful hung."
"Free be they flung!—for we were loth
Their silken folds should feast the moth.
Free be they flung! as free shall wave
Clan-Alpine's pine in banner brave.
But, stranger, peaceful since you came,
Bewilder'd in the mountain game,
Whence the bold boast by which you show
Vich-Alpine's vow'd and mortal foe?"
"Warrior, but yestermorn I knew
Naught of thy chieftain, Roderick Dhu,
Save as an outlaw'd desperate man,
The chief of a rebellious clan,
Who, in the regent's court and sight,
With ruffian dagger stabb'd a knight:
Yet this alone might from his part
Sever each true and loyal heart."

VI.

Wrothful at such arraignment foul,
Dark lour'd the clansman's sable scowl.
A space he paused, then sternly said,
"And heard'st thou why he drew his blade?
Heard'st thou that shameful word and blow
Brought Roderick's vengeance on his foe?
What reck'd the chieftain if he stood
On highland heath, or Holy-Rood?
He rights such wrong where it is given,
If it were in the court of heaven."
"Still was it outrage;—yet 'tis true,
Not then claim'd sovereignty his due;
While Albany, with feeble hand,
Held borrow'd truncheon of command,
The young king, mew'd in Stirling tower,
Was stranger to respect and power.
But then, thy chieftain's robber life!
Winning mean prey by causeless strife,
Wrenching from ruin'd lowland swain
His herds and harvest rear'd in vain—
Methinks a soul like thine should scorn
The spoils from such foul foray borne."

VII.

The Gael beheld him grim the while,
And answer'd with disdainful smile—
"Saxon, from yonder mountain high,
I mark'd thee send delighted eye,
Far to the south and east, where lay,
Extended in succession gay,
Deep waving fields and pastures green,
With gentle slopes and groves between;
These fertile plains, that soften'd vale,
Were once the birthright of the Gael;
The stranger came with iron hand,
And from our fathers reft the land.
Where dwell we now? See, rudely swell
Crag over crag, and fell o'er fell.
Ask we this savage hill we tread,
For fatten'd steer or household bread;
Ask we for flocks these shingles dry,
And well the mountain might reply,—
'To you, as to your sires of yore,
Belong the target and claymore!
I give you shelter in my breast,
Your own good blades must win the rest.'
Pent in this fortress of the north,
Think'st thou we will not sally forth,
To spoil the spoiler as we may,
And from the robber rend the prey?
Ay, by my soul!—While on yon plain
The Saxon rears one shock of grain;
While, of ten thousand herds, there strays
But one along yon river's maze,
The Gael, of plain and river heir,
Shall, with strong hand, redeem his share.
Where live the mountain chiefs who hold
That plundering lowland field and fold
Is aught but retribution true?
Seek other cause 'gainst Roderick Dhu.

VIII.

Answer'd Fitz-James,—"And, if I sought,
Think'st thou no other could be brought?
What deem ye of my path waylaid?
My life given o'er to ambuscade?"
"As of a meed to rashness due;
Hadst thou sent warning fair and true,
I seek my hound, or falcon stray'd,
I seek, good faith, a highland maid;
Free hadst thou been to come and go;
But secret path marks secret foe.
Nor yet, for this, e'en as a spy,
Hadst thou, unheard, been doom'd to die,
Save to fulfil an augury."
"Well, let it pass; nor will I now
Fresh cause of enmity avow,
To chafe thy mood and cloud thy brow
Enough, I am by promise tied
To match me with this man of pride:
Twice have I sought Clan-Alpine's glen
In peace; but when I come agen,
I come with banner, brand, and bow,
As leader seeks his mortal foe.
For lovelorn swain in lady's bower,
Ne'er panted for th' appointed hour
As I, until before me stand
This rebel chieftain and his band."

IX.

"Have, then, thy wish!"—he whistled shrill
And he was answer'd from the hill;
Wild as the scream of the curlew,
From crag to crag the signal flew.
Instant, through copse and heath, arose
Bonnets, and spears, and bended bows;
On right, on left, above, below,
Sprung up at once the lurking foe;
From shingles gray their lances start,
The bracken bush sends forth the dart,
The rushes and the willow wand
Are bristling into axe and brand,
And every tuft of broom gives life
To plaided warrior arm'd for strife.
That whistle garrison'd the glen
At once with full five hundred men,

As if the yawning hill to heaven
A subterranean host had given.
Watching their leader's beck and will,
All silent there they stood, and still;
Like the loose crags whose threatening mass
Lay tottering o'er the hollow pass,
As if an infant's touch could urge
Their headlong passage down the verge,
With step and weapon forward flung,
Upon the mountain side they hung.
The mountaineer cast glance of pride
Along Benledi's living side,
Then fix'd his eye and sable brow
Full on Fitz-James—"How say'st thou now
These are Clan-Alpine's warriors true?
And, Saxon—I am Roderick Dhu!"

X.

Fitz-James was brave:—though to his heart
The lifeblood thrill'd with sudden start,
He mann'd himself with dauntless air,
Return'd the chief his haughty stare,
His back against a rock he bore,
And firmly placed his foot before.
"Come one, come all! this rock shall fly
From its firm base as soon as I."
Sir Roderick mark'd—and in his eyes
Respect was mingled with surprise,
And the stern joy which warriors feel
In foeman worthy of their steel.
Short space he stood—then waved his hand:
Down sunk the disappearing band;
Each warrior vanish'd where he stood,
In broom or bracken, heath or wood;
Sunk brand and spear and bended bow,
In osiers pale and copses low;
It seem'd as if their mother earth
Had swallow'd up her warlike birth.
The wind's last breath had toss'd in air
Pennon, and plaid, and plumage fair;—
The next but swept a lone hill side,
Where heath and fern were waving wide;
The sun's last glance was glinted back
From spear and glaive, from targe and jack;—
The next, all unreflected, shone
On bracken green, and cold gray stone.

XI.

Fitz-James look'd round—yet scarce believed
The witness that his sight received;
Such apparition well might seem
Delusion of a dreadful dream.
Sir Roderick in suspense he eyed,
And to his look the chief replied,
"Fear naught—nay, that I need not say—
But doubt not aught from mine array.
Thou art my guest; I pledged my word
As far as Coilantogle ford:
Nor would I call a clansman's brand
For aid against one valiant hand,
Though on our strife lay every vale
Rent by the Saxon from the Gael.
So move we on; I only meant
To show the reed on which you leant,
Deeming this path you might pursue
Without a pass from Roderick Dhu."
They moved:—I said Fitz-James was brave
As ever knight that belted glaive;
Yet dare not say, that now his blood
Kept on its wont and temper'd flood,
As, following Roderick's stride, he drew
That seeming lonesome pathway through,
Which yet, by fearful proof, was rife
With lances, that, to take his life,
Waited but signal from a guide
So late dishonour'd and defied.
Ever, by stealth, his eye sought round
The vanish'd guardians of the ground,
And still, from copse and heather deep,
Fancy saw spear and broadsword peep
And in the plover's shrilly strain,
The signal whistle heard again.
Nor breathed he free till far behind
The pass was left; for then they wind
Along a wide and level green,
Where neither tree nor tuft was seen,
Nor rush, nor bush of broom was near,
To hide a bonnet or a spear.

XII.

The chief in silence strode before,
And reach'd that torrent's sounding shore,
Which, daughter of three mighty lakes,
From Vennachar in silver breaks,
Sweeps through the plain, and ceaseless mines
On Bochastle the mouldering lines,
Where Rome, the empress of the world,
Of yore her eagle wings unfurl'd.
And here his course the chieftain stay'd,
Threw down his target and his plaid,
And to the lowland warrior said:
"Bold Saxon! to his promise just,
Vich-Alpine has discharged his trust.
This murderous chief, this ruthless man,
This head of a rebellious clan,
Hath led thee safe, through watch and ward
Far past Clan-Alpine's outmost guard.
Now, man to man, and steel to steel,
A chieftain's vengeance thou shalt feel.
See, here, all vantageless I stand,
Arm'd, like thyself, with single brand;
For this is Coilantogle ford,
And thou must keep thee with thy sword."

XIII.

The Saxon paused:—"I ne'er delay'd,
When foeman bade me draw my blade;
Nay more, brave chief, I vow'd thy death:
Yet sure thy fair and generous faith,
And my deep debt for life preserved,
A better meed have well deserved:
Can naught but blood our feud atone?
Are there no means?"—"No, stranger, none!
And hear—to fire thy flagging zeal—
The Saxon cause rests on thy steel;
For thus spoke fate, by prophet bred
Between the living and the dead:—
'Who spills the foremost foeman's life,
His party conquers in the strife.'"
"Then, by my word," the Saxon said,
"The riddle is already read.

Seek yonder brake beneath the cliff,
There lies red Murdoch, stark and stiff.
Thus fate has solved her prophecy,
Then yield to fate, and not to me.
To James, at Stirling, let us go,
When, if thou wilt be still his foe,
Or if the king shall not agree
To grant thee grace and favour free,
I plight mine honour, oath, and word,
That, to thy native strengths restored,
With each advantage shalt thou stand,
That aids thee now to guard thy land."

XIV.

Dark lightning flash'd from Roderick's eye—
"Soars thy presumption then so high,
Because a wretched kern ye slew,
Homage to name to Roderick Dhu?
He yields not, he, to man nor fate!
Thou add'st but fuel to my hate:
My clansman's blood demands revenge.—
Not yet prepared?—By heaven, I change
My thought, and bold thy valour light
As that of some vain carpet-knight,
Who ill deserved my courteous care,
And whose best boast is but to wear
A braid of his fair lady's hair."—
"I thank thee, Roderick, for the word!
It nerves my heart, it steels my sword;
For I have sworn, this braid to stain
In the best blood that warms thy vein.
Now, truce farewell! and ruth begone!—
Yet think not that by thee alone,
Proud chief! can courtesy be shown;
Though not from copse, or heath, or cairn,
Start at my whistle clansmen stern,
Of this small horn one feeble blast
Would fearful odds against thee cast.
But fear not—doubt not—which thou wilt—
We try this quarrel hilt to hilt."—
Then each at once his falchion drew,
Each on the ground his scabbard threw,
Each look'd to sun, and stream, and plain,
As what they ne'er might see again;
Then foot, and point, and eye opposed,
In dubious strife they darkly closed.

XV.

Ill fared it then with Roderick Dhu,
That on the field his targe he threw,
Whose brazen studs and tough bull hide
Had death so often dash'd aside;
For, train'd abroad his arms to wield,
Fitz-James's blade was sword and shield.
He practised every pass and ward,
To thrust, to strike, to feint, to guard;
While less expert, though stronger far,
The Gael maintain'd unequal war.
Three times in closing strife they stood,
And thrice the Saxon blade drank blood.
No stinted draught, no scanty tide,
The gushing flood the tartans dyed.
Fierce Roderick felt the fatal drain,
And shower'd his blows like wintry rain;
And, as firm rock, or castle roof,
Against the winter shower is proof,
The foe, invulnerable still,
Foil'd his wild rage by steady skill;
Till, at advantage ta'en, his brand
Forced Roderick's weapon from his hand,
And, backward borne upon the lea,
Brought the proud chieftain to his knee.

XVI.

"Now, yield ye, or, by Him who made
The world, thy heart's blood dies my blade!"
"Thy threats, thy mercy, I defy!
Let recreant yield, who fears to die."—
Like adder darting from his coil,
Like wolf that dashes through the toil,
Like mountain cat who guards her young,
Full at Fitz-James's throat he sprung;
Received, but reck'd not of a wound,
And lock'd his arms his foeman round.—
Now, gallant Saxon, hold thine own!
No maiden's hand is round thee thrown!
That desperate grasp thy frame might feel,
Through bars of brass and triple steel!
They tug, they strain;—down, down, they go
The Gael above, Fitz-James below.
The chieftain's gripe his throat compress'd,
His knee was planted in his breast;
His clotted locks he backward threw,
Across his brow his hand he drew,
From blood and mist to clear his sight,
Then gleam'd aloft his dagger bright!—
—But hate and fury ill supplied
The stream of life's exhausted tide,
And all too late th' advantage came,
To turn the odds of deadly game;
For while the dagger gleam'd on high,
Reel'd soul and sense, reel'd brain and eye.
Down came the blow; but in the heath
The erring blade found bloodless sheath.
The struggling foe may now unclasp
The fainting chief's relaxing grasp;
Unwounded from the dreadful close,
But breathless all, Fitz-James arose.

XVII.

He faltered thanks to heaven for life,
Redeem'd, unhoped, from desperate strife;
Next on his foe his look he cast,
Whose every gasp appear'd his last;
In Roderick's gore he dipp'd the braid,—
"Poor Blanche! thy wrongs are dearly paid
Yet with thy foe must die or live
The praise that faith and valour give."—
With that he blew a bugle note,
Undid the collar from his throat,
Unbonnetted, and by the wave
Sat down, his brow and hands to lave.
Then faint afar are heard the feet
Of rushing steeds in gallop fleet;
The sounds increase, and now are seen
Four mounted squires in Lincoln green;
Two who bear lance, and two who lead,
By loosen'd rein, a saddled steed;
Each onward held his headlong course,
And by Fitz-James rein'd up his horse—
With wonder view'd the bloody spot.—
—"Exclaim not, gallants! question not:—

You, Herbert and Luffness, alight,
And bind the wounds of yonder knight;
Let the gray palfrey bear his weight,
We destined for a fairer freight,
And bring him on to Stirling straight;
I will before at better speed,
To seek fresh horse and fitting weed.
The sun rides high;—I must be boune
To see the archer game at noon;
But lightly Bayard clears the lea.—
De Vaux and Herries, follow me.

XVIII.

"Stand, Bayard, stand!"—the steed obey'd,
With arching neck and bended head,
And glancing eye, and quivering ear,
As if he loved his lord to hear.
No foot Fitz-James in stirrup stay'd,
No grasp upon the saddle laid,
But wreath'd his left hand in the mane,
And lightly bounded from the plain,
Turn'd on the horse his armed heel,
And stirr'd his courage with the steel.
Bounded the fiery steed in air,
The rider sate erect and fair,
Then, like a bolt from steel crossbow
Forth launch'd, along the plain they go.
They dash'd that rapid torrent through,
And up Carhonie's hill they flew;
Still at the gallop prick'd the knight,
His merry men follow'd as they might.
Along thy banks, swift Teith! they ride,
And in the race they mock thy tide;
Torry and Lendrick now are past,
And Deanstown lies behind them cast;
They rise, the bannei'd towers of Doune,
They sink in distant woodland soon;
Blair-Drummond sees the hoofs strike fire,
They sweep like breeze through Ochtertyre;
They mark just glance and disappear
The lofty brow of ancient Kier;
They bathe their coursers' sweltering sides,
Dark Forth! amid thy sluggish tides,
And on th' opposing shore take ground,
With plash, with scramble, and with bound.
Right hand they leave thy cliffs, Craig-Forth.
And soon the bulwark of the north,
Gray Stirling, with her towers and town,
Upon their fleet career look'd down.

XIX.

As up the flinty path they strain'd,
Sudden his steed the leader rein'd;
A signal to his squire he flung,
Who instant to his stirrup sprung:
"Seest thou, De Vaux, yon woodsman gray,
Who townward holds the rocky way,
Of stature tall and poor array?
Mark'st thou the firm, yet active stride,
With which he scales the mountain side?
Know'st thou from whence he comes, or whom?"
"No, by my word;—a burley groom
He seems, who in the field or chase
A baron's train would nobly grace."
'Out, out, De Vaux! can fear supply,
And jealousy, no sharper eye?
Afar, ere to the hill he drew,
That stately form and step I knew:
Like form in Scotland is not seen,
Treads not such step on Scottish grees
'Tis James of Douglas, by St. Serle!
The uncle of the banish'd earl.
Away, away, to court, to show
The near approach of dreaded foe:
The king must stand upon his guard:
Douglas and he must meet prepared."
Then right hand wheel'd their steeds, and straight
They won the castle's postern gate.

XX.

The Douglas, who had bent his way
From Cambus-Kenneth's abbey gray,
Now, as he climb'd the rocky shelf,
Held sad communion with himself:—
"Yes! all is true my fears could frame:
A prisoner lies the noble Graeme,
And fiery Roderick soon will feel
The vengeance of the royal steel.
I, only I, can ward their fate,
God grant the ransom come not late!
The abbess hath her promise given,
My child shall be the bride of heaven:
Be pardon'd one repining tear!
For He, who gave her, knows how dear,
How excellent!—but that is by,
And now my business is—to die.
—Ye towers! within whose circuit dread
A Douglas by his sovereign bled,
And thou, O sad and fatal mound!
That oft hast heard the death axe sound,
As on the noblest of the land
Fell the stern headsman's bloody hand,
The dungeon, block, and nameless tomb
Prepare, for Douglas seeks his doom!
—But hark! what blithe and jolly peal
Makes the Franciscan steeple reel?
And see! upon the crowded street,
In motley groups what masquers meet!
Banner and pageant, pipe and drum,
And merry morrice dancers come.
I guess, by all this quaint array,
The burghers hold their sports to-day
James will be there; he loves such show,
Where the good yeoman bends his bow,
And the tough wrestler foils his foe,
As well as where, in proud career,
The high-born tilter shivers spear.
I'll follow to the castle park,
And play my prize: King James shall mark,
If age has tamed these sinews stark,
Whose force so oft, in happier days,
His boyish wonder loved to praise."

XXI.

The castle gates were open flung,
The quivering drawbridge rock'd and rang,
And echoed loud the flinty street
Beneath the courser's clattering feet,
As slowly down the deep descent
Fair Scotland's king and nobles went,
While all along the crowded way
Was jubilee and loud huzza.

And ever James was bending low,
To his white jennet's saddle bow,
Doffing his cap to city dame,
Who smiled and blush'd for pride and shame.
And well the simperer might be vain,—
He chose the fairest of the train.
Gravely he greets each city sire,
Commends each pageant's quaint attire,
Gives to the dancers thanks aloud,
And smiles and nods upon the crowd,
Who rend the heavens with their acclaims,
"Long live the commons' king, King James!"
Behind the king throng'd peer and knight,
And noble dame and damsel bright,
Whose fiery steeds ill brook'd the stay
Of the steep street and crowded way.
But in the train you might discern
Dark lowering brow and visage stern;
There nobles mourn'd their pride restrain'd,
And the mean burghers' joys disdain'd;
And chiefs, who, hostage for their clan,
Were each from home a banish'd man,
There thought upon their own gray tower,
Their waving woods, their feudal power,
And deem'd themselves a shameful part
Of pageant which they cursed in heart.

XXII.

Now, in the castle park, drew out
Their chequer'd bands the joyous rout.
There morricers, with bell at heel,
And blade in hand, their mazes wheel;
But chief, beside the butts, there stand
Bold Robin Hood and all his band—
Friar Tuck, with quarterstaff and cowl,
Old Scathelocke, with his surly scowl,
Maid Marion, fair as ivory bone,
Scarlet, and Mutch, and Little John;
Their bugles challenge all that will,
In archery to prove their skill.
The Douglas bent a bow of might,
His first shaft center'd in the white,
And, when in turn he shot again,
His second split the first in twain.
From the king's hand must Douglas take
A silver dart, the archers' stake;
Fondly he watch'd, with watery eye,
Some answering glance of sympathy;—
No kind emotion made reply!
Indifferent as to archer wight,
The monarch gave the arrow bright.

XXIII.

Now, clear the ring! for, hand to hand,
The manly wrestlers take their stand.
Two o'er the rest superior rose,
And proud demanded mightier foes
Nor call'd in vain; for Douglas came.
—For life is Hugh of Larbert lame;
Scarce better John of Alloa's fare,
Whom senseless home his comrades bear.
Prize of the wrestling match, the king
To Douglas gave a golden ring,
While coldly glanced his eye of blue,
As frozen drop of wintry dew.
Douglas would speak, but in his breast
His struggling soul his words suppress'd:
Indignant then he turn'd him where
Their arms the brawny yeomen bare,
To hurl the massive bar in air.
When each his utmost strength had shown,
The Douglas rent an earth-fast stone
From its deep bed, then heaved it high,
And sent the fragment through the sky,
A rood beyond the farthest mark;—
And still in Stirling's royal park,
The gray-hair'd sires, who know the past,
To strangers point the Douglas-cast,
And moralize on the decay
Of Scottish strength in modern day.

XXIV.

The vale with loud applauses rang,
The Ladie's Rock sent back the clang.
The king, with look unmoved, bestow'd
A purse well fill'd with pieces broad.
Indignant smiled the Douglas proud,
And threw the gold among the crowd,
Who now, with anxious wonder, scan,
And sharper glance, the dark gray man;
Till whispers rose among the throng,
That heart so free, and hand so strong,
Must to the Douglas' blood belong:
The old men mark'd, and shook the head,
To see his hair with silver spread,
And wink'd aside, and told each son
Of feats upon the English done,
Ere Douglas of the stalwart hand
Was exiled from his native land.
The women praised his stately form,
Though wreck'd by many a winter's storm;
The youth with awe and wonder saw
His strength surpassing nature's law.
Thus judged, as is their wont, the crowd,
Till murmur rose to clamours loud.
But not a glance from that proud ring
Of peers who circled round the king,
With Douglas held communion kind,
Or call'd the banish'd man to mind;
No, not from those who, at the chase,
Once held his side the honour'd place,
Begirt his board, and, in the field,
Found safety underneath his shield
For he whom royal eyes disown,
When was his form to courtiers known?

XXV.

The monarch saw the gambols flag,
And bade let loose a gallant stag,
Whose pride, the holiday to crown,
Two favourite greyhounds should pull down
That venison free, and Bourdeaux wine
Might serve the archery to dine.
But Lufra—whom from Douglas' side,
Nor bribe nor threat could e'er divide,
The fleetest hound in all the north—
Brave Lufra saw, and darted forth.
She left the royal hounds midway,
And, dashing on the antler'd prey,
Sunk her sharp muzzle in his flank,
And deep the flowing lifeblood drank.

The king's stout huntsman saw the sport
By strange intruder broken short,
Came up, and, with his leash unbound,
In anger struck the noble hound.
—The Douglas had endured, that morn,
The king's cold look, the nobles' scorn,
And last, and worst to spirit proud,
Had borne the pity of the crowd;
But Lufra had been fondly bred
To share his board, to watch his bed,
And oft would Ellen Lufra's neck,
In maiden glee, with garlands deck;
They were such playmates, that with name
Of Lufra, Ellen's image came.
His stifled wrath is brimming high,
In darken'd brow and flashing eye;
As waves before the bark divide,
The crowd gave way before his stride;
Needs but a buffet and no more,
The groom lies senseless in his gore.
Such blow no other hand could deal,
Though gauntleted in glove of steel.

XXVI.

Then clamour'd loud the royal train,
And brandish'd swords and staves amain.
But stern the baron's warning—"Back!
Back, on your lives, ye menial pack!
Beware the Douglas!—yes, behold,
King James! the Douglas, doom'd of old,
And vainly sought for near and far,
A victim to atone the war:
A willing victim now attends,
Nor craves thy grace but for his friends."
—"Thus is my clemency repaid?
Presumptuous lord!" the monarch said;
"Of thy misproud ambitious clan,
Thou, James of Bothwell, wert the man,
The only man, in whom a foe
My woman mercy would not know;
But shall a monarch's presence brook
Injurious blow and haughty look?
What ho! the captain of our guard!
Give the offender fitting ward.
Break off the sports!"—for tumult rose,
And yeomen 'gan to bend their bows;—
"Break off the sports!"—he said, and frown'd;
"And bid our horsemen clear the ground."

XXVII.

Then uproar wild and misarray
Marr'd the fair form of festal day.
The horsemen prick'd among the crowd,
Repell'd by threats and insult loud;
To earth are borne the old and weak;
The timorous fly, the women shriek;
With flint, with shaft, with staff, with bar,
The hardier urge tumultuous war.
At once round Douglas darkly sweep
The royal spears in circle deep,
And slowly scale the pathway steep;
While on the rear in thunder pour
The rabble with disorder'd roar.
With grief the noble Douglas saw
The commons rise against the law,
And to the leading soldier said,
"Sir John of Hyndford! 'twas my blade
That knighthood on thy shoulder laid;
For that good deed permit me, then,
A word with these misguided men.

XXVIII.

"Hear, gentle friends! ere yet for me
Ye break the bands of fealty.
My life, my honour, and my cause,
I tender free to Scotland's laws;
Are these so weak as must require
The aid of our misguided ire?
Or, if I suffer causeless wrong,
Is then my selfish rage so strong,
My sense of public weal so low,
That, for mean vengeance on a foe,
Those cords of love I should unbind
Which knit my country and my kind?
Oh no! believe, in yonder tower
It will not soothe my captive hour,
To know those spears our foes should dread,
For me in kindred gore are red.
To know, in fruitless brawl begun
For me, that mother wails her son;
For me, that widow's mate expires;
For me, that orphans weep their sires,
That patriots mourn insulted laws,
And curse the Douglas for the cause.
O! let your patience ward such ill,
And keep your right to love me still!"

XXIX.

The crowd's wild fury sunk again
In tears as tempests melt in rain:
With lifted hands and eyes, they pray'd
For blessings on his generous head,
Who for his country felt alone,
And prized her blood beyond his own.
Old men, upon the verge of life
Bless'd him who stay'd the civil strife;
And mothers held their babes on high,
The self-devoted chief to spy,
Triumphant over wrong and ire,
To whom the prattlers owed a sire:
E'en the rough soldier's heart was moved,
As if behind some bier beloved,
With trailing arms and drooping head,
The Douglas up the hill he led,
And at the castle's battled verge,
With sighs resign'd his honour'd charge.

XXX.

Th' offended monarch rode apart,
With bitter thought and swelling heart,
And would not now vouchsafe again
Through Stirling's streets to lead his train.
"O Lennox, who would wish to rule
This changeling crowd, this common fool?
Hear'st thou," he said, "the loud acclaim,
With which they shout the Douglas' name?
With like acclaim the vulgar throat
Strain'd for King James their morning notes
With like acclaim they hail'd the day
When first I broke the Douglas' sway;

And like acclaim would Douglas greet,
If he could hurl me from my seat.
Who o'er the herd would wish to reign,
Fantastic, fickle, fierce, and vain?
Vain as the leaf upon the stream,
And fickle as a changeful dream;
Fantastic as a woman's mood,
And fierce as frenzy's fever'd blood.
Thou many-headed monster thing,
O! who would wish to be thy king!—

XXXI.

"But soft! what messenger of speed
Spurs hitherward his panting steed?
I guess his cognizance afar—
What from our cousin, John of Mar?"—
"He prays, my liege, your sports keep bound
Within the safe and guarded ground;
For some foul purpose yet unknown—
Most sure for evil to the throne—
The outlaw'd chieftain, Roderick Dhu,
Has summon'd his rebellious crew;
'Tis said, in James of Bothwell's aid
These loose banditti stand array'd.
The Earl of Mar, this morn, from Doune,
To break their muster march'd, and soon
Your grace will hear of battle fought;
But earnestly the earl besought,
Till for such danger he provide,
With scanty train you will not ride."—

XXXII.

"Thou warn'st me I have done amiss—
I should have earlier look'd to this;
I lost it in this bustling day.
—Retrace with speed thy former way;
Spare not for spoiling of thy steed,
The best of mine shall be thy meed.
Say to our faithful Lord of Mar,
We do forbid th' intended war;
Roderick, this morn, in single fight,
Was made our prisoner by a knight;
And Douglas hath himself and cause
Submitted to our kingdom's laws.
The tidings of their leaders lost
Will soon dissolve the mountain host,
Nor would we that the vulgar feel,
For their chiefs' crimes, avenging steel.
Bear Mar our message, Braco; fly!"—
He turn'd his steed—"My liege, I hie,
Yet, ere I cross this lily lawn,
I fear the broadswords will be drawn."
The turf the flying courser spurn'd,
And to his towers the king return'd.

XXXIII.

Ill with King James's mood that day
Suited gay feast and minstrel lay;
Soon were dismiss'd the courtly throng,
And soon cut short the festal song.
Nor less upon the sadden'd town,
The evening sunk in sorrow down.
The burghers spoke of civil war,
Of rumour'd feuds and mountain war,
Of Moray, Mar, and Roderick Dhu,
All up in arms;—the Douglas too,
They mourn'd him pent within the hold,
"Where stout Earl William was of old;"*—
And there his word the speaker stay'd,
And finger on his lip he laid,
Or pointed to his dagger blade.
But jaded horsemen, from the west,
At evening to the castle press'd;
And busy talkers said they bore
Tidings of fight on Katrine's shore;
At noon the deadly fray begun,
And lasted till the set of sun.
Thus giddy rumour shook the town,
Till closed the night her pennons brown.

CANTO VI.

THE GUARD-ROOM.

I.

THE sun awakening, through the smoky air
Of the dark city casts a sullen glance,
Rousing each caitiff to his task of care,
Of sinful man the sad inheritance;
Summoning revellers from the lagging dance
And scaring prowling robber to his den;
Gilding on battled tower the warder's lance,
And warning student pale to leave his pen,
And yield his drowsy eyes to the kind nurse of men.

What various scenes, and, O! what scenes of wo,
Are witness'd by that red and struggling beam!
The fever'd patient, from his pallet low,
Through crowded hospitals beholds its stream;
The ruin'd maiden trembles at its gleam;
The debtor wakes to thought of gyve and jail;
The lovelorn wretch starts from tormenting dream;
The wakeful mother, by the glimmering pale,
Trims her sick infant's couch, and soothes his feeble wail.

II.

At dawn the towers of Stirling rang
With soldier step and weapon clang,
While drums, with rolling note, foretell
Relief to weary sentinel.
Through narrow loop and casement barr'd,
The sunbeams sought the court of guard,
And struggling with the smoky air,
Deaden'd the torch's yellow glare.
In comfortless alliance shone
The lights through arch of blacken'd stone,
And show'd wild shapes in garb of war,
Faces deform'd with beard and scar,
All haggard from the midnight watch,
And fever'd with the stern debauch;
For the oak table's massive board,
Flooded with wine, with fragments stored,
And beakers drain'd, and cups o'erthrown,
Show'd in what sport the night had flown.
Some, weary, snored on floor and bench:
Some labour'd still their thirst to quench;
Some, chill'd with watching, spread their hands
O'er the huge chimney's dying brands,
While round them, or beside them flung,
At every step their harness rung.

* Stabbed by James II. in Stirling castle.

III.

These drew not for their fields the sword,
Like tenants of a feudal lord,
Nor own'd the patriarchal claim
Of chieftain in their leader's name;
Adventurers they, from far who roved,
To live by battle which they loved.
There th' Italian's clouded face;
The swarthy Spaniard's there you trace;
The mountain-loving Switzer there
More freely breathed in mountain air;
The Fleming there despised the soil,
That paid so ill the labourer's toil;
The rolls show'd French and German name;
And merry England's exiles came,
To share, with ill-conceal'd disdain
Of Scotland's pay the scanty gain.
All brave in arms, well train'd to wield
The heavy halbert, brand, and shield;
In camps licentious, wild, and bold;
In pillage, fierce and uncontroll'd;
And now, by holy-tide and feast,
From rules of discipline released.

IV.

They held debate of bloody fray,
Fought 'twixt Loch-Katrine and Achray.
Fierce was their speech, and 'mid their words,
Their hands oft grappled to their swords;
Nor sunk their tone to spare the ear
Of wounded comrades groaning near,
Whose mangled limbs, and bodies gored,
Bore token of the mountain sword,
Though neighbouring to the court of guard,
Their prayers and feverish wails were heard:
Sad burden to the ruffian joke,
And savage oath by fury spoke!—
At length up started John of Brent,
A yeoman from the banks of Trent;
A stranger to respect or fear,
In peace a chaser of the deer,
In host a hardy mutineer,
But still the boldest of the crew,
When deed of danger was to do.
He grieved, that day, their games cut short,
And marr'd the dicer's brawling sport,
And shouted loud, "Renew the bowl!
And, while a merry catch I troll,
Let each the buxom chorus bear,
Like brethren of the brand and spear."

V.

SOLDIER'S SONG.

Our vicar still preaches that Peter and Poule
Laid a swinging long curse on the bonny brown bowl,
That there's wrath and despair in the jolly black jack,
And the seven deadly sins in a flagon of sack;
Yet whoop, Barnaby! off with the liquor,
Drink upsees* out, and a fig for the vicar!

Our vicar he calls it damnation to sip
The ripe ruddy dew of a woman's dear lip,
Says that Beelzebub lurks in her kerchief so sly,
And Apollyon shoots darts from her merry black eye;
Yet whoop, Jack! kiss Gillian the quicker,
Till she bloom like a rose, and a fig for the vicar!

Our vicar thus preaches—and why should he not?
For the dues of his cure are the placket and pot:
And 'tis right of his office poor laymen to lurch,
Who infringe the domains of our good mother church.
Yet whoop, bully-boys! off with your liquor,
Sweet Marjorie's the word, and a fig for the vicar

VI.

The warder's challenge, heard without,
Stay'd in mid roar the merry shout.
A soldier to the portal went—
"Here is old Bertram, sirs, of Ghent;
And, beat for jubilee the drum!
A maid and minstrel with him come."
Bertram, a Fleming, gray and scarr'd,
Was entering now the court of guard,
A harper with him, and in plaid
All muffled close, a mountain maid,
Who backward shrunk to 'scape the view
Of the loose scene and boisterous crew.
"What news?" they roar'd:—"I only know,
From noon till eve we fought the foe,
As wild and as untameable
As the rude mountains where they dwell.
On both sides store of blood is lost,
Nor much success can either boast."
"But whence thy captives, friend? such spoil
As theirs must needs reward thy toil.
Old dost thou wax, and wars grow sharp;
Thou now hast glee-maiden and harp!
Get thee an ape, and trudge the land,
The leader of a juggler band."—

VII.

"No, comrade; no such fortune mine.
After the fight, these sought our line,
That aged harper and the girl,
And, having audience of the earl,
Mar bade I should purvey them steed,
And bring them hitherward with speed.
Forbear your mirth and rude alarm,
For none shall do them shame or harm."
"Hear ye his boast?" cried John of Brent,
E'er to strife and jangling bent;
"Shall he strike doe beside our lodge,
And yet the jealous niggard grudge
To pay the forester his fee!
I'll have my share, howe'er it be,
Despite of Moray, Mar, or thee."
Bertram his forward step withstood;
And, burning in his vengeful mood,
Old Allan, though unfit for strife,
Laid hand upon his dagger-knife;
But Ellen boldly stepp'd between,
And dropp'd at once the tartan screen:
So, from his morning cloud, appears
The sun of May, through summer tears.
The savage soldiery amazed,
As on descendant angel gazed;

* A bacchanalian interjection, borrowed from the Dutch.

E'en hardy Brent, abash'd and tamed,
Stood half admiring, half ashamed.

VIII.

Boldly she spoke:—"Soldiers, attend!
My father was the soldier's friend;
Cheer'd him in camps, in marches led,
And with him in the battle bled.
Not from the valiant, or the strong,
Should exile's daughter suffer wrong."
Answer'd De Brent, most forward still
In every feat, or good or ill—
"I shame me of the part I play'd;
And thou an outlaw's child, poor maid.
An outlaw I by forest laws,
And merry Needwood knows the cause.
Poor Rose! if Rose be living now—'
He wiped his iron eye and brow—
"Must bear such age, I think, as thou.
Hear ye, my mates;—I go to call
The captain of our watch to hall;
There lies my halbert on the floor;
And he that steps my halbert o'er,
To do the maid injurious part,
My shaft shall quiver in his heart!
Beware loose speech, or jesting rough:
Ye all know John De Brent. Enough."

IX.

Their captain came; a gallant, young,
(Of Tullibardine's house he sprung,)
Nor wore he yet the spurs of knight;
Gay was his mien, his humour light,
And, though by courtesy controll'd,
Forward his speech, his bearing bold:
The high-born maiden ill could brook
The scanning of his curious look
And dauntless eye;—and yet, in sooth,
Young Lewis was a generous youth;
But Ellen's lovely face and mien,
Ill-suited to the garb and scene,
Might lightly bear construction strange,
And give loose fancy scope to range.
"Welcome to Stirling towers, fair maid!
Come ye to seek a champion's aid,
On palfry white, with harper hoar,
Like errant damosel of yore?
Does thy high quest a knight require,
Or may the venture suit a squire?"
Her dark eye flash'd;—she paused and sigh'd,
"O what have I to do with pride!
Through scenes of sorrow, shame, and strife,
A suppliant for a father's life,
I crave an audience of the king.
Behold, to back my suit, a ring,
The royal pledge of grateful claims,
Given by the monarch to Fitz-James."—

X.

The signet ring young Lewis took,
With deep respect and alter'd look;
And said—"This ring our duties own;
And pardon, if to worth unknown,
In semblance mean obscurely veil'd,
Lady, in aught my folly fail'd.
Soon as the day flings wide his gates,
The king shall know what suitor waits.
Please you, meanwhile, in fitting bower
Repose you till his waking hour;
Female attendance shall obey
Your hest for service or array:
Permit I marshal you the way."
But, ere she follow'd, with the grace
And open bounty of her race,
She bade her slender purse be shared
Among the soldiers of the guard.
The rest with thanks their guerdon took;
But Brent, with shy and awkward look,
On the reluctant maiden's hold
Forced bluntly back the proffer'd gold;—
"Forgive a haughty English heart,
And O forget its ruder part;
The vacant purse shall be my share,
Which in my barret cap I'll bear,
Perchance, in jeopardy of war,
Where gayer crests may keep afar."
With thanks—'twas all she could—the maid
His rugged courtesy repaid.

XI.

When Ellen forth with Lewis went,
Allan made suit to John of Brent:
"My lady safe, O let your grace
Give me to see my master's face!
His minstrel I—to share his doom
Bound from the cradle to the tomb.
Tenth in descent, since first my sires
Waked for his noble house their lyres,
Nor one of all the race was known
But prized its weal above their own.
With the chief's birth begins our care;
Our harp must soothe the infant heir,
Teach the youth tales of fight, and grace
His earliest feat of field or chase;
In peace, in war, our rank we keep,
We cheer his board, we soothe his sleep.
Nor leave him till we pour our verse,
A doleful tribute! o'er his hearse.
Then let me share his captive lot;
It is my right—deny it not!"—
"Little we reck," said John of Brent,
"We southern men, of long descent;
Nor wot we how a name—a word—
Makes clansmen vassals to a lord:
Yet kind my noble landlord's part,
God bless the house of Beaudesert!
And, but I loved to drive the deer
More than to guide the labouring steer,
I had not dwelt an outcast here.
Come, good old minstrel, follow me
Thy lord and chieftain shalt thou see."

XII.

Then, from a rusted iron hook,
A bunch of ponderous keys he took,
Lighted a torch, and Allan led
Through grated arch and passage dread.
Portals they pass'd, where, deep within,
Spoke prisoner's moan, and fetters' din;
Through rugged vaults, where loosely stored,
Lay wheel, and axe, and headsman's sword,
And many a hideous engine grim,
For wrenching joints, and crushing limb,

By artists form'd, who deem'd it shame
And sin to give their work a name.
They halted at a low-brow'd porch,
And Brent to Allan gave the torch,
While bolt and chain he backward roll'd,
And made the bar unhasp its hold.
They enter'd:—'twas a prison room
Of stern security and gloom,
Yet not a dungeon; for the day
Through lofty gratings found its way,
And rude and antique garniture
Deck'd the sad walls and oaken floor;
Such as the rugged days of old
Deem'd fit for captive noble's hold.
"Here," said De Brent, "thou mayst remain
Till the leach visit him again.
Strict is his charge, the warders tell,
To tend the noble prisoner well."
Retiring then, the bolt he drew,
And the lock's murmurs growl'd anew.
Roused at the sound, from lowly bed
A captive feebly raised his head;
The wondering minstrel look'd, and knew—
Not his dear lord, but Roderick Dhu!
For, come from where Clan-Alpine fought,
They, erring, deem'd the chief he sought.

XIII.

As the tall ship, whose lofty prore
Shall never stem the billows more,
Deserted by her gallant band,
Amid the breakers lies astrand—
So, on his couch, lay Roderick Dhu!
And oft his fever'd limbs he threw
In toss abrupt, as when her sides
Lie rocking in th' advancing tides,
That shake her frame to ceaseless beat,
Yet cannot heave her from her seat;
O! how unlike her course at sea!
Or his free step on hill and lea!
Soon as the minstrel he could scan,
—"What of thy lady? of my clan?
My mother?—Douglas?—tell me all!
Have they been ruin'd in my fall?
Ah, yes! or wherefore art thou here?
Yet speak—speak boldly—do not fear."
(For Allan, who his mood well knew,
Was choak'd with grief and terror too.)
"Who fought—who fled?—Old man, be brief;
Some might—for they had lost their chief.
Who basely live?—who bravely died?"
"O, calm thee, chief!" the minstrel cried,
"Ellen is safe;"—"For that, thank heaven!"
"And hopes are for the Douglas given;
The Lady Margaret too is well,
And, for thy clan—on field or fell,
Has never harp of minstrel told,
Of combat fought so true and bold.
Thy stately pine is yet unbent,
Though many a goodly bough is rent."

XIV.

The chieftain rear'd his form on high,
And fever's fire was in his eye;
But ghastly, pale, and livid streaks
Checker'd his swarthy brow and cheeks.
—"Hark, minstrel! I have heard thee play,
With measure bold, on festal day,
In yon lone isle—again where ne'er
Shall harper, play, or warrior hear!
That stirring air that peals on high
O'er Dermid's race our victory.
Strike it!—and then (for well thou canst)
Free from thy minstrel spirit glanced,
Fling me the picture of the fight,
When met my clan the Saxon might.
I'll listen, till my fancy hears
The clang of swords, the crash of spears!
These grates, these walls, shall vanish then,
For the fair field of fighting men,
And my free spirit bursts away,
As if it soar'd from battle fray."
The trembling bard with awe obey'd—
Slow on the harp his hand he laid;
But soon remembrance of the sight
He witness'd from the mountain's height,
With what old Bertram told at night,
Awaken'd the full power of song,
And bore him in career along;
As shallop launch'd on river's tide,
That slow and fearful leaves the side,
But, when it feels the middle stream,
Drives downward swift as lightning's beam.

XV.

BATTLE OF BEAL' AN DUINE.

"The minstrel came once more to view
The eastern ridge of Ben-venue,
For, ere he parted, he would say
Farewell to lovely Loch-Achray—
Where shall he find, in foreign land,
So lone a lake, so sweet a strand!
There is no breeze upon the fern,
No ripple on the lake,
Upon her eyrie nods the erne,
The deer has sought the brake;
The small birds will not sing aloud,
The springing trout lies still,
So darkly glooms yon thunder cloud,
That swathes, as with a purple shroud,
Benledi's distant hill.
Is it the thunder's solemn sound
That mutters deep and dread,
Or echoes from the groaning ground
The warrior's measured tread?
Is it the lightning's quivering glance
That on the thicket streams,
Or do they flash on spear and lance
The sun's retiring beams?
I see the dagger crest of Mar,
I see the Moray's silver star
Wave o'er the cloud of Saxon war,
That up the lake comes winding far!
To hero boune for battle strife,
Or bard of martial lay,
'Twere worth ten years of peaceful life
One glance at their array!

XVI.

"Their light-arm'd archers far and near
Survey'd the tangled ground,

Their centre ranks, with pike and spear,
A twilight forest frown'd,
Their barbed horsemen, in the rear,
The stern battalia crown'd.
No cymbal clash'd, no clarion rang,
Still were the pipe and drum;
Save heavy tread, and armour's clang
The sullen march was dumb.
There breathed no wind their crests to shake,
Or wave their flags abroad;
Scarce the frail aspen seem'd to quake,
That shadow'd o'er their road.
Their va'ward scouts no tidings bring,
Can rouse no lurking foe,
Nor spy a trace of living thing,
Save when they stirr'd the roe;
The host moves like a deep sea wave,
Where rise no rocks its pride to brave,
High swelling, dark, and slow.
The lake is pass'd, and now they gain
A narrow and a broken plain,
Before the Trosach's rugged jaws;
And here the horse and spearmen pause,
While, to explore the dangerous glen,
Dive through the pass the archer men.

XVII.

"At once there rose so wild a yell
Within that dark and narrow dell,
As all the fiends, from heaven that fell,
Had peal'd the banner cry of hell!
Forth from the pass in tumult driven,
Like chaff before the wind of heaven,
The archery appear:
For life! for life! their flight they ply—
And shriek, and shout, and battle cry,
And plaids and bonnets waving high,
And broadswords flashing to the sky,
Are maddening in the rear.
Onward they drive, in dreadful race,
Pursuers and pursued;
Before that tide of flight and chase,
How shall it keep its rooted place,
The spearmen's twilight wood?
—'Down, down,' cried Mar, 'your lances down!
Bear back both friend and foe!'
Like reeds before the tempest's frown,
That serried grove of lances brown
At once lay levell'd low;
And closely shouldering side to side,
The bristling ranks the onset bide.—
—'We'll quell the savage mountaineer,
As their Tinchel* cows the game!
They come as fleet as forest deer,
We'll drive them back as tame.'

XVIII.

"Bearing before them, in their course,
The relics of the archer force,
Like wave with crest of sparkling foam,
Right onward did Clan-Alpine come.

Above the tide, each broadsword bright
Was brandishing like beam of light,
Each targe was dark below;
And with the ocean's mighty swing,
When heaving to the tempest's wing,
They hurl'd them on the foe.
I heard the lance's shivering crash,
As when the whirlwind rends the ash;
I heard the broadsword's deadly clang,
As if a hundred anvils rang!
But Moray wheel'd his rearward rank
Of horsemen on Clan-Alpine's flank—
—'My banner man, advance!
I see,' he cried, 'their columns shake.
Now, gallants! for your ladies' sake,
Upon them with the lance!'
The horsemen dash'd among the rout,
As deer break through the broom;
Their steeds are stout, their swords are out,
They soon make lightsome room.
Clan-Alpine's best are backward borne—
Where, where was Roderick then!
One blast upon his bugle horn
Were worth a thousand men.
And refluent through the pass of fear
The battle's tide was pour'd;
Vanish'd the Saxon's struggling spear,
Vanish'd the mountain sword.
As Bracklinn's chasm, so black and steep,
Receives her roaring linn,
As the dark caverns of the deep
Suck the wild whirlpool in,
So did the deep and darksome pass
Devour the battle's mingled mass;
None linger now upon the plain,
Save those who ne'er shall fight again.

XIX.

"Now westward rolls the battle's din,
That deep and doubling pass within.
—Minstrel, away! the work of fate
Is bearing on: its issue wait
Where the rude Trosach's dread defile
Opens on Katrine's lake and isle.
Gray Ben-venue I soon repass'd,
Loch-Katrine lay beneath me cast.
The sun is set;—the clouds are met,
The lowering scowl of heaven
An inky hue of livid blue
To the deep lake has given;
Strange gusts of wind from mountain glen
Swept o'er the lake, then sunk agen.
I heeded not the eddying surge,
Mine eye but saw the Trosach's gorge,
Mine ear but heard the sullen sound,
Which like an earthquake shook the ground,
And spoke the stern and desperate strife,
That parts not but with parting life,
Seeming, to minstrel ear, to toll
The dirge of many a passing soul.
Nearer it comes—the dim wood glen
The martial flood disgorged agen,
But not in mingled tide;
The plaided warriors of the north,
High on the mountain thunder forth,
And overhang its side;

* A circle of sportsmen, who, by surrounding a great space, and gradually narrowing, brought immense quantities of deer together, which usually made desperate efforts to break through the *Tinchel*.

While by the lake below appears
The darkening cloud of Saxon spears.
At weary bay each shatter'd band,
Eyeing their foemen, sternly stand;
Their banners stream like tatter'd sail,
That flings its fragments to the gale;
And broken arms and disarray
Mark'd the fell havoc of the day.

XX.

"Viewing the mountain's ridge askance,
The Saxons stood in sullen trance,
Till Moray pointed with his lance,
And cried—'Behold yon isle!—
See! none are left to guard its strand,
But women weak, that wring the hand:
'Tis there of yore the robber band
Their booty wont to pile;
My purse, with bonnet-pieces store,
To him will swim a bowshot o'er,
And loose a shallop from the shore.
Lightly we'll tame the war wolf then,
Lords of his mate, and brood, and den.'—
Forth from the ranks a spearman sprung,
On earth his casque and corslet rung,
He plunged him in the wave:—
All saw the deed—the purpose knew,
And to their clamours Ben-venue
A mingled echo gave:
The Saxons shout, their mate to cheer,
The helpless females scream for fear,
And yells for rage the mountaineer.
'Twas then, as by the outcry riven,
Pour'd down at once the louring heaven;
A whirlwind swept Loch-Katrine's breast,
Her billows rear'd their snowy crest.
Well for the swimmer swell'd they high,
To mar the highland marksman's eye;
For round him shower'd, 'mid rain and hail,
The vengeful arrows of the Gael.
In vain.—He nears the isle—and lo!
His hand is on a shallop's bow.
—Just then a flash of lightning came,
It tinged the waves and strand with flame;
I mark'd Duncraggan's widow'd dame—
Behind an oak I saw her stand,
A naked dirk gleam'd in her hand:
It darken'd—but amid the moan
Of waves I heard a dying groan;—
Another flash!—the spearman floats
A weltering corse beside the boats,
And the stern matron o'er him stood,
Her hand and dagger streaming blood.

XXI.

"'Revenge! revenge!' the Saxons cried,
The Gael's exulting shout replied.
Despite the elemental rage,
Again they hurried to engage;
But, ere they closed in desperate fight,
Bloody with spurring came a knight,
Sprung from his horse, and, from a crag,
Waved 'twixt the hosts a milk-white flag.
Clarion and trumpet by his side
Rung forth a truce-note high and wide;
While, in the monarch's name, afar
An herald's voice forbade the war,
For Bothwell's lord, and Roderick bold,
Were both, he said, in captive hold."—
But here the lay made sudden stand,
The harp escaped the minstrel's hand!
Oft had he stolen a glance, to spy
How Roderick brook'd his minstrelsy:
At first, the chieftain, to the chime,
With lifted hand, kept feeble time;
That motion ceased—yet feeling strong
Varied his look as changed the song;
At length no more his deafen'd ear
The minstrel melody can hear:
His face grows sharp, his hands are clench'd,
As if some pang his heartstrings wrench'd;
Set are his teeth, his fading eye
Is sternly fix'd on vacancy;
Thus, motionless, and moanless, drew
His parting breath, stout Roderick Dhu!
Old Allan-bane look'd on aghast,
While grim and still his spirit pass'd;
But when he saw that life was fled,
He pour'd his wailing o'er the dead.

XXII.

LAMENT.

"And art thou cold and lowly laid,
Thy foeman's dread, thy people's aid,
Breadalbane's boast, Clan-Alpine's shade!
For thee shall none a requiem say?
—For thee—who loved the minstrel's lay
For thee, of Bothwell's house the stay,
The shelter of her exiled line—
E'en in this prison-house of thine,
I'll wail for Alpine's honour'd pine!

"What groans shall yonder valleys fill!
What shrieks of grief shall rend yon hill!
What tears of burning rage shall thrill,
When mourns thy tribe thy battles done,
Thy fall before the race was won,
Thy sword ungirt ere set of sun!
There breathes not clansman of thy line,
But would have given his life for thine.
O wo for Alpine's honour'd pine!

"Sad was thy lot on mortal stage!
The captive thrush may brook the cage,
The prison'd eagle dies for rage.
Brave spirit, do not scorn my strain!
And when its notes awake again,
E'en she, so long beloved in vain,
Shall with my harp her voice combine,
And mix her wo and tears with mine,
To wail Clan-Alpine's honour'd pine."

XXIII.

Ellen, the while, with bursting heart,
Remain'd in lordly bower apart,
Where play'd, with many-colour'd gleams,
Through storied pane, the rising beams.
In vain on gilded roof they fall,
And lighten'd up a tapestried wall,
And for her use a menial train
A rich collation spread in vain.
The banquet proud, the chamber gay,
Scarce drew one curious glance astray;

Or, if she look'd, 'twas but to say,
With better omen dawn'd the day
In that lone isle, where waved on high
The dun deer's hide for canopy;
Where oft her noble father shared
The simple meal her care prepared,
While Lufra, crouching by her side,
Her station claim'd with jealous pride,
And Douglas, bent on woodland game,
Spoke of the chase to Malcolm Græme,
Whose answer, oft at random made,
The wandering of his thoughts betray'd.
Those who such simple joys have known
Are taught to prize them when they're gone,
But sudden, see, she lifts her head!
The window seeks with cautious tread.
What distant music has the power
To win her in this woful hour!
'Twas from a turret that o'erhung
Her latticed bower, the strain was sung.

XXIV.

LAY OF THE IMPRISONED HUNTSMAN.

My hawk is tired of perch and hood,
My idle greyhound loathes his food,
My horse is weary of his stall,
And I am sick of captive thrall.
I wish I were as I have been,
Hunting the hart in forest green,
With bended bow and bloodhound free,
For that's the life is meet for me.

"I hate to learn the ebb of time
From yon dull steeple's drowsy chime,
Or mark it as the sunbeams crawl,
Inch after inch, along the wall.
The lark was wont my matins ring,
The sable rook my vespers sing;
These towers, although a king's they be,
Have not a hall of joy for me.

"No more at dawning morn I rise,
And sun myself in Ellen's eyes,
Drive the fleet deer the forest through,
And homeward wend with evening dew;
A blithesome welcome blithely meet,
And lay my trophies at her feet,
While fled the eve on wing of glee.—
That life is lost to love and me!"

XXV.

The heart-sick lay was hardly said,
The listener had not turn'd her head,
It trickled still, the starting tear,
When light a footstep struck her ear,
And Snowdoun's graceful knight was near.
She turn'd the hastier, lest again
The prisoner should renew his strain.
"O welcome, brave Fitz-James!" she said;
"How may an almost orphan maid
Pay the deep debt"—"O say not so!
To me no gratitude you owe.
Not mine, alas! the boon to give,
And bid thy noble father live;
I can but be thy guide, sweet maid,
With Scotland's king thy suit to aid.
No tyrant he, though ire and pride
May lead his better mood aside.
Come, Ellen, come!—'tis more than time;
He holds his court at morning prime."
With beating heart and bosom wrung,
As to a brother's arm she clung;
Gently he dried the falling tear,
And gently whisper'd hope and cheer;
Her faltering steps half led, half stay'd,
Through gallery fair and high arcade,
Till, at his touch, its wings of pride
A portal arch unfolded wide.

XXVI.

Within 'twas brilliant all and light,
A thronging scene of figures bright;
It glow'd on Ellen's dazzled sight,
As when the setting sun has given
Ten thousand hues to summer even,
And, from their tissue, fancy frames
Aerial knights and fairy dames.
Still by Fitz-James her footing stay'd,
A few faint steps she forward made,
Then slow her drooping head she raised,
And fearful round the presence gazed;
For him she sought who own'd this state,
The dreadful prince whose will was fate!—
She gazed on many a princely port,
Might well have ruled a royal court;
On many a splendid garb she gazed—
Then turn'd bewilder'd and amazed,
For all stood bare: and, in the room,
Fitz-James alone wore cap and plume.
To him each lady's look was lent;
On him each courtier's eye was bent;
Midst furs and silks and jewels sheen,
He stood, in simple Lincoln green,
The centre of the glittering ring;
And Snowdoun's knight is Scotland's king.

XXVII.

As wreath of snow, on mountain breast,
Slides from the rock that gave it rest,
Poor Ellen glided from her stay,
And at the monarch's feet she lay;
No word her choking voice commands—
She show'd the ring—she clasp'd her hands.
O! not a moment could he brook,
The generous prince, that suppliant look!
Gently he raised her—and, the while,
Check'd with a glance the circle's smile;
Graceful, but grave, her brow he kiss'd,
And bade her terrors be dismiss'd;—
"Yes, fair, the wandering poor Fitz-James
The fealty of Scotland claims.
To him thy woes, thy wishes, bring;
He will redeem his signet ring.
Ask naught for Douglas:—yestereven
His prince and he have much forgiven:
Wrong hath he had from slanderous tongue.
I, from his rebel kinsman, wrong.
We would not to the vulgar crowd
Yield what they craved with clamour loud;
Calmly we heard and judged his cause;
Our council aided, and our laws.

I stanch'd thy father's death-feud stern,
With stout De Vaux and gray Glencairn;
And Bothwell's lord henceforth we own
The friend and bulwark of our throne.—
But, lovely infidel, how now?
What clouds thy misbelieving brow?
Lord James of Douglas, lend thine aid—
Thou must confirm this doubting maid."

XXVIII.

Then forth the noble Douglas sprung,
And on his neck his daughter hung.
The monarch drank, that happy hour,
The sweetest, holiest draught of power—
When it can say, with godlike voice,
Arise, sad virtue, and rejoice!
Yet would not James the general eye
On nature's raptures long should pry;
He stepp'd between—"Nay, Douglas, nay,
Steal not my proselyte away!
The riddle 'tis my right to read,
That brought this happy chance to speed.—
Yes, Ellen, when disguised I stray
In life's more low but happier way,
'Tis under name which veils my power,
Nor falsely veils—for Stirling's tower
Of yore the name of Snowdoun claims,
And Normans call me James Fitz-James.
Thus watch I o'er insulted laws,
Thus learn to right the injured cause."
Then in a tone apart and low,
—"Ah, little tra t'ress! none must know
What idle dream, what lighter thought,
What vanity full dearly bought,
Join'd to thine eye's dark witchcraft, drew
My spell-bound steps to Ben-venue,
In dangerous hour, and all but gave
Thy monarch's life to mountain glaive!"
Aloud he spoke—"Thou still dost hold
That little talisman of gold,
Pledge of my faith, Fitz-James's ring—
What seeks fair Ellen of the king?"

XXIX.

Full well the conscious maiden guess'd
He probed the weakness of her breast;
But, with that consciousness there came
A lightening of her fears for Græme,
And more she deem'd the monarch's ire
Kindled 'gainst him, who, for her sire,
Rebellious broadsword boldly drew;
And, to her generous feeling true,
She craved the grace of Roderick Dhu.—
"Forbear thy suit;—the King of kings
Alone can stay life's parting wings:
I knew his heart, I knew his hand,
Have shared his cheer and proved his brand.
My fairest earldom would I give
To bid Clan-Alpine's chieftain live!—
Hast thou no other boon to crave?
No other captive friend to save?"—
Blushing she turn'd her from the king,
And to the Douglas gave the ring,
As if she wished her sire to speak
The suit that stain'd her glowing cheek.—
"Nay, then my pledge has lost its force,
And stubborn justice holds her course.
Malcolm, come forth!"—And, at the word,
Down kneel'd the Græme to Scotland's lord.
"For thee, rash youth, no suppliant sues,
From thee may vengeance claim her dues,
Who, nurtured underneath our smile,
Has paid our care by treacherous wile,
And sought, amid thy faithful clan,
A refuge for an outlaw'd man,
Dishonouring thus thy loyal name.—
Fetters and warder for the Græme!"
His chain of gold the king unstrung,
The links o'er Malcolm's neck he flung,
Then gently drew the glittering band,
And laid the clasp on Ellen's hand.

Harp of the north, farewell! the hills grow dark,
On purple peaks a deeper shade descending;
In twilight copse the glowworm lights her spark;
The deer, half seen, are to the covert wending.
Resume thy wizard elm! the fountain lending,
And the wild breeze, thy wilder minstrelsy;
Thy numbers sweet with nature's vespers blending,
With distant echo from the fold and lea,
And herd-boy's evening pipe, and hum of housing bee.

Yet once again, farewell, thou minstrel harp!
Yet, once again, forgive my feeble sway,
And little reck I of the censure sharp,
May idly cavil at an idle lay.
Much have I owed thy strains on life's long way,
Thro' secret woes the world has never known,
When on the weary night dawn'd wearier day,
And bitter was the grief devour'd alone.
That I o'erlive such woes, enchantress! is thine own.

Hark! as my lingering footsteps slow retire—
Some spirit of the air has waked thy string!
'Tis now a seraph bold, with touch of fire,
'Tis now the brush of fairy's frolic wing;
Receding now, the dying numbers ring
Fainter and fainter down the rugged dell,
And now the mountain breezes scarcely bring
A wandering witch-note of the distant spell—
And now, 'tis silent all! Enchantress, fare thee well.

THE FIRE KING.

'The blessings of the evil genii, which are curses, were upon him.' *Eastern Tale.*

This ballad was written at the request of Mr. Lewis, to be inserted in his *Tales of Wonder*. It is the third in a series of four ballads, on the subject of Elementary Spirits. The story is, however, partly historical; for it is recorded, that, during the struggles of the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem, a knight templar, called Saint Alban, deserted to the Saracens, and defeated the Christians in many combats, till he was finally routed and slain, in a conflict with King Baldwin, under the walls of Jerusalem.

Bold knights and fair dames, to my harp give an ear,
Of love, and of war, and of wonder to hear;
And you haply may sigh, in the midst of your glee,
At the tale of Count Albert, and fair Rosalie.

O see you that castle, so strong and so high?
And see you that lady, the tear in her eye?
And see you that palmer from Palestine's land,
The shell on his hat, and the staff in his hand?

"Now, palmer, gray palmer, O tell unto me,
What news bring you home from the Holy Countrie?
And how goes the warfare by Galilee's strand?
And how fare our nobles, the flower of the land?"

"O well goes the warfare by Galilee's wave,
For Gilead, and Nablous, and Ramah we have;
And well fare our nobles by Mount Lebanon,
For the heathen have lost, and the Christians have won."

A fair chain of gold mid her ringlets there hung:
O'er the palmer's gray locks the fair chain has she flung;
'O palmer, gray palmer, this chain be thy fee,
For the news thou hast brought from the Holy Countrie.

"And, palmer, good palmer, by Galilee's wave,
O saw ye Count Albert, the gentle and brave?
When the crescent went back, and the red-cross rush'd on,
O saw ye him foremost on Mount Lebanon?"

"O lady, fair lady, the tree green it grows;
O lady, fair lady, the stream pure it flows:
Your castle stands strong, and your hopes soar on high;
But lady, fair lady, all blossoms to die.

"The green boughs they wither, the thunderbolt falls,
It leaves of your castle but levin-scorch'd walls;
The pure stream runs muddy; the gay hope is gone;
Count Albert is prisoner on Mount Lebanon."

O she's ta'en a horse, should be fleet at her speed;
And she's ta'en a sword, should be sharp at her need;
And she has ta'en shipping for Palestine's land,
To ransom Count Albert from Soldanrie's hand.

Small thought had Count Albert on fair Rosalie,
Small thought on his faith, or his knighthood had he
A heathenish damsel his light heart had won,
The Soldan's fair daughter of Mount Lebanon.

"O Christian, brave Christian, my love wouldst thou be,
Three things must thou do ere I hearken to thee;
Our laws and our worship on thee shalt thou take;
And this thou shalt first do for Zulema's sake.

"And, next, in the cavern, where burns evermore
The mystical flame which the Kurdmans adore,
Alone, and in silence, three nights shalt thou wake;
And this thou shalt next do for Zulema's sake.

"And, last, thou shalt aid us with counsel and hand,
To drive the Frank robber from Palestine's land;
For my lord and my love then Count Albert I'll take,
When all this is accomplish'd for Zulema's sake."

He has thrown by his helmet and cross-handled sword,
Renouncing his knighthood, denying his Lord;
He has ta'en the green caftan, and turban put on,
For the love of the maiden of fair Lebanon.

And in the dread cavern, deep, deep under ground,
Which fifty steel gates and steel portals surround,
He has watch'd until daybreak, but sight saw he none,
Save the flame burning bright on its altar of stone.

Amazed was the princess, the Soldan amazed,
Sore murmur'd the priests as on Albert they gazed;
They search'd all his garments, and, under his weeds,
They found, and took from him, his rosary beads.

Again in the cavern, deep, deep under ground,
He watch'd the lone night, while the winds whistled round;
Far off was their murmur, it came not more nigh;
The flame burn'd unmoved, and naught else did he spy.

Loud murmur'd the priests, and amazed was the king,
While many dark spells of their witchcraft they sing;
They search'd Albert's body, and, lo! on his breast
Was the sign of the cross, by his father impress'd.

The priests they erase it with care and with pain,
And the recreant return'd to the cavern again;
But, as he descended, a whisper there fell—
It was his good angel, who bade him farewell!

High bristled his hair, his heart flutter'd and beat,
And he turn'd him five steps, half resolved to retreat;
But his heart it was harden'd, his purpose was gone,
When he thought of the maid of fair Lebanon.

Scarce pass'd he the archway, the threshold scarce trod,
When the winds from the four points of heaven were abroad;
They made each steel portal to rattle and ring,
And, borne on the blast, came the dread Fire-King.

Full sore rock'd the cavern whene'er he drew nigh;
The fire on the altar blazed bickering and high;
In volcanic explosions the mountains proclaim
The dreadful approach of the monarch of flame.

Unmeasured in height, undistinguish'd in form,
His breath it was lightning, his voice it was storm;
I ween the stout heart of Count Albert was tame,
When he saw in his terrors the monarch of flame.

In his hand a broad falchion blue glimmer'd through smoke,
And Mount Lebanon shook as the monarch he spoke:
"With this brand shalt thou conquer, thus long, and no more,
Till thou bend to the cross, and the virgin adore."

The cloud-shrouded arm gives the weapon; and, see!
The recreant receives the charm'd gift on his knee:
The thunders grow distant, and faint gleam the fires,
As, borne on his whirlwind, the phantom retires.

Count Albert has arm'd him the Paynim among;
Though his heart it was false, yet his arm it was strong;
And the red-cross wax'd faint, and the crescent came on,
From the day he commanded on Mount Lebanon.

From Lebanon's forest to Galilee's wave,
The sands of Samaar drank the blood of the brave;
Till the knights of the temple and knights of St. John,
With Salem's king Baldwin, against him came on.

The war-cymbals clatter'd, the trumpets replied,
The lances were couch'd, and they closed on each side;
And horsemen and horses Count Albert o'erthrew,
Till he pierced the thick tumult King Baldwin unto.

Against the charm'd blade which Count Albert did wield,
The fence had been vain of the king's red-cross shield;
But a page thrust him forward the monarch before,
And cleft the proud turban the renegade wore.

So fell was the dint, that Count Albert stoop'd low
Before the cross'd shield, to his steel saddle-bow;
And scarce had he bent to the red-cross his head,
"*Bonne grace, notre dame,*" he unwittingly said.

Sore sigh'd the charm'd sword, for its virtue was o'er;
It sprung from his grasp, and was never seen more:
But true men have said, that the lightning's red wing
Did waft back the brand to the dread Fire-King.

He clench'd his set teeth, and his gauntletted hand;
He stretch'd, with one buffet, that page on the strand;
As back from the stripling the broken casque roll'd,
You might see the blue eyes, and the ringlets of gold.

Short time had Count Albert in horror to stare
On those death-swimming eye-balls, and blood-clotted hair;
For down came the Templars, like Cedron in flood,
And died their long lances in Saracen blood.

The Saracens, Kurdmans, and Ishmaelites yield
To the scallop, the saltier, and crosletted shield;
And the eagles were gorged with the infidel dead,
From Bethsaida's fountains to Napthali's head.

The battle is over on Bethsaida's plain.
O! who is yon Paynim lies stretched 'mid the slain?
And who is yon page lying cold at his knee?
O! who but Count Albert and fair Rosalie.

The lady was buried in Salem's bless'd bound,
The count he was left to the vulture and hound:
Her soul to high mercy our lady did bring;
His went on the blast to the dread Fire-King.

Yet many a minstrel, in harping, can tell,
How the red-cross it conquer'd, the crescent it fell;
And lords and gay ladies have sigh'd, 'mid their glee,
At the tale of Count Albert and fair Rosalie.

THE WILD HUNTSMEN.

This is a translation, or rather an imitation, of the *Wilde Jager* of the German poet Bürger. The tradition upon which it is founded bears, that formerly a wildgrave, or keeper of a royal forest, named Falkenburg, was so much addicted to the pleasures of the chase, and otherwise so extremely profligate and cruel, that he not only followed this unhallowed amusement on the Sabbath, and other days consecrated to religious duty, but accompanied it with the most unheard-of oppression upon the poor peasants who were under his vassalage. When this second Nimrod died, the people adopted a superstition, founded probably on the many various uncouth sounds heard in the depth of a German forest, during the silence of the night. They conceived they still heard the cry of the wildgrave's hounds; and the well-known cheer of the deceased hunter, the sound of his horse's feet, and the rustling of the branches before the game, the pack, and the sportsmen, are also distinctly discriminated; but the phantoms are rarely, if ever, visible. Once, as a benighted *chasseur* heard this infernal chase pass by him, at the sound of the halloo, with which the spectre huntsman cheered

his hounds, he could not refrain from crying, "*Gluck zu, Falkenburg!*" (Good sport to ye, Falkenburg!) "Dost thou wish me good sport?" answered a hoarse voice; "thou shalt share the game;" and there was thrown at him what seemed to be a huge piece of foul carrion. The daring *chasseur* lost two of his best horses soon after, and never perfectly recovered the personal effects of this ghostly greeting. This tale, though told with some variation, is universally believed all over Germany.

The French had a similar tradition concerning an aërial hunter, who infested the forest of Fontainebleau. He was sometimes visible; when he appeared as a huntsman, surrounded with dogs, a tall grisly figure. Some account of him may be found in "Sully's Memoirs," who says he was called *Le Grande Veneur*. At one time he chose to hunt so near the palace, that the attendants, and, if I mistake not, Sully himself, came out into the court, supposing it was the sound of the king returning from the chase. This phantom is elsewhere called Saint Hubert.

The superstition seems to have been very general, as appears from the following fine poetical description of this phantom chase, as it was heard in the wilds of Ross-shire.

"Ere since, of old, the haughty thanes of Ross—
So to the simple swain tradition tells—
Were wont with clans, and ready vassals throng'd
To wake the bounding stag, or guilty wolf,
There oft is heard, at midnight, or at noon,
Beginning faint, but rising still more loud,
And nearer, voice of hunters, and of hounds,
And horns hoarse-winded, blowing far and keen:—
Forthwith the hubbub multiplies; the gale
Labours with wilder shrieks and rifer din
Of hot pursuit; the broken cry of deer
Mangled by throttling dogs; the shouts of men,
And hoofs thick beating on the hollow hill.
Sudden the grazing heifer in the vale
Starts at the noise, and both the herdsman's ears
Tingle with inward dread. Aghast he eyes
The mountain's height, and all the ridges round,
Yet not one trace of living wight discerns;
Nor knows, o'erawe'd, and trembling as he stands,
To what or whom he owes his idle fear,
To ghost, to witch, to fairy, or to fiend;
But wonders, and no end of wondering finds."

Scottish Descriptive Poems, pp. 167, 168.

A posthumous miracle of father Lesly, a Scottish Capuchin, related to his being buried on a hill haunted by these unearthly cries of hounds and huntsmen. After his sainted relics had been deposited there, the noise was never heard more. The reader will find this, and other miracles, recorded in the life of father Bonaventura, which is written in the choicest Italian.

THE wildgrave winds his bugle horn,
To horse, to horse! halloo, halloo!
His fiery courser snuffs the morn,
And thronging serfs their lord pursue.

The eager pack, from couples freed,
Dash through the bush, the brier, the brake;
While answering hound, and horn, and steed,
The mountain echoes startling wake.

The beams of God's own hallow'd day
Had painted yonder spire with gold,
And, calling sinful men to pray,
Loud, long, and deep, the bell had toll'd:

But still the wildgrave onward rides;
Halloo, halloo! and hark again!
When, spurring from opposing sides,
Two stranger horsemen join the train.

Who was each stranger, left and right,
Well may I guess, but dare not tell;
The right hand steed was silver white,
The left, the swarthy hue of hell.

The right hand horseman, young and fair,
His smile was like the morn of May;
The left, from eye of tawny glare,
Shot midnight lightning's lurid ray.

He waved his huntsman's cap on high,
Cried, "Welcome, welcome, noble lord!
What sport can earth, or sea, or sky,
To match the princely chase, afford?"

"Cease thy loud bugle's clanging knell,"
Cried the fair youth, with silver voice;
"And for devotion's choral swell
Exchange the rude unhallow'd noise.

"To-day the ill-omen'd chase forbear,
Yon bell yet summons to the fane;
To-day the warning spirit hear,
To-morrow thou mayst mourn in vain."

"Away, and sweep the glades along!"
The sable hunter hoarse replies;
"To muttering monks leave matin song,
And bells, and books, and mysteries."

The wildgrave spurr'd his ardent steed,
And, lanching forward with a bound,
"Who, for thy drowsy priest-like rede,
Would leave the ovial horn and hound.

"Hence, if our manly sport offend!
With pious fools go chant and pray:
Well hast thou spoke, my dark-brow'd friend
Halloo, halloo! and, hark away!"

The wildgrave spurr'd his courser light,
O'er moss and moor, o'er holt and hill
And on the left, and on the right,
Each stranger horseman follow'd still.

Up springs, from yonder tangled thorn,
A stag more white than mountain snow
And louder rung the wildgrave's horn,
"Hark forward, forward! holla, ho!"

A heedless wretch had cross'd the way;
He gasps, the thundering hoofs below:
But, live who can, or die who may,
Still, "Forward, forward!" on they go

See, where yon simple fences meet,
A field with autumn's blessings crown
See, prostrate at the wildgrave's feet,
A husbandman, with toil embrown'd

"O mercy, mercy, noble lord!
Spare the poor's pittance," was his cry,
"Earn'd by the sweat these brows have pour'd,
In scorching hour of fierce July?"

Earnest the right hand stranger pleads,
The left still cheering to the prey,
Th' impetuous earl no warning heeds,
But furious holds the onward way.

"Away, thou hound so basely born,
Or dread the scourge's echoing blow!"
Then loudly rung his bugle horn,
Hark forward, forward, holla, ho!"

So said, so done: a single bound
Clears the poor labourer's humble pale:
Wild follows man, and horse, and hound,
Like dark December's stormy gale.

And man, and horse, and hound, and horn,
Destructive sweep the field along;
While joying o'er the wasted corn,
Fell famine marks the maddening throng.

Again uproused, the timorous prey
Scours moss, and moor, and holt, and hill;
Hard run, he feels his strength decay,
And trusts for life his simple skill.

Too dangerous solitude appear'd;
He seeks the shelter of the crowd;
Amid the flock's domestic herd
His harmless head he hopes to shroud.

O'er moss, and moor, and holt, and hill,
His track the steady bloodhounds trace;
O'er moss and moor, unwearied still,
The furious earl pursues the chase.

Full lowly did the herdsman fall;
"O spare, thou noble baron, spare
These herds, a widow's little all;
These flocks an orphan's fleecy care?"

Earnest the right hand stranger pleads,
The left still cheering to the prey;
The earl nor prayer nor pity heeds,
But furious keeps the onward way.

"Unmanner'd dog! to stop my sport
Vain were thy cant and beggar whine,
Though human spirits, of thy sort,
Were tenants of these carrion kine!"

Again he winds his bugle horn,
"Hark forward, forward, holla, ho!"
And through the herd, in ruthless scorn,
He cheers his furious hounds to go.

In heaps the throttled victims fall;
Down sinks their mangled herdsman near.
The murderous cries the stag appal—
Again he starts, new nerved by fear.

With blood besmear'd, and white with foam,
While big the tears of anguish pour
He seeks, amid the forest's gloom,
The humble hermit's hallow'd bower.

But man and horse, and horn and hound,
Fast rattling on his traces go;
The sacred chapel rung around
With, "Hark away! and, holla, ho!"

All mild, amid the route profane,
The holy hermit pour'd his prayer;
"Forbear with blood God's house to stain;
Revere his altar, and forbear!

"The meanest brute has rights to plead,
Which wrong'd by cruelty or pride,
Draw vengeance on the ruthless head:
Be warn'd at length, and turn aside."

Still the fair horseman anxious pleads;
The black, wild whooping, points the prey:
Alas! the earl no warning heeds,
But frantic keeps the forward way.

"Holy or not, or right or wrong,
Thy altar, and its rites, I spurn;
Not sainted martyr's sacred song,
Not God himself, shall make me turn!"

He spurs his horse, he winds his horn,
"Hark forward, forward, holla, ho!"
But off, on wirlwind's pinions borne,
The stag, the hut, the hermit, go.

And horse, and man, and horn, and hound,
And clamour of the chase was gone;
For hoofs, and howls, and bugle sound,
A deadly silence reign'd alone.

Wild gazed th' affrighted earl around;
He strove in vain to wake his horn;
In vain to call; for not a sound
Could from his anxious lips be borne.

He listens for his trusty hounds;
No distant baying reach'd his ears:
His courser, rooted to the ground,
The quickening spur unmindful bears.

Still dark and darker frown the shades,
Dark as the darkness of the grave;
And not a sound the still invades,
Save what a distant torrent gave.

High o'er the sinner's humbled head
At length the solemn silence broke;
And from a cloud of swarthy red,
The awful voice of thunder spoke.

"Oppressor of creation fair!
Apostate spirits' harden'd tool!
Scorner of God! Scourge of the poor!
The measure of thy cup is full.

"Be chased forever through the wood;
Forever roam th' affrighted wild;
And let thy fate instruct the proud,
God's meanest creature is his child."

'Twas hush'd: one flash, of sombre glare,
With yellow ting'd the forest brown;
Up rose the wildgrave's bristling hair,
And horror chill'd each nerve and bone.

Cold pour'd the sweat in freezing rill;
A rising wind began to sing;
And louder, louder, louder still,
Brought storm and tempest on its wing.

Earth heard the call! Her entrails rend;
From yawning rifts, with many a yell,
Mix'd with sulphureous flames, ascend
The misbegotten dogs of hell.

What ghastly huntsman next arose,
Well may I guess, but dare not tell;
His eye like midnight lightning glows,
His steed the swarthy hue of hell.

The wildgrave flies o'er bush and thorn,
With many a shriek of helpless wo;
Behind him hound, and horse, and horn,
And, "Hark away, and holla, ho!"

With wild despair's reverted eye,
Close, close behind, he marks the throng,
With bloody fangs, and eager cry,
In frantic fear he scours along.

Still, still shall last the dreadful chase,
Till time itself shall have an end:
By day they scour earth's cavern'd space,
At midnight's witching hour ascend.

This is the horn, and hound, and horse,
That oft the lated peasant hears;
Appall'd he signs the frequent cross,
When the wild din invades his ears.

The wakeful priest oft drops a tear
For human pride, for human wo,
When at his midnight mass, he hears
Th' infernal cry of "Holla, ho!"

THE BATTLE OF SEMPACH.

These verses are a literal translation of an ancient Swiss ballad upon the battle of Sempach, fought 9th July, 1386, being the victory by which the Swiss cantons established their independence. The author is Albert Tehudi, denominated the Souter, from his profession of a shoemaker. He was a citizen of Lucerne, esteemed highly among his countrymen, both for his powers as a *Meistersinger*, or minstrel, and his courage as a soldier; so that he might share the praise conferred by Collins on Eschylus, that—

——Not alone he nursed the poet's flame,
But reach'd from Virtue's hand the patriot steel.

The circumstance of their being written by a poet returning from a well-fought field he describes, and in which his country's fortune was secured, may confer on Tehudi's verses an interest which they are not entitled to claim from their poetical merit. But ballad poetry, the more literally it is translated, the more it loses its simplicity, without acquiring either grace or strength; and therefore some of the faults of the verses must be imputed to the translator's feeling it a duty to keep as closely as possible to his original. The various puns, rude attempts at pleasantry, and disproportioned episodes, must be set down to Tehudi's account, or to the taste of his age.

The military antiquary will derive some amusement from the minute particulars which the martial poet has recorded. The mode in which the Austrian men-at-arms received the charge of the Swiss was by forming a phalanx, which they defended with their long lances. The gallant Winkelried, who sacrificed his own life by rushing among the spears, clasping in his arms as many as he could grasp, and thus opening a gap in these iron battalions, is celebrated in Swiss history. When fairly mingled together, the unwieldy length of their weapons, and cumbrous weight of their defensive armour, rendered the Austrian men-at-arms a very unequal match for the light-armed mountaineers. The victories obtained by the Swiss over the German chivalry, hitherto deemed as formidable on foot as on horseback, led to important changes in the art of war. The poet describes the Austrian knights and squires as cutting the peaks from their boots ere they could act upon foot, in allusion to an inconvenient piece of foppery, often mentioned in the middle ages. Leopold III., Archduke of Austria, called "The handsome man-at-arms," was slain in the battle of Sempach, with the flower of his chivalry.

'Twas when among our linden trees
The bees had housed in swarms,
(And gray-hair'd peasants say that these
Betoken foreign arms,)

Then look'd we down to Willisow,
The land was all in flame;
We knew the Archduke Leopold
With all his army came.

The Austrian nobles made their vow,
So hot their hearts and bold,
"On Switzer carles we'll trample now,
And slay both young and old."

With clarion loud, and banner proud,
From Zurich on the lake,
In martial pomp and fair array,
Their onward march they make.

"Now list, ye, lowland nobles all
Ye seek the mountain strand,
Nor wot ye what shall be your lot
In such a dangerous land.

"I rede ye, shrive you of your sins
Before you further go;
A skirmish in Helvetian hills
May send your souls to wo."

"But where now shall we find a priest,
Our shrift that he may hear?"
"The Switzer priest* has ta'en the field,
He deals a penance drear.

* All the Swiss clergy who were able to bear arms fought in this patriotic war.

"Right heavily upon your head
He'll lay his hand of steel;
And with his trusty partizan
Your absolution deal."

'Twas on a Monday morning then,
The corn was steep'd in dew,
And merry maids had sickels ta'en,
When the host to Sempach drew.

The stalwart men of fair Lucerne
Together have they join'd;
The pith and core of manhood stern—
Was none cast looks behind.

It was the Lord of Hare castle,
And to the duke he said,
"Yon little band of brethren true
Will meet us undismay'd."

"O Hare-castle,* thou heart of hare!"
Fierce Oxenstern replied;
"Shalt see then how the game will fare,"
The taunting knight replied.

There was lacing then of helmets bright,
And closing ranks amain;
The peaks they hew'd from their boot-points
Might well nigh load a wain.†

And thus they to each other said,
"Yon handful down to hew
Will be no boastful tale to tell,
The peasants are so few."

The gallant Swiss confederates there,
They pray'd to God aloud,
And he display'd his rainbow fair
Against a swarthy cloud.

Then heart and pulse throbb'd more and more
With courage firm and high,
And down the good confederates bore
On the Austrian chivalry.

The Austrian lion‡ 'gan to growl,
And toss his main and tail;
And ball, and shaft, and crossbow bolt
Went whistling forth like hail.

Lance, pike, and halberd, mingled there.
The game was nothing sweet;
The boughs of many a stately tree
Lay shiver'd at their feet.

The Austrian men-at-arms stood fast,
So close their spears they laid:
It chafed the gallant Winkelried,
Who to his comrades said—

"I have a virtuous wife at home,
A wife and infant son;
I leave them to my country's care
This field shall soon be won.

"These nobles lay their spears right thick,
And keep full firm array,
Yet shall my charge their order break,
And make my brethren way."

He rush'd against the Austrian band,
In desperate career,
And with his body, breast, and hand,
Bore down each hostile spear.

Four lances splinter'd on his crest
Six shiver'd in his side;
Still on the serried files he press'd—
He broke their ranks and died.

This patriot's self-devoted deed
First tamed the lion's mood,
And the four forest cantons freed
From thraldom by his blood.

Right where his charge had made a lane,
His valiant comrades burst,
With sword, and axe, and partizan,
And hack, and stab, and thrust.

The daunted lion 'gan to whine,
And granted ground amain;
The mountain bull,* he bent his brows,
And gored his sides again.

Then lost was banner, spear, and shield,
At Sempach, in the flight;
The cloister vaults at Koningsfield
Hold many an Austrian knight.

It was the Archduke Leopold,
So lordly would he ride,
But he came against the Switzer churls,
And they slew him in his pride.

The heifer said unto the bull,
"And shall I not complain?
There came a foreign nobleman
To milk me on the plain.

"One thrust of thine outrageous horn
Has gall'd the knight so sore,
That to the churchyard he is borne,
To range our glens no more."—

An Austrian noble left the stour,
And fast the flight 'gan take;
And he arrived in luckless hour
At Sempach, on the lake.

He and his squire a fisher call'd,
(His name was Hans Von Rot,)
"For love, or meed, or charity,
Receive us in thy boat."

Their anxious call the fisher heard,
And glad the meed to win,

---

* In the original, *Haasenstein*, or *Hare-stone*.

† This seems to allude to the preposterous fashion, during the middle ages, of wearing boots with the points or peaks turned upwards, and so long that, in some cases, they were fastened to the knees of the wearer with small chains. When they alighted to fight upon foot, it would seem that the Austrian gentlemen found it necessary to cut off these peaks, that they might move with the necessary activity.

‡ A pun on the archduke's name, Leopold.

* A pun on the *Urus*, or wild bull, which gives name to the canton of Uri.

His shallop to the shore he steer'd,
And took the fliers in.

And while against the tide and wind
Hans stoutly row'd his way,
The noble to his follower sign'd
He should the boatman slay.

The fisher's back was to them turn'd,
The squire his dagger drew,
Hans saw his shadow in the lake,
The boat he overthrew.

He whelm'd the boat, and as they strove,
He stunn'd them with his oar;
"Now drink ye deep, my gentle sirs,
You'll ne'er stab boatman more.

"Two gilded fishes in the lake
This morning have I caught,
Their silver scales may much avail,
Their carrion flesh is naught."

It was a messenger of wo
Has sought the Austrian land;
"Ah! gracious lady, evil news!
My lord lies on the strand.

"At Sempach, on the battle field,
His bloody corpse lies there."
"Ah, gracious God!" the lady cried,
What tidings of despair!"

Now would you know the minstrel wight,
Who sings of strife so stern,
Albert the Souter is he hight,
A burgher of Lucerne.

A merry man was he, I wot,
The night he made the lay,
Returning from the bloody spot
Where God had judged the day.

THE MAID OF TORO.

O LOW shone the sun on the fair lake of Toro,
And weak were the whispers that waved the dark wood,
All as a fair maiden bewilder'd in sorrow,
Sorely sigh'd to the breezes, and wept to the flood.
"O saints! from the mansions of bliss lowly bending;
Sweet virgin, who hearest the suppliant's cry;
Now grant my petition, in anguish ascending,
My Henry restore, or let Eleanor die!

All distant and faint were the sounds of the battle,
With the breezes they rise, with the breezes they fail,
Till the shout, and the groan, and the conflict's dread rattle,
And the chase's wild clamour, came loading the gale.
Breathless she gazed on the woodlands so dreary;
Slowly approaching a warrior was seen;
Life's ebbing tide mark'd his footsteps so weary,
Cleft was his helmet, and wo was his mien.

"O, save thee, fair maid, for our armies are flying,
O, save thee, fair maid, for thy guardian is low!
Deadly cold on yon heath thy brave Henry is lying:
And fast through the woodland approaches the foe."—
Scarce could he falter the tidings of sorrow,
And scarce could she hear them, benumb'd with despair:
And when the sun sunk on the sweet lake of Toro,
For ever he set to the brave and the fair.

WAR-SONG

OF THE ROYAL EDINBURGH LIGHT DRAGOONS.

Nennius. Is not peace the end of arms?
Caratach. Not where the cause implies a general conquest.
Had we a difference with some petty isle,
Or with our neighbours, Britons, for our landmarks,
The taking in of some rebellious lord,
Or making head against a slight commotion,
After a day of blood peace might be argued:
But where we grapple for the land we live on,
The liberty we hold more dear than life,
The gods we worship, and, next these, our honours,
And, with those, swords that know no end of battle—
Those men, beside themselves, allow no neighbour,
Those minds, that, where the day is claim inheritance,
And, where the sun makes ripe the fruit, their harvest,
And where they march but measure out more ground
To add to Rome——
It must not be.—No! as they are our foes,
Let's use the peace of honour—that's fair dealing;
But in our hands our swords. The hardy Roman,
That thinks to graft himself into my stock,
Must first begin his kindred under ground,
And be allied in ashes. *Bonduca.*

THE following war-song was written during the apprehension of an invasion. The corps of volunteers, to which it was addressed, was raised in 1797, consisting of gentlemen, mounted and armed at their own expense. It still subsists, as the Right Troop of the Royal Mid-Lothian Light Cavalry, commanded by the honourable Lieutenant-colonel Dundas. The noble and constitutional measure, of arming freemen in defence of their own rights, was nowhere more successful than in Edinburgh, which furnished a force of 3000 armed and disciplined volunteers, including a regiment of cavalry, from the city and county, and two corps of artillery, each capable of serving twelve guns. To such a force, above all others, might, in similar circumstances, be applied the exhortation of our ancient Galgacus: "*Proinde ituri in aciem, et majores vestros et posteros cogitate.*"

To horse! to horse! the standard flies,
The bugles sound the call;
The Gallic navy stems the seas,
The voice of battle's on the breeze,
Arouse ye, one and all!

From high Dunedin's towers we come,
A band of brothers true;
Our casques the leopard's spoils surround;
With Scotland's hardy thistle crown'd,
We boast the red and blue.*

Though tamely crouch to Gallia's frown
Dull Holland's tardy train;
Their ravish'd toys though Romans mourn,
Though gallant Switzers vainly spurn,
And foaming gnaw the chain;

O! had they mark'd th' avenging call†
Their brethren's murder gave,
Disunion ne'er their ranks had mown,
Nor patriot valour, desperate grown,
Sought freedom in the grave!

Shall we, too, bend the stubborn head,
In freedom's temple born,
Dress our pale cheeks in timid smile,
To hail a master in our isle,
Or brook a victor's scorn?

No! though destruction o'er the land
Come pouring as a flood,
The sun that sees our falling day
Shall mark our sabres' deadly sway,
And set that night in blood.

For gold let Gallia's legions fight,
Or plunder's bloody gain;
Unbribed, unbought, our swords we draw,
To guard our king, to fence our law,
Nor shall their edge be vain.

If ever breath of British gale
Shall fan the tri-colour,
Or footstep of invader rude,
With rapine foul, and red with blood,
Pollute our happy shore—

Then farewell home! and farewell friends!
Adieu each tender tie!
Resolved, we mingle in the tide,
Where charging squadrons furious ride,
To conquer or to die.

To horse! to horse! the sabres gleam;
High sounds our bugle call;
Combined by honour's sacred tie,
Our word is, *Laws and Liberty!*
March forward, one and all!

* The royal colours.

† The allusion is to the massacre of the Swiss guards, on the fatal 10th of August, 1792. It is painful, but not useless, to remark, that the passive temper with which the Swiss regarded the death of their bravest countrymen, mercilessly slaughtered in discharge of their duty, encouraged and authorized the progressive injustice by which the Alps, once the seat of the most virtuous and free people upon the continent, have, at length, been converted into the citadel of a foreign and military despot. A state degraded is half enslaved.

MAC-GREGOR'S GATHERING.

WRITTEN FOR ALBYN'S ANTHOLOGY

Air—*Thain' a Grigalach.**

THESE verses are adapted to a very wild, yet lively gathering-tune, used by the Mac-Gregors. The severe treatment of this clan, their outlawry and the proscription of their very name, are alluded to in the ballad.

THE moon's on the lake, and the mist's on the brae,
And the clan has a name that is nameless by day!
Then gather, gather, gather, Gregalach!
Gather, gather, gather, &c.

Our signal for fight, that from monarchs we drew,
Must be heard but by night in our vengeful haloo!
Then haloo, Gregalach! haloo, Gregalach!
Haloo, haloo, haloo, Gregalach, &c.

Glen Orchy's proud mountains, Coalchuirn and her towers,
Glenstrae and Glenlyon no longer are ours:
We're landless, landless, landless, Gregalach!
Landless, landless, landless, &c.

But doom'd and devoted by vassal and lord
Mac-Gregor has still both his heart and his sword!
Then courage, courage, courage, Gregalach!
Courage, courage, courage, &c.

If they rob us of name, and pursue us with beagles,
Give their roofs to the flame, and their flesh to the eagles!
Then vengeance, vengeance, vengeance, Gregalach!
Vengeance, vengeance, vengeance, &c.

While there's leaves in the forest, and foam on the river,
Mac-Gregor, despite them, shall flourish for ever!
Come then, Gregalach! come then, Gregalach!
Come then, come then, come then, &c.

Through the depths of Loch Katrine the steed shall career,
O'er the peak of Ben Lomond the galley shall steer,
And the rocks of Craig Royston like icicles melt,
Ere our wrongs be forgot, or our vengeance unfelt!
Then gather, gather, gather, Gregalach!
Gather, gather, gather, &c.

MACKRIMMON'S LAMENT.

Air—*Cha till mi tuille.†*

MACKRIMMON, hereditary piper to the laird of Macleod, is said to have composed this lament when the clan was about to depart upon a distan

* "The Mac-Gregor is come."

† "We return no more."

and dangerous expedition. The minstrel was impressed with a belief, which the event verified, that he was to be slain in the approaching feud; and hence the Gaelic words, "*Cha till mi tuille; ged thillis Macleod, cha till Macrimmon,*" "I shall never return; although Macleod returns, yet Mackrimmon shall never return!" The piece is but too well known, from its being the strain with which the emigrants from the west highlands and isles usually take leave of their native shore.

Macleod's wizard flag from the gray castle sallies,
The rowers are seated, unmoor'd are the galleys;
Gleam war-axe and broadsword, clang target and quiver,
As Mackrimmon sings, "Farewell to Dunvegan for ever!
Farewell to each cliff on which breakers are foaming;
Farewell, each dark glen, in which red deer are roaming;
Farewell, lonely Syke, to lake, mountain, and river,
Macleod may return, but Mackrimmon shall never!

"Farewell the bright clouds that on Quillan are sleeping;
Farewell the bright eyes in the Dun that are weeping;
To each minstrel delusion, farewell!—and for ever!
Mackrimmon departs to return to you never!
The *banshee's* wild voice sings the death-dirge before me,
The pall of the dead for a mantle hangs o'er me:
But my heart shall not flag, and my nerves shall not shiver,
Though devoted I go—to return again never!

"Too oft shall the notes of Mackrimmon's bewailing
Be heard when the Gael on their exile are sailing;
Dear land! to the shores, whence unwilling we sever,
Return—return—return—shall we never!
Cha till, cha till, cha till sin tuille!
Cha till, cha till, cha till sin tuille,
Cha till, cha till, cha till sin tuille,
Ged thillis Macleod, cha till Macrimmon!"

PIBROCH OF DONALD DHU.

WRITTEN FOR ALBYN'S ANTHOLOGY.

Air—*Piobair of Dhonuil Duidh.**

This is a very ancient pibroch belonging to the clan Mac-Donald, and supposed to refer to the expedition of Donald Balloch, who, in 1431, launched from the isles with a considerable force, invaded Lochabar, and at Inverlochy defeated and put to flight the Earls of Marr and Caithness, though at the head of an army superior to his own. The words of the set theme, or melody, to which the pipe variations are applied, run thus in Gaelic:

Piobaireachd Dhonuil, piobaireachd Dhonuil;
Piobaireachd Dhonuil Duidh, piobaireachd Dhonuil;
Piobaireachd Dhonuil Duidh, piobaireachd Dhonuil;
Piob agus bratach air faiche Inverlochi.

The pipe summons of Donald the Black,
The pipe summons of Donald the Black,
The war-pipe and the pennon are on the gathering-place at Inverlochy.

Pibroch of Donuil Dhu,
Pibroch of Donuil,
Wake thy wild voice anew,
Summon Clan-Conuil.
Come away, come away,
Hark to the summons!
Come in your war array,
Gentles and commons.

Come from deep glen, and
From mountain so rocky,
The war-pipe and pennon
Are at Inverlochy:
Come every hill-plaid, and
True heart that wears one,
Come every steel blade, and
Strong hand that bears one.

Leave untended the herd,
The flock without shelter;
Leave the corpse uninterr'd,
The bride at the altar;
Leave the deer, leave the steer,
Leave nets and barges;
Come with your fighting gear,
Broadswords and targes.

Come as the winds come when
Forests are rended;
Come as the waves come when
Navies are stranded;
Faster come, faster come,
Faster and faster,
Chief, vassal, page, and groom,
Tenant and master.

Fast they come, fast they come;
See how they gather!
Wide waves the eagle plume,
Blended with heather.
Cast your plaids, draw your blades,
Forward each man set!
Pibroch of Donuil Dhu,
Knell for the onset!

THE DANCE OF DEATH.

Night and morning were at meeting
Over Waterloo;
Cocks had sung their earliest greeting,
Faint and low they crew,
For no paly beam yet shone
On the heights of Mount Saint John;

* "The pibroch of Donald the Black."

Tempest clouds prolong'd the sway
Of timeless darkness over day;
Whirlwind, thunderclap, and shower,
Mark'd it a predestined hour.
Broad and frequent through the night
Flash'd the sheets of levin light;
Muskets, glancing lightnings back,
Show'd the dreary bivouack
Where the soldier lay,
Chill and stiff, and drench'd with rain,
Wishing dawn of morn again,
Though death should come with day.
'Tis at such a tide and hour,
Wizard, witch, and fiend have power,
And ghastly forms through mist and shower,
Gleam on the gifted ken;
And then th' affrighted prophet's ear
Drinks whispers strange of fate and fear,
Presaging death and ruin near
Among the sons of men.
Apart from Albyn's war-array,
'Twas then gray Allan sleepless lay;
Gray Allan, who for many a day,
Had follow'd stout and stern,
Where through battle's rout and reel,
Storm of shout and hedge of steel,
Led the grandson of Lochiel,
Valiant Fassiefern.
Through steel and shot he leads no more—
Low laid mid friends and foemen's gore—
But long his native lake's wild shore,
And Sunart rough, and high Ardgower,
And Morven long shall tell,
And proud Ben Nevis hear with awe,
How, upon bloody Quatre-Bras,
Brave Cameron heard the wild hurra
Of conquest as he fell.

Lone on the outskirts of the host,
The weary sentinel held post,
And heard, through darkness, far aloof,
The frequent clang of courser's hoof,
Where held the cloak'd patrol their course,
And spurr'd 'gainst storm the swerving horse;
But there are sounds in Allan's ear
Patrol nor sentinel may hear;
And sights before his eyes aghast
Invisible to them have pass'd,
When down the destined plain
'Twixt Britain and the bands of France,
Wild as marsh-borne meteors glance,
Strange phantoms wheel'd a revel dance,
And doom'd the future slain.—
Such forms were seen, such sounds were heard,
When Scotland's James his march prepared
For Flodden's fatal plain;
Such, when he drew his ruthless sword,
As choosers of the slain, adored
The yet unchristen'd Dane.
An indistinct and phantom band,
They wheel'd their ring-dance hand in hand,
With gesture wild and dread;
The seer, who watch'd them ride the storm,
Saw through their faint and shadowy form
The lightnings flash more red;
And still their ghastly roundelay
Was of the coming battle-fray,
And of the destined dead.

SONG.

Wheel the wild dance,
While lightnings glance,
And thunders rattle loud,
And call the brave
To bloody grave,
To sleep without a shroud.

Our airy feet,
So light and fleet,
They do not bend the rye,
That sinks its head when whirlwinds rave,
And swells again in eddying wave,
As each wild gust blows by;
But still the corn,
At dawn of morn,
Our fatal steps that bore,
At eve lies waste,
A trampled paste
Of blackening mud and gore.

Wheel the wild dance,
While lightnings glance,
And thunders rattle loud,
And call the brave
To bloody grave,
To sleep without a shroud.

Wheel the wild dance,
Brave sons of France!
For you our ring makes room;
Make space full wide
For martial pride,
For banner, spear, and plume.
Approach, draw near,
Proud cuirassier!
Room for the men of steel!
Through crest and plate
The broadsword's weight,
Both head and heart shall feel.

Wheel the wild dance,
While lightnings glance,
And thunders rattle loud,
And call the brave
To bloody grave,
To sleep without a shroud.

Sons of the spear!
You feel us near,
In many a ghastly dream;
With fancy's eye
Our forms you spy,
And hear our fatal scream.
With clearer sight
Ere falls the night,
Just when to weal or wo
Your disembodied souls take flight
On trembling wing—each startled sprite
Our choir of death shall know.

Wheel the wild dance,
While lightnings glance,
And thunders rattle loud,

And call the brave
To bloody grave,
To sleep without a shroud.

Burst, ye clouds, in tempest showers,
Redder rain shall soon be ours—
See, the east grows wan—
Yield we place to sterner game,
Ere deadlier bolts and drearer flame
Shall the welkin's thunders shame;
Elemental rage is tame
To the wrath of man.

At morn, gray Allan's mates with awe
Heard of the vision'd sights he saw,
The legend heard him say:
But the seer's gifted eye was dim,
Deafen'd his ear, and stark his limb,
Ere closed that bloody day.
He sleeps far from his highland heath—
But often of the Dance of Death
His comrades tell the tale
On piquet-post, when ebbs the night,
And waning watch-fires grow less bright,
And dawn is glimmering pale.

FAREWELL TO THE MUSE.

Enchantress, farewell, who so oft has decoy'd me,
At the close of the evening, through woodlands to roam,
Where the forester, lated, with wonder espied me
Explore the wild scenes he was quitting for home.
Farewell, and take with thee thy numbers wild, speaking
The language alternate of rapture and wo:
O! none but some lover, whose heart-strings are breaking,
The pang that I feel at our parting can know.

Each joy thou couldst double, and when there came sorrow,
Or pale disappointment, to darken my way,
What voice was like thine, that could sing of to-morrow,
Till forgot in the strain was the grief of to-day!
But when friends drop around us in life's weary waning,
The grief, queen of numbers, thou canst not assuage;
Nor the gradual estrangement of those yet remaining,
The languor of pain, and the chillness of age.

'Twas thou that once taught me, in accents bewailing,
To sing how a warrior lay stretch'd on the plain,
And a maiden hung o'er him with aid unavailing,
And held to his lips the cold goblet in vain;
As vain those enchantments, O queen of wild numbers,
To a bard when the reign of his fancy is o'er,
And the quick pulse of feeling in apathy slumbers.
Farewell then! Enchantress! I meet thee no more.

HELLVELLYN.

In the spring of 1805, a young gentleman of talents, and of a most amiable disposition, perished by losing his way on the mountain Hellvellyn. His remains were not discovered till three months afterwards, when they were found guarded by a faithful terrier bitch, his constant attendant during frequent solitary rambles through the wilds of Cumberland and Westmoreland.

I climb'd the dark brow of the mighty Hellvellyn,
Lakes and mountains beneath me gleam'd misty and wide;
All was still, save by . ts when the eagle was yelling,
And starting around me the echoes replied.
On the right, Striden-edge round the Red-tarn was bending,
And Catchedicam its left verge was defending,
One huge nameless rock in the front was ascending,
When I mark'd the sad spot where the wanderer had died.

Dark green was the spot 'mid the brown mountain heather,
Where the pilgrim of nature lay stretch'd in decay,
Like the corpse of an outcast abandoned to weather,
Till the mountain winds wasted the tenantless clay.
Nor yet quite deserted, though lonely extended,
For, faithful in death, his mute favourite attended,
The much-loved remains of her master defended,
And chased the hill fox and the raven away.

How long didst thou think that his silence was slumber?
When the wind waved his garment, how oft didst thou start?
How many long days and long weeks didst thou number,
Ere he faded before thee, the friend of thy heart?
And, O! was it meet that, no requiem read o'er him,
No mother to weep, and no friend to deplore him,
And thou, little guardian, alone stretch'd before him,
Unhonour'd the pilgrim from life should depart?

When a prince to the fate of the peasant has yielded,
The tapestry waves dark round the dim-lighted hall;
With 'scutcheons of silver the coffin is shielded,
And pages stand mute by the canopied pall:
Through the courts, at deep midnight, the torches are gleaming;
In the proudly-arch'd chapel the banners are beaming;
Far adown the lone aisle sacred music is streaming
Lamenting a chief of the people should fall.

But meeter for thee, gentle lover of nature,
To lay down thy head like the meek mountain lamb:
When, wilder'd, he drops from some cliff huge in stature,
And draws his last sob by the side of his dam.
And more stately thy couch by this desert lake lying,
Thy obsequies sung by the gray plover flying,
With one faithful friend but to witness thy dying,
In the arms of Hellvellyn and Catchedicam.

WANDERING WILLIE.

All joy was bereft me the day that you left me,
And climb'd the tall vessel to sail yon wide sea;
O weary betide it! I wander'd beside it,
And bann'd it for parting my Willie and me.

Far o'er the wave hast thou follow'd thy fortune,
Oft fought the squadrons of France and of Spain;
Ae kiss of welcome's worth twenty at parting,
Now I hae gotten my Willie again.

When the sky it was mirk, and the winds they were wailing,
I sat on the beach wi' the tear in my e'e,
And thought o' the bark where my Willie was sailing,
And wish'd that the tempest could a' blaw on me.

Now that thy gallant ship rides at her mooring,
Now that my wanderer's in safety at hame,
Music to me were the wildest winds' roaring,
That e'er o'er Inch-Keith drove the dark ocean faem.

When the lights they did blaze, and the guns they did rattle,
And blithe was each heart for the great victory,
In secret I wept for the dangers of battle,
And thy glory itself was scarce comfort to me.

But now shalt thou tell, while I eagerly listen,
Of each bold adventure, and every brave scar,
And, trust me, I'll smile though my e'en they may glisten;
For sweet after danger's the tale of the war.

And O! how we doubt when there's distance 'tween lovers,
When there's naething to speak to the heart thro' the e'e;
How often the kindest and warmest prove rovers,
And the love of the faithfullest ebbs like the sea.

Till, at times, could I help it? I pined and I ponder'd,
If love could change notes like the bird on the tree—
Now I'll ne'er ask if thine eyes may hae wander'd,
Enough, thy leal heart has been constant to me.

Welcome, from sweeping o'er sea and through channel,
Hardships and danger despising for fame,
Furnishing story for glory's bright annal,
Welcome, my wanderer, to Jeanie and hame!

Enough, now thy story in annals of glory,
Has humbled the pride of France, Holland, and Spain;
No more shalt thou grieve me, no more shalt thou leave me,
I never will part with my Willie again.

HUNTING SONG.

Waken, lords and ladies gay,
On the mountain dawns the day,
All the jolly chase is here,
With hawk, and horse, and hunting spear;
Hounds are in their couples yelling,
Hawks are whistling, horns are knelling,
Merrily, merrily, mingle they,
"Waken, lords and ladies gay."

Waken, lords and ladies gay,
The mist has left the mountain gray,
Springlets in the dawn are streaming,
Diamonds on the brake are gleaming;
And foresters have busy been,
To track the buck in thicket green;
Now we come to chant our lay,
"Waken, lords and ladies gay."

Waken, lords and ladies gay,
To the greenwood haste away
We can show you where he lies,
Fleet of foot, and tall of size;
We can show the marks he made,
When 'gainst the oak his antlers fray'd
You shall see him brought to bay,
"Waken, lords and ladies gay."

Louder, louder chant the lay,
Waken, lords and ladies gay!
Tell them youth, and mirth, and glee,
Run a course as well as we:
Time, stern huntsman! who can baulk,
Stanch as hound, and fleet as hawk:
Think of this, and rise with day,
Gentle lords and ladies gay.

THE BARD'S INCANTATION.

WRITTEN UNDER THE THREAT OF INVASION, IN THE AUTUMN OF 1804.

The forest of Glenmore is drear,
It is all of black pine and the dark oak tree;
And the midnight wind to the mountain deer
Is whistling the forest lullaby:

The moon looks through the drifting storm,
But the troubled lake reflects not her form,
For the waves roll whitening to the land,
And dash against the shelvy strand.

There is a voice among the trees
That mingles with the groaning oak—
That mingles with the stormy breeze,
And the lake-waves dashing against the rock;
There is a voice within the wood,
The voice of the bard in fitful mood;
His song was louder than the blast,
As the bard of Glenmore through the forest past.

"Wake ye from your sleep of death,
Minstrels and bards of other days!
For the midnight wind is on the heath,
And the midnight meteors dimly blaze:
The spectre with his bloody hand,*
Is wandering through the wild woodland;
The owl and the raven are mute for dread,
And the time is meet to awake the dead!

"Souls of the mighty, wake and say,
To what high strain your harps were strung,
When Lochlin plough'd her billowy way,
And on your shores her Norsemen flung?
Her Norsemen train'd to spoil and blood,
Skill'd to prepare the raven's food,
All by your harpings doom'd to die
On bloody Largs and Loncarty.†

"Mute are ye all: No murmurs strange
Upon the midnight breeze sail by;
Nor through the pines with whistling change,
Mimic the harp's wild harmony!
Mute are ye now?—Ye ne'er were mute,
When Murder with his bloody foot,
And Rapine with his iron hand,
Were hovering near yon mountain strand.

"O yet awake the strain to tell,
By every deed in song enroll'd,
By every chief who fought or fell,
For Albion's weal in battle bold;—
From Coilgach,‡ first who rolled his car,
Through the deep ranks of Roman war,
To him, of veteran memory dear,
Who victor died on Aboukir.

"By all their swords, by all their scars,
By all their names, a mighty spell!
By all their wounds, by all their wars,
Arise, the mighty strain to tell!
Fiercer than fierce Hengist's strain,
More impious than the heathen Dane,
More grasping than all-grasping Rome,
Gaul's ravening legions hither come!"—

The wind is hush'd, and still the lake—
Strange murmurs fill my tingling ears,
Bristles my hair, my sinews quake,
At the dread voice of other years—

"When targets clash'd, and bugles rung,
And blades round warriors' heads were flung,
The foremost of the band were we,
And hymn'd the joys of Liberty!"

* The forest of Glenmore is haunted by a spirit called Shamdearg, or Red-hand.

† Where the Norwegian invader of Scotland received two bloody defeats.

‡ The Galgacus of Tacitus.

ROMANCE OF DUNOIS.

FROM THE FRENCH.

THE original of this little romance makes part of a manuscript collection of French songs, probably compiled by some young officer, which was found on the field of Waterloo, so much stained with clay and blood, as sufficiently to indicate what had been the fate of its late owner. The song is popular in France, and is rather a good specimen of the style of composition to which it belongs. The translation is strictly literal.

IT was Dunois, the young and brave,
Was bound for Palestine,
But first he made his orison
Before Saint Mary's shrine:
"And grant, immortal queen of heaven,"
Was still the soldier's prayer,
"That I may prove the bravest knight,
And love the fairest fair."

His oath of honour on the shrine
He graved it with his sword,
And follow'd to the Holy Land
The banner of his lord;
Where, faithful to his noble vow,
His war-cry fill'd the air,
"Be honour'd aye the bravest knight,
Beloved the fairest fair."

They owed the conquest to his arm,
And then his liege lord said,
"The heart that has for honour beat,
By bliss must be repaid;—
My daughter Isabel and thou
Shall be a wedded pair,
For thou art bravest of the brave,
She fairest of the fair."

And then they bound the holy knot
Before Saint Mary's shrine,
That makes a paradise on earth,
If hearts and hands combine:
And every lord and lady bright
That were in chapel there,
Cried, "Honour'd be the bravest knight,
Beloved the fairest fair!"

THE TROUBADOUR.

GLOWING with love, on fire for fame,
A Troubadour that hated sorrow,
Beneath his lady's window came,
And thus he sung his last good morrow:

"My arm it is my country's right,
My heart is in my truelove's bower;
Gayly for love and fame to fight
Befits the gallant Troubadour."

And while he march'd with helm on head
And harp in hand, the descant rung,
As faithful to his favourite maid,
The minstrel burden still he sung:
"My arm it is my country's right,
My heart is in my lady's bower;
Resolved for love and fame to fight,
I come, a gallant Troubadour."

E'en when the battle-roar was deep,
With dauntless heart he hew'd his way
'Mid splintering lance and falchion-sweep,
And still was heard his warrior-lay:
"My life it is my country's right,
My heart is in my lady's bower;
For love to die, for fame to fight,
Becomes the valiant Troubadour."

Alas! upon the bloody field
He fell beneath the foeman's glaive,
But still, reclining on his shield,
Expiring sung th' exulting stave:
"My life it is my country's right,
My heart is in my lady's bower;
For love and fame to fall in fight,
Becomes the valiant Troubadour."

CARLE, NOW THE KING'S COME.*

BEING NEW WORDS TO AN AULD SPRING.

THE news has flown frae mouth to mouth;
The north for ance has bang'd the south;
The de'il a Scotsman's die of drouth,
Carle, now the king's come.

CHORUS.

Carle, now the king's come!
Carle, now the king's come!
Thou shalt dance and I will sing,
Carle, now the king's come!

Auld England held him lang and fast;
And Ireland had a joyfu' cast;
But Scotland's turn has come at last—
Carle, now the king's come!

Auld Reikie, in her rokela gray,
Thought never to have seen the day;
He's been a weary time away—
But, Carle, now the king's come!

She's skirling frae the Castle Hill,
The carline's voice is grown sae shrill,
Ye'll hear her at the Canon Mill,
Carle, now the king's come!

"Up, bairns," she cries, "baith great and sma',
And busk ye for the weapon shaw!—
Stand by me and we'll bang them a'!
Carle, now the king's come!

"Come, from Newbattle's* ancient spires,
Bauld Lothian, with your knights and squires
And match the mettle of your sires,
Carle, now the king's come!

"You're welcome hame, my Montague!†
Bring in your hand the young Buccleugh;
I'm missing some that I may rue,
Carle, now the king's come!

"Come, Haddington, the kind and gay,
You've graced my causeway mony a day;
I'll weep the cause if you should stay,
Carle, now the king's come!

"Come, premier duke,‡ and carry doun,
Frae yonder craig§ his ancient croun;
It's had a lang sleep and a soun'—
But, Carle, now the king's come!

"Come, Athole, from the hill and wood,
Bring down your clansmen, like a cloud;—
Come, Morton, show the Douglas blood,
Carle, now the king's come!

"Come, Tweeddale, true as sword to sheath;
Come, Hopetoun, fear'd on fields of death;
Come, Clerk, and give your bugle breath;
Carle, now the king's come!

"Come, Wemyss, who modest merit aids;
Come, Roseberry, from Dalmeny shades;
Breadalbane, bring your belted plaids;
Carle, now the king's come!

"Come, stately Niddrie,‖ auld and true,
Girt with the sword that Minden knew;
We have ower few such lairds as you—
Carle, now the king's come!

"King Arthur's grown a common crier,
He's heard in Fife and far Cantire,—
'Fie, lads, behold my crest of fire!'¶
Carle, now the king's come!

"Saint Abb roars out, 'I see him pass
Between Tantallon and the Bass!'—
Calton,** get on your keeking-glass,
Carle, now the king's come!"

The carline stopp'd; and sure I am,
For very glee had ta'en a dwam,
But Oman help'd her to a dram.—
Cogie, now the king's come!

Cogie, now the king's come!
Cogie, now the king's come!
I'se be four and ye's be toom,
Cogie, now the king's come!

* Composed on the occasion of the royal visit to Scotland, in August, 1822.

* Seat of the Marquis of Lothian.
† Uncle to the Duke of Buccleugh.
‡ Hamilton. § The castle.
‖ Wauchope of Niddrie, a noble-looking old man, and a fine specimen of an ancient baron.
¶ There is to be a bonfire on the top of Arthur's seat.
** The Castle-hill commands the finest view of the Frith of Forth, and will be covered with thousands, anxiously looking for the royal squadron.

THE END.

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